**How to Act at the Time of Descent - Selected Passages From the Sources**

**1. Baal Hasulam. Letter 25**
One who repents from love is rewarded with complete *Dvekut* [adhesion], meaning the highest degree, and one who is ready for sins is in the netherworld. These are the farthest two points in this entire reality. It would seem that we should be meticulous with the word “repentance,” which should have been called “wholeness,” except it is to show that everything is preordained, and each and every soul is already established in all its light, goodness, and eternity. But for the bread of shame, the soul went out in restrictions until it clothed in the murky body, and only through it does it return to its root prior to the *Tzimtzum* [restriction], with its reward in its hand from all the terrible move it had made. The overall reward is the real *Dvekut*, meaning that she [the soul] got rid of the bread of shame because her vessel of reception has become a vessel of bestowal and her form is equal to her Maker, and I have often spoken to you about that. By this you will see that if the descent is for the purpose of ascending, it is regarded as an ascent and not as a descent. Indeed, the descent itself is the ascent as the letters of the prayer themselves are filled with abundance, and with a short prayer, the abundance is small for lack of letters.

**2. Rabash. Article 34 (1988) What Are Day and Night in the Work**At the end of correction it will be known to all that “Yours is the day; Yours is also the night.” That is, since His will is to do good to His creations, and good means day, so how can it be said that the Creator gives darkness? It is against His purpose! However, the darkness, too, meaning the night, is regarded as “day,” even though the person feels cessations in *Dvekut* with the Creator, which are called “darkness” and “night.” But at the end of correction, when it is known that He has given the darkness, too, this is certainly light, as well. The proof of it is that then the sins become as merits. Thus, at that time we know that “Yours is the day; Yours is also the night,” since both belong to You, meaning that both are You, meaning the Creator has given both as “day.”
Conversely, before the end of the work, it is impossible to attribute the cessations that a person has in *Dvekut* with the Creator to the Creator, that He has sent him this, since this contradicts the purpose of creation. This is the meaning of the words, “The darkness of the night will shine as the light of the day.” That is, since the sins have then become to him has merits, everything becomes day. Now we can understand what are day and night in the work. A person should know that he must feel what is darkness, or he will not be able to enjoy the light, since in anything that a person wants to taste any flavor, whether it is worth using, he must learn one from the other, as it is written, “as the advantage of the light out of the darkness.” Likewise, a person cannot enjoy rest unless he knows what is fatigue. For this reason, a person must go through a process of ascents and descents. However, he must not be impressed by the descents. Instead, he should exert not to escape the campaign. For this reason, although during the work he must know that they are two things, at the end of the work he sees that light and darkness are as two legs that lead a person to the goal.

 **3. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 172. The Matter of Preventions and Delays**All the preventions and delays that appear before our eyes are but a form of nearing—the Creator wants to bring us closer, and all these preventions bring us only nearing, since without them we would have no possibility of approaching Him. This is so because, by nature, there is no greater distance, as we are made of pure matter while the Creator is higher than high. Only when one begins to approach does he begin to feel the distance between us. And any prevention one overcomes brings the way closer for that person. (This is so because one grows accustomed to moving on a line of growing farther. Hence, whenever one feels that he is distant, it does not induce any change in the process, since he knew in advance that he is moving on a line of growing farther, since this is the truth, that there are not enough words to describe the distance between us and the Creator. Hence, every time he feels that distance to a greater extent than he thought, it causes him no contention.)

**4. Rabash. Article 44 (1990) What Is an Optional War, in the work - 2**It is written in the book *A Sage’s Fruit* (Vol. 1, p 139), “About the verse, ‘My beloved is like a gazelle,’ our sages said, ‘As the gazelle looks back when he runs, when the Creator leaves Israel, He turns back His face.’ Then the face returns to being in the *Achoraim*, meaning craving and longing to cling to Israel once more. This begets in Israel longing and craving to cling to the Creator, too, and the measure of the longing and craving is actually the face itself.” We should interpret that he means that when a person is in a state of lowliness, it is considered that the Creator has moved away from him, and he has no desire or yearning for the work, this is regarded as the Creator giving a person a shape of tastelessness about spirituality. Moreover, a person wants to escape and forget about the work altogether. This is regarded as the Creator showing him the *Achoraim*. The *Panim* [face/anterior] of the Creator is His desire to do good to His creations, and the *Achoraim* is the complete opposite. Why does the Creator show a person the *Achoraim*? It is on purpose, for by this a person gets a thrust toward *Dvekut* with the Creator, for he cannot remain in a state of lowliness. It follows that here, within the *Achoraim* is the discernment of *Panim*.

**5. Rabash. Article 5 (1988) What Is, “When Israel Are in Exile, the Shechina Is With Them,” in the Work**What is the meaning of “When Israel are in exile, the Shechina is with them”? As Rabbi Shimon Ben Yochai said, “Wherever they exile, the Shechina is with them.” What is the benefit from this in the work, that he says about it, “How beloved are Israel by the Creator”? We should interpret that when a person feels that he is in exile, meaning feels the taste of exile in the work and wants to escape from the exile, the meaning will be that a person must believe that wherever they are exiled, the Shechina is with them. That is, the Shechina let him feel the taste of exile. “With them” means that the Shechina is attached to them and they are not separated from the Shechina, that they should say that it is a descent. On the contrary, now the Shechina is giving him a push so he will climb the degrees of Kedusha [holiness/sanctity], and dresses herself in a garment of descent. When a person knows and believes that this is so, it will encourage him so he does not escape the campaign or say that the work of bestowal is not for him because he always sees that he is in states of ascents and descents, and he sees no end to these states and falls into despair. But if he walks in the path of faith and believes in the words of our sage, then he must say the opposite.

**6. Rabash. Article 29 (1986) Lishma and Lo Lishma**
A person who wishes to walk on the path of bestowal, he must understand that from above he is given a special treatment, that he was lowered from the previous state so he would begin to really contemplate the goal, meaning what is required of man and what man wants the Creator to give him. But when he is in a state of ascent, when he has desire for Torah and *Mitzvot*, he has no need to worry about spirituality. Instead, he sees that he will stay this way his whole life because he is happy this way. It therefore follows that the descent he has received is for his own good, meaning that he is receiving special treatment, that he was lowered from his state where he thought that he had some wholeness. This is apparent in his agreeing to remain in the current state his whole life. But now that he sees that he is far from spirituality, he begins to think, “What is really required of me? What should I do? What is the purpose I should achieve?” He sees that he has no power to work, and finds himself in a state of “between heaven and earth.” Then, man’s only strengthening is that only the Creator can help, but by himself, he is doomed. It was said about this (Isaiah, 4:31): “Yet those who hope for the Lord will gain new strength,” meaning those people who hope for the Creator. This means that they who see that there is no one else in the world who can help them regain strength each time. It follows that this descent is actually an ascent, meaning that this descent that they feel allows them to rise in degree, since “there is no light without a *Kli*.”

**7. Rabash. Article 6 (1991) What Is, “The Herdsmen of Abram’s Cattle and the Herdsmen of Lot’s Cattle,” in the Work**In every beginning a person must start over the acceptance of the kingdom of heaven, it is not enough that yesterday he had faith in the Creator. For this reason, every acceptance of the kingdom of heaven is considered a new discernment. That is, now he receives a part of the vacant space that was devoid of the kingdom of heaven, and admits that empty place and fills it with the kingdom of heaven. It follows that now he sorted out a new thing, which did not exist before he took that empty place and filled it with the kingdom of heaven. This is regarded as elevating a new spark into the *Kedusha*. Finally, from all the ascents, he always raises sparks from the vacant space into the *Kedusha*. It follows that from each descent he arrives at a new beginning and raises new sparks. Hence, when a person sees that he has descents, he should be careful not to escape from the campaign, even though he sees that he is not progressing. Rather, he must try to start anew each time. That is, the fact that he begins to ascend does not mean that he returned to his previous degree. This would mean that he did nothing by his work, since he thinks that he is now ascending to his previous level. Rather, he must believe that this is a new discernment, that each time, he raises different sparks, until he raises the sparks that pertain to his essence.

**8. Rabash. Article 22 (1985) The Whole of the Torah Is One Holy Name**We must always consider the goal, which is to “do good to His creations.” If the evil inclination comes to a person and asks him all of Pharaoh’s questions, he should not reply with lame excuses, but say, “Now, with your questions, I can begin with the work of bestowal.” This means that we should not say about the questions of the evil inclination that it came to us in order to lower us from our degree. On the contrary, now it is giving us a place to work, by which we will ascend on the degrees of wholeness. That is, any overcoming in the work is called “walking in the work of the Creator,” since each penny joins into a great amount.” That is, all the times we overcome accumulate to a certain measure required to become a *Kli* for the reception of the abundance. Overcoming means taking a part of a vessel of reception and adding it to the vessels of bestowal. It is like the *Masach* [screen], which we must put on the *Aviut*[thickness/will to receive]. It follows that if one has no will to receive, one has nothing on which to place a *Masach*. For this reason, when the evil inclination brings us foreign thoughts, this is the time to take these thoughts and raise them above reason. This is something one can do with everything one’s soul desires. He should not say that now he has received rejection from the work. Rather, he should say that he was given thoughts and desires from above so as to have room to admit them into *Kedusha*[holiness]. It therefore follows that it is to the contrary: because he is brought closer from above, he was sent work. It was said about this: “The ways of the Lord are straight; righteous walk in it and transgressors fail in it.”

**9. Rabash. Article 1 (1991) What Is, “We Have No Other King But You,” in the Work**It is written (Psalms 89), “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, generation after generation I will make known Your faith with my mouth.” We should understand the meaning of “sing forever.” How can one sing to the Creator when he sees that he is full of faults and his heart is not whole with the Creator, and he feels far from the Creator? And sometimes, he even wants to escape the campaign. How can he say that this is the Lord’s mercies and he is singing about this to the Creator? According to the above, a person should say that the fact that he in a lowly state is not because now he has become worse. Rather, now, since he wants to correct himself so that all his actions will be for the sake of the Creator, from above he is shown his true state—what is in his body, which until now was concealed and was not apparent. Now the Creator has revealed them, as it is written in the book *A Sage’s Fruit*. A person says about this that it is mercy that the Creator has revealed to him the bad in him so he would know the truth and would be able to ask of the Creator for a real prayer. It follows that on one hand, now he sees that he is far from the Creator. On the other hand, a person should say that the Creator is close to him and tends to him, and shows him the faults. Hence, he should say that they are mercies. This is the meaning of the words, “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever.” That is, on one hand, he is happy and is singing about this. On the other hand, he sees that he must repent. In other words, he must ask of the Creator to bring him closer and give him the desire to bestow, which is a second nature.

**10. Baal Hasulam. Letter 5**
I rejoice in those revealed corruptions and the ones that are being revealed. I do, however, regret and complain about the corruptions that have still not appeared, but which are destined to appear, for a hidden corruption is hopeless, and its surfacing is a great salvation from heaven. The rule is that one does not give what he does not have. Hence, if it has appeared now, there is no doubt that it was here to begin with but was hidden. This is why I am happy when they come out of their holes because when you cast your eye on them, they become a pile of bones.

**11. Rabash. Article 30 (1989) What Is the Meaning of Lighting the Menorah in the Work?**One who labors and works as much as he can, and goes through ups and downs, can say that he tastes the taste of darkness because he cannot overcome his will to receive for himself. Thus, the descents that a person receives when he wants to walk on the path of truth are instruments for the sensation of the help he will receive. We must believe the words of our sages who said, “He who comes to purify is aided.” A person must not escape the campaign when he sees that he is not making progress. Sometimes he gets thoughts of the spies, who said that this work is not for us and requires special people who can walk on the path of overcoming. All this comes to him because he understands that each time, he must see how he is making progress. However, it does not occur to him that he must advance in obtaining darkness, that this is the only *Kli* he needs to acquire. A *Kli* is a need for a filling. That is, if he has no filling for the lack, he feels that he is in the dark. For this reason, a person must not say that he is not advancing in the work. Hence, he wants to escape the campaign, for it is not the truth, since he sees each time how far he is from obtaining the light, meaning for the Creator to give him the *Kli* called “desire to bestow.” He cannot obtain the desire to bestow by himself, and then he comes to feel that the world has grown dark on him. At that time, the light comes, meaning help from above, as it is written, “He who comes to purify is aided.”

**12. Rabash. Records. Article 195. The Association of the Quality of Judgment with Mercy**The main work is the choice, meaning “choose life,” so there will be *Dvekut* [adhesion], which is *Lishma* [for Her sake]. By this, one is rewarded with *Dvekut* with the Life of Lives. When there is open Providence, there is no room for choice. For this reason, the upper one raised the *Malchut*, which is the quality of judgment, to the *Eynaim* [eyes]. This created a concealment, meaning that it seemed to the lower one that there was a drawback in the upper one, that there was no *Gadlut* [greatness/adulthood] in the upper one. Subsequently, the qualities of the upper one are placed within the lower one, meaning they are deficient. It follows that these *Kelim* [vessels] have equivalence with the lower one, namely that as there is no vitality to the lower one, so there is no vitality in the upper qualities. In other words, he feels no taste in *Torah and Mitzvot*[commandments] for they are lifeless. At that time, there is room for choice, for the lower one to say that this whole concealment that he feels is because the upper one restricted himself for the sake of the lower one. This is called “When Israel are in exile, the *Shechina [Divinity] is with them,” that whatever taste he feels, so he says. That is, it is not his fault that he does not feel the taste of vitality. Rather, in his view, there really is no vitality in spirituality. If a person overcomes and says that the bitter taste he finds in these nourishments are only because he does not have the proper Kelim to receive the abundance because his Kelim are to receive and not to bestow, and he is sorry that the upper had to hide himself, for which the lower one can slander, this is regarded as MAN that the lower one raises. By this, the upper raises his AHP. “Raising” means that the upper one can show the lower one the merit and the pleasure that exists in the Kelim of AHP that the upper one can reveal. Thus, from the perspective of the lower one, it follows that he raises the Galgalta Eynaim of the lower one, and by this itself, the lower one sees the merit of the upper one. It follows that the lower one ascends together with the AHP of the upper one.*

**13. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 42. What Is the Acronym Elul in the Work**It is impossible to obtain disclosure before one receives the discernment of *Achoraim* [posterior], discerned as concealment of the Face, and to say that it is as important to him as the disclosure of the Face. It means that one should be as glad as though he has already acquired the disclosure of the Face. However, one cannot persist and appreciate the concealment like the disclosure, except when one works in bestowal. At that time, one can say, “I do not care what I feel during the work because what is important to me is that I want to bestow upon the Creator. If the Creator understands that He will have more contentment if I work in a form of *Achoraim*, I agree.” However, if one still has sparks of reception, he comes to thoughts, and it is then hard for him to believe that the Creator leads the world in a manner of “good and doing good.” This is the meaning of the letter *Yod* in the name *HaVaYaH*, which is the first letter, called “a black dot that has no white in it,” meaning it is all darkness and concealment of the Face. It means that when one comes to a state where one has no support, one’s state becomes black, which is the lowest quality in the upper world, and that becomes the *Keter* to the lower one, as the *Kli* of *Keter* is a vessel of bestowal.

**14. Rabash. Records. Article 21. Sanctification of the Month**A person must take upon himself the burden of the kingdom of heaven on the lowest quality, and say about it that to him, even that state, the lowest that can be, meaning one that is entirely above reason, when he has no support from the mind or the feeling, so he can build its foundations on it, and at that time, he is seemingly standing between heaven and earth and has no support, for then everything is above reason, then a person says that the Creator sent him this state, where he is in utter lowliness, since the Creator wants him to take upon himself the burden of the kingdom of heaven in this manner of lowliness. At that time, because he believes above reason, he takes upon himself that the situation he is in now comes to him from the Creator, meaning that the Creator wants him to see the lowest possible state that can be in the world. And yet, he must say that he believes in the Creator in all manners. This is considered that he has made an unconditional surrender. That is, a person does not say to the Creator, “If You give me a good feeling, to feel that ‘The whole earth is full of His glory,’ I will be willing to believe.” Rather, when he has no knowledge or sensation of spirituality, he cannot accept the burden of the kingdom of heaven and observe the *Torah and Mitzvot*[commandments]. Rather, he must accept the kingdom of heaven unconditionally.

**15. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 19. What Is “The Creator Hates the Bodies,” in the Work**Sometimes one despises this work of assuming the burden of the kingdom of heaven, which is a time of a sensation of darkness, when one sees that no one can save him from the state he is in but the Creator. Then he takes upon himself the kingdom of heaven above reason, as an ox to the burden and as a donkey to the load. One should be glad that now he has something to give to the Creator, and the Creator enjoys him having something to give to the Creator. But one does not always have the strength to say that this is beautiful work, called “adornment,” but he despises this work. This is a harsh condition for one to be able to say that he chooses this work over the work of whiteness, meaning that he does not sense a taste of darkness during the work, but then one feels a taste in the work. It means that then he does not have to work with the will to receive to agree to take upon himself the kingdom of heaven above reason. If he does overcome himself and can say that this work is pleasant to him that now he is observing the *Mitzva* [commandment] of faith above reason, and he accepts this work as beauty and adornment, this is called “A joy of *Mitzva*.”

**16. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 96. What Is Waste of Barn and Winery, in the Work**The purpose of the work is in the literal and nature, since in this work he no longer has room to fall lower down, since he is already placed on the ground. This is so because he does not need greatness because to him it is always like something new. That is, he always works as though he had just begun to work. And he works in the form of accepting the burden of the kingdom of heaven above reason. The basis, upon which he built the order of the work, was in the lowest manner, and all of it was truly above reason. Only one who is truly naïve can be so low as to proceed without any basis on which to establish his faith, literally with no support. Additionally, he accepts this work with great joy, as though he had had real knowledge and vision on which to establish the certainty of faith. And to that exact measure of above reason, to that very measure as though he had reason. Hence, if he persists in this way, he can never fall. Rather, he can always be in gladness, by believing that he is serving a great King.

**17. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 33. The Lots on Yom Kippurim and with Haman**Indeed, we must know that what appears to one as things that contradict the guidance of “The Good Who Does Good” is only to compel one to draw the upper light on the contradictions, when wanting to prevail over the contradictions. Otherwise, one cannot prevail. This is called “the exaltedness of the Creator,” which one extends when having the contradictions, called Dinim [judgments]. This means that the contradictions can be annulled if one wants to overcome them, only if he extends the exaltedness of the Creator. You find that these Dinim cause the drawing of the exaltedness of the Creator. This is the meaning of what is written, “and cast his mantle upon him.” It means that afterward he attributed the whole mantle of hair to Him, to the Creator. That is, now he saw that the Creator gave him this mantle deliberately, in order to draw the upper light on them. However, one can only see this later, after one has been granted the light that rests on these contradictions and Dinim that he had had in the beginning. This is so because he sees that without the hair, meaning the descents, there would not be a place for the upper light to be there, as there is no light without a Kli [vessel]. For this reason, he sees that all the exaltedness of the Creator he had obtained was because of the Se’arot and the contradictions he had had. This is the meaning of “The Lord on high is mighty.” It means that the exaltedness of the Creator is awarded through the Aderet.

**18. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 13. A Pomegranate**There is emptiness only in a place where there is no existence, as in “The earth hangs on nothing.” You find that what is the measure of the filling of the empty place? The answer is, according to one’s elevation of oneself above reason. This means that the emptiness should be filled with exaltedness, meaning with above reason, and to ask of the Creator to give him that strength. This will mean that all the emptiness was created, meaning it comes to a person to feel this way—that he is empty—only in order to fill it with the *Romemut* of the Creator. In other words, one is to take everything above reason. This is the meaning of the verse, “God has made it that He will be feared.” This means that these thoughts of emptiness come to a person in order for one to have a need to take upon himself faith above reason. And for this we need the help of the Creator. It follows that at that time, one must ask the Creator to give him the power to believe above reason. It turns out that it is precisely then that one needs the Creator to help him, since the exterior mind lets him understand the opposite. Hence, at that time, one has no other choice but to ask the Creator to help him. It is said about this, “One’s desire overcomes him every day; and were it not for the Creator, he would not overcome it.” It follows that only then is the state when one understands that no one will help him but the Creator. And this is “God has made it that He will be feared.” The matter of fear is discerned as faith, and only then is one in need of the salvation of the Creator.

**19. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 83. Concerning the Right Vav and the Left Vav**In any state one is in, he can be a servant of the Creator since he does not need anything, but does everything above reason. It turns out that one does not need any *Mochin* with which to be the servant of the Creator. Now we can interpret what is written, “Set up a table before me, against my enemies.” A table means, as it is written, “and sent her out of his house, and she departed his house, and went” (Deuteronomy 24:1-2). A *Shulchan* [table] is like *VeShlacha* [and sent her], meaning exit from the work. We should interpret that even during the exits from the work, meaning in a state of decline, one still has a place to work. This means that when one prevails above reason during the declines, and says that the descents, too, were given to him from above, by this the enemies are canceled. This is so because the enemies thought that through the declines the person will reach utter lowliness and escape the campaign, but in the end the opposite occurred—the enemies were canceled. This is the meaning of what is written, “the table that is before the Lord,” that precisely in this manner does he receive the face of the Creator. This is the meaning of subduing all the judgments, even the harshest judgments, since he assumes the burden of the kingdom of heaven at all times. That is, he always finds a place for work, as it is written that Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochai said, “There is no place to hide from You.”

**20. Rabash. Article 18 (1986) Who Causes the Prayer**One must not say, “I’m waiting for the Creator to give me an awakening from above, and then I will be able to work in the work of holiness.” Baal HaSulam said that in regard to the future, a person must believe in reward and punishment, meaning he must say (*Avot*, Chapter 1), “If I am not for me who is for me, and when I am for me, what am I, and if not now, then when?” Thus, one mustn’t wait another moment. Instead, he should say, “If not now, then when?” And he must not wait for a better time, so “Then I will get up and do the work of holiness.” Rather, it is as our sages said (*Avot*, Chapter 2), “Do not say, ‘I will study when I have time,’ lest you will not have time.”

**21. Rabash. Letter 77**The whole foundation is that one should ask that all of one’s thoughts and desires will be only to benefit the Creator, a depiction of lowliness, called Shechina in the dust, immediately appears. Hence, we must not be impressed by the descent, since many pennies join into a great amount. This is as we learned, “there is no absence in spirituality,” rather that it has temporarily departed in order to have room for work to advance. This is so because every moment that we scrutinize into holiness enters the domain of holiness, and a person descends only in order to sort out more sparks of holiness. However, there is an advice that one should not wait until his degree is lowered for him, and when he feels his lowliness he goes up again, and that ascent is regarded as sorting a part into holiness. Instead, he himself descends and elevates other sparks, and raises them into the domain of holiness. It is as our sages said, “Before I lose, I search” (Shabbat, 152), meaning before I lose the situation I am in, I start searching. It is as Baal HaSulam said about King David, who said, “I awaken the dawn.” Our sages said, “I awaken the dawn and the dawn does not awaken me.” Therefore, the keeping is primarily during the ascent, and not during the descent.

**22. Rabash. Article 27 (1989) What Is the Meaning of Suffering in the Work**Our sages said (*Shabbat* 152), “What I did not lose, I seek.” That is, an old man walking bent, always looking at the ground as though searching for something. He says, “I have lost nothing, yet I search.” We should interpret “Old is he who has acquired wisdom.” That is, he is “Wise, who sees the future.” Since he can come to a descent in order acquire empty *Kelim*, so the Creator may fill them or he will remain in a state of lowliness because he will not feel deficient. Then, when he loses the state of ascent, he begins to seek advice how to ascent in spirituality once again. Therefore, one who is old, meaning wise and sees the future, begins to search how to ascend in spirituality even before he loses the state of ascent. He begins to follow all the counsels about the ways to ascend on the spiritual degrees, and this is done by seeking deficiencies in the state he is in. In that case, there is no need to throw him down in importance so he will find and see deficiencies in himself, since he himself will be looking for deficiencies so as to have empty *Kelim* that the Creator may fill.

**23. Rabash. Article 43 (1990) What Is, “You Shall Not Plant for Yourself an Asherah by the Altar,” in the Work**Every descent is a trial. If a person can endure the trial, meaning that the thought that comes to a person causes him to see if he is under the governance of *Kedusha* or not, during the descent, a person can see that at the time of ascent, his whole structure was built on the will to receive for oneself. During the descent, a person cannot make any calculations. But afterward, when he receives nearing from above once more, which comes to a person by what is written, “I am the Lord, who dwells with them in the midst of their impurity,” meaning that even though a person is still in the authority of self-love, still, an illumination comes to him from above, called “an awakening from above.” At that time, he must awaken the state of descent that he had by himself, and think what was the reason he received the descent, and what he must correct so as not to come into a descent once more. A person must believe that the fact that he suffered a descent is because he was thrown from above. This is why he fell into such lowliness. At that time, he can work on himself, correct corrections so he does not fall again, since he must believe that the descent is a correction for him.

**24. Rabash. Article 8 (1991) What Is, “And Abraham Was Old, of Many Days,” in the Work**One who is clever and wants to save time does not wait until he suffers a descent from above. Rather, while he is in an ascent and wants to acquire the importance of the state of closeness to the Creator, he begins to depict to himself what is a state of descent, meaning how he suffers from being far from the Creator compared to how he feels now that he is close to the Creator. It follows that even during the ascent he learns from the discernments as though he were in a state of descent. At that time, he can calculate and discern between an ascent and a descent. At that time he will get a picture of the advantage of the light over darkness, since he can create a depiction of how he was back in the state of descent, and thought that the whole matter of the work of bestowal does not belong to him, and how he suffered from these states when he wanted to escape the campaign, and only from one place he could get some relief, meaning only from one hope, that he thought, “When will I be able to go to sleep?” for then he would escape from all the states of impatience, when he felt that the world has grown dark on him. Now, during the ascent, he sees everything differently. At that time, he wants to work only for the sake of the Creator, and he has no concern for his own benefit. From all those calculations that he will do during the ascent, it follows that now he has a place where he can discern between light and darkness, and he does not need to wait until he is given from above a state of descent.

**25. Rabash. Article 15 (1991) What Is the Blessing, “Who Made a Miracle for Me in This Place,” in the Work**A person should accustom himself with anything to compare between the time of suffering and the time of pleasure, and to bless for the miracle of delivering him from suffering to a state of pleasure. By this, he will be able to thank the Creator and enjoy in the new *Kelim* that have been added to him now when he compares the two times to one another. From this, a person can advance in the work. This is as Baal HaSulam said, that it does not matter whether a person receives from the Creator something great or small. What matters is how much a person thanks the Creator. To the extent of his gratitude, so grows the giving that the Creator gives. Therefore, we must take note to be grateful, to appreciate His gift, so we can approach the Creator. Hence, when a person always looks during the ascent at the state he was in while in descent, meaning how he felt during the descent, he can make a distinction as in, “as the advantage of the light from within the darkness,” and he already has new *Kelim* in which to receive joy and be thankful to the Creator. This is the meaning of what is written, that a person should bless, “Blessed is He who made a miracle for me in this place,” meaning in the place where he is now, during the ascent, since there cannot be an ascent if there was no prior state of descent.

**26. Rabash. Article 24 (1986) The Difference between Charity and Gift**When one does not see results over a long period of time of making efforts, and he does not see a satisfaction of his deficiency, torments and pain begin to form in him because he has made efforts but sees no progress in his work. At that time the thoughts begin to come one-by-one. Sometimes it is with sparks of despair, and sometimes he grows stronger, but then he sees once more that he has fallen from his state, and so on repeatedly. Finally, a real deficiency forms in him, which he has obtained through exertion in ascents and descents. These ascents and descents leave him with pain each time at not having been granted *Dvekut* with the Creator. Finally, when the cup of labor has been filled sufficiently, it is called a *Kli*. Then the filling of it comes from the Creator, since now he has a real *Kli*. It follows that his seeing that now—after several years of work—he has retreated, this happens deliberately so he will ache at not having *Dvekut* with the Creator. It turns out that each time he must see that he is approaching the making of the *Kli*, called “real deficiency.” That is, his gauge of *Katnut* [infancy/smallness] and *Gadlut*[adulthood/greatness] of the deficiency is to the extent of the suffering he feels at not having the filling, which is called here “*Dvekut* with the Creator,” where all he wants is only to bring contentment to the Creator.

**27. Rabash. Article 21 (1988) What Does It Mean that the Torah Was Given Out of the Darkness in the Work**When a person wants to draw near to the Creator, meaning use the vessels of bestowal, but he cannot because the body disagrees with it, since his body extends from vessels of reception, at that time a person feels that the world has grown dark on him, for he understands that if he cannot obtain vessels of bestowal, he will never be rewarded with the upper light, which is the light of “doing good to His creations.” It follows that the darkness he feels from not being able to obtain vessels of bestowal by himself gives him the need that someone will help him obtain those *Kelim*[vessels]. According to the rule, “There is no light without a *Kli* [vessel], no filling without a lack,” it follows that now he has received a need for the light of Torah. It is as our sages said, “I have created the evil inclination; I have created the Torah as a spice.” Thus, the Torah is given specifically to the deficient, and that deficiency is called “darkness.” This is the meaning of the words, “The Torah was given out of the darkness.” That is, one who feels darkness in his life because he has no vessels of bestowal is fit to receive the Torah, so that through the Torah, the light in it will reform him and he will obtain the vessels of bestowal. Through them, he will be fit to receive the delight and pleasure, for those two are included in the Torah: 1) The *Kli*—that he wants to bestow. 2) Then he receives the delight and pleasure into the vessels of bestowal.

**28. Rabash. Article 19 (1985) Come unto Pharaoh - 1**We should pay attention to “Come unto Pharaoh” and believe through the worst possible states, and not escape the campaign, but rather always trust that the Creator can help a person and give him, whether one needs a little help or a lot of help. In truth, one who understands that he needs the Creator to give him a lot of help, because he is worse than the rest of the people, is more suitable for his prayer to be answered, as it is written, “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.” Therefore, one should not say that he is unfit for the Creator to bring him closer, but that the reason is that he is idle in his work. Instead, one should always overcome and not let thoughts of despair enter his mind, as our sages said (Berachot, 10), “Even if a sharp sword is placed on his neck he should not deny himself of mercy,” as it was said (Job, 13), “Though He slay me, I will hope for Him.” We should interpret the “sharp sword placed on his neck” to mean that even though one’s evil, called “self-love,” is placed on his neck and wants to separate him from *Kedusha* by showing him that it is impossible to exit this authority, he should say that the picture he sees is the truth. However, “He should not deny himself of mercy,” for at that time he must believe that the Creator can give him the mercy, meaning the quality of bestowal. That is, by himself, it is true that one cannot exit the authority of self-reception. But from the perspective of the Creator, when the Creator helps him, of course He can bring him out. This is the meaning of what is written, “I am the Lord your God, who took you out from the land of Egypt to be your God.”

**29. Rabash. Article 38 (1990) What Is, “A Cup of Blessing Must Be Full,” in the Work**

A person needs great mercy in order not to escape the campaign. Although he uses the counsels that our sages said, “I have created the evil inclination; I have created the Torah as a spice,” but the person says that he has already used this advice several times to no avail. He also says that he has already used the advice “He who comes to purify is aided,” and it is as though all the counsels are not for him. Thus, he does not know what to do. This is the worst state for a person, meaning he wants to escape from these states but has nowhere to run. At that time he suffers torments at being between despair and confidence. But then a person says, “Where will I turn?” At that time, the only advice is prayer. Yet, this prayer is also without any guarantee, so it follows that then he must pray to believe that the Creator does hear a prayer, and everything that one feels in these states is to his benefit. But this can be only above reason, meaning although the mind tells him, “After all the calculations, you see that nothing can help you,” he should believe this, too, above reason, that the Creator can deliver him from the will to receive for himself, in return for which he will receive the desire to bestow. Then, when a person receives from the Creator the desire to bestow, he becomes whole with the Creator, meaning he has been rewarded with equivalence of form, which is called “unification.”

**30. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 70. With a Mighty Hand and with Fury Poured Out**Those who want to come into the work of the Creator in order to truly adhere to Him and enter the King’s palace, not everyone is admitted. Rather, he is tested: If he has no other desires but only a desire for *Dvekut*[adhesion], he is admitted. And how is one tested if he has only one desire? He is given disturbances. This means that he is sent foreign thoughts and foreign messengers to obstruct him so he would leave this path and follow the path of all the people. If one overcomes all the difficulties and breaks all the bars that block him, and little things cannot push him away, the Creator sends him great *Klipot* [shells/peels] and chariots to deflect one from entering into *Dvekut* with the Creator alone, and with nothing else. This is considered that the Creator is rejecting him with a mighty hand. If the Creator does not show a mighty hand, it will be hard to push him away since he has a strong desire to adhere only to the Creator and to nothing else. But when the Creator wants to reject one whose desire is not so strong, He pushes him away with a small thing. By giving him a great desire for corporeality, he already leaves the holy work entirely, and there is no need to repel him with a mighty hand. Yet, when one overcomes all the hardships and the disturbances, one is not easily repelled, but with a mighty hand. And if one overcomes even the mighty hand and does not want to move from the place of *Kedusha* [holiness] whatsoever, but wants to adhere specifically to Him in truth, and sees that he is repelled, then one says that fury is poured out on him. Otherwise, he would be allowed inside. But because fury is poured out on him by the Creator, he is not admitted into the King’s palace to adhere to Him. It follows that before one wants to move from one’s place, and breaks in and wants to enter, it cannot be said that he feels that fury is poured out on him. Rather, after all the rejections that he is rejected, and he does not move from his place, meaning when the mighty hand and the fury poured out have already been revealed upon him, then “I will be King over you” comes true. This is so because only through bursting and great efforts does the kingdom of heaven become revealed to him, and he is rewarded with entering the King’s palace.

**32. Rabash. Article 6 (1989) What Is Above Reason in the Work**This is the meaning of the words, “king of Israel and his redeemer.” That is, once they have taken upon themselves the kingdom of heaven, called “king of Israel,” they attain that the Creator is his redeemer, meaning that only the Creator redeemed them from the control of the evil, and they themselves were powerless to do so. In this way, we should interpret the words “Lord of hosts.” This name means, as Baal HaSulam interpreted, that as he said, *Tzevaot* [hosts] are two words: *Tze* [leave/go out] and *Ba* [comes]. That is, *Tzava* [army] are men of war. These are people who go each day to fight the evil inclination. They are called “army.” Therefore, after they have been rewarded with redemption, meaning after they conquer the evil inclination and emerge from the control of the evil, their conduct in the work is by way of ascents and descents, which is called *Tzevaot* [plural of *Tzava* (army)]. Meaning, at times they emerge from their control, and then are under their control again. Thus, the name for ascents and descents is *Tzevaot*. During the work, a person should say, “If I am not for me, who is for me?” At that time in the work, they think that they themselves are doing the ascents and descents, that they are men of war, called *Tzava*, “mighty men.” Afterward, when they are redeemed, they attain that the Lord is of hosts [*Tzevaot*], meaning that the Creator made all the ups and downs they had. In other words, even the descents come from the Creator. A person does not get so many ups and downs for no reason. Rather, the Creator caused all those exits. We can interpret “exit” as “exit from *Kedusha* [holiness],” and *Ba* [comes] as “coming to *Kedusha*. The Creator does everything. Hence, after the redemption, the Creator is called “Lord of Hosts.” And who is He? “The king of Israel and his redeemer.”