

## ליקוטי מוהר"ן תנינא סימן י"א

דַּע, כְּשֶׁהָאָדָם מִתְפַּלֵּל בְּשָׂדֵה, אֲזִי כָּל הָעֲשָׂבִים כֹּלָם בָּאִין  
 בְּתוֹךְ הַתְּפִלָּה, וּמְסִיעִין לוֹ, וְנוֹתְנִין לוֹ כַּח בְּתִפְלָתוֹ. וְזֶה בְּחִינַת  
 שְׂנִקְרָאת הַתְּפִלָּה שִׂיחָה, בְּחִינַת (בראשית ב): "שִׂיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה", שְׂכָל  
 שִׂיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה נוֹתְנִין כַּח וְסִיּוּעַ בְּתִפְלָתוֹ.  
 וְזֶה בְּחִינַת (שם כ"ד): "וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׂוּחַ בְּשָׂדֶה" - שְׂתִפְלָתוֹ הִיְתָה  
 עִם סִיּוּעַ וְכַח הַשָּׂדֶה, שְׂכָל עֲשָׂבֵי הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְּנוּ כַּח וְסִיּוּעַ בְּתִפְלָתוֹ  
 כִּנְ"ל, שְׂבִשְׂבִיל זֶה נִקְרָאת הַתְּפִלָּה שִׂיחָה כִּנְ"ל.  
 וְעַל-כֵּן בְּקִלְלָה נֶאֱמַר (דברים י"א): "וְהָאָדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת יְבוּלָה";

blade sings to God without any ulterior motive, without any distracting thought, without any expectation of reward. How wonderful it is to hear their song and serve God in their midst. *Es is zehr gut frum tzu zein tzivishen zei* – It is very good to be religious among them” (*Rabbi Nachman’s Wisdom* #163).

3. **shrub of the field.** Rebbe Nachman explains that because prayer draws potency and power from the *SiaCh* (שיח) of the fields it is called *SiChah* (שיחה). The full verse in Genesis (*loc. cit.*) reads: “Now, every shrub of the field was not yet on the earth and every grass of the field had not yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not caused rain to fall upon the earth and there was no human to till the soil.” Rashi explains that when grasses and trees were created, they remained on the surface of the ground and did not spring up, because “the Lord God had not caused rain to fall.” And what is the reason God did not give rain? It was because “there was no human to till the soil”—i.e., there was no one to recognize the benefit of rain. Adam had not yet been created. But when Adam came and recognized that it was necessary for the world, he *prayed* for rain and it descended and the trees and grasses sprouted (*Rashi, loc. cit.*). The need for rain for the *siach* of the field caused Adam to turn to God in *sichah* (prayer). Thus, by virtue of the etymological similarity between *SiaCh* and *SiChah*, the same verse which speaks of the shrubs of the field also alludes to prayer.

4. **And Yitzchak went out laSuaCh in the field....** Our Sages teach: Yitzchak instituted *Minchah* (the Afternoon Prayer), as it is stated: “Yitzchak went out *lasuach* in the field toward evening.” In this verse, *lasuach* means nothing other than prayer (*Berakhot* 26b). In linking *laSuaCh* (לשוח) and *SiChah* (שיחה) with *SiaCh* (שיח) and so showing the connection between prayer and the flora of the field, Rebbe Nachman teaches the great benefit of praying in the fields amidst the grasses and trees.

5. **the soil will not yield its produce.** “The Curse” refers here specifically to Scripture’s warning in Deuteronomy, Chapter 11, of the misfortunes that will befall the Jewish people should they turn away from God to worship idolatry. The full verse (*loc. cit.*) reads: “Then God’s wrath will

## LIKUTEY MOHARAN II #11<sup>1</sup>

**K**now! when a person prays in the fields, all the flora enters into the prayer, helping him and strengthening his prayer.<sup>2</sup> This is the reason prayer is called *SiChah* (conversation), the concept of “*SiaCh* (shrub) of the field” (Genesis 2:5).<sup>3</sup> All the shrubs of the field empower and assist his prayer.

This is the concept of “And Yitzchak went out *laSuaCh* (to converse) in the field” (ibid. 24:63)—his prayer was with the help and power of the field. All the flora of the field empowered and assisted his prayer, on account of which prayer is called *SiChah*.<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, the Curse includes the statement: “and the soil will not yield its produce (*yevul*)” (Deuteronomy 11:17).<sup>5</sup> For all the earth’s produce

**1. Likutey Moharan II #11.** Rebbe Nachman gave this lesson in the summer of 1808. Reb Noson writes: After the Rebbe returned from Lemberg (Lvov), he was still sick with tuberculosis. He would often ride to the outskirts of [Breslov] and walk in the fields. This was for his health (the fresh air would somewhat ease his suffering) and for other awesome reasons that only he knew. During these strolls we heard many wonderful lessons and tales from the Rebbe. It was on one such occasion that we heard this teaching.... We had taken the wagon out of the city and stopped in a field to walk. We had descended from the coach and were standing around the Rebbe, who was still sitting there. It was time for the afternoon *Minchah* prayer, and we were about to begin the service in the field. The Rebbe then revealed this lesson, saying that when one prays in the field, all the [surrounding] flora enters into his prayers. He later remarked that just as we stood around him, he sees all the plant life, each plant pushing itself toward each person who was standing there, in order to rise and become a part of that person’s prayer (*Rabbi Nachman’s Wisdom* #144). The main theme of the lesson is praying in the fields.

**2. strengthening his prayer.** The purpose of each thing God creates—every sentient being and even all insentient matter—is to recognize His *Malkhut* (Kingship) and praise Him. Segments of the creation’s praise of God are recorded in *Perek Shirah* (“Chapter of Song”), a collection of Biblical verses recited by heaven and earth, the celestial bodies, and the world’s flora and fauna, reflecting each creation’s role in the universe (see *Shaar HaMitzvot, V’Etchanan*, p.87). Even each blade of grass and every shrub and tree sings praise to God. Rebbe Nachman teaches here that when their “song” enters the prayers of the person who calls out to God from the fields, it fills all his words with strength and power.

A follower of Rebbe Nachman from Zlatipolia, where the Rebbe lived circa 1800-1801, related that one summer day the Rebbe sent his daughter Sarah to call for him. “When I came, he suggested that we take a stroll. We soon reached the outskirts of the town and were walking in a grassy meadow. ‘If only you could hear the song of this grass,’ the Rebbe said, ‘how each

כִּי כָל יְבוּל הָאָרֶץ צְרִיכִין לְתַן כַּח וְסִיוֹעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַתְּפִלָּה, וּכְשֵׁישׁ  
פָּגַם וְעָפּוּב עַל זֶה, אָזִי נֹאמֵר: "וְהֵאָדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת יְבוּלָהּ."  
כִּי אֶפְלוּ כְשֵׁאיִנוּ מִתְּפִלָּל בְּשָׂדֵה, נוֹתְנִים גַּם-כֵּן יְבוּל הָאָרֶץ סִיוֹעַ  
בְּתִפְלָתוֹ, דְּהֵינּוּ כָּל מֵה שְׁסָמוּךְ אֶל הָאָדָם, כְּגוֹן אֲכִילָתוֹ וְשִׁתְּיָתוֹ  
וְכִיּוֹצֵא. רַק כֶּשֶׁהוּא בְּשָׂדֵה, שְׂאִזֵי סָמוּךְ לָהֶם בְּיוֹתֵר, אָזִי כָּל  
הָעֲשָׂבִים וְכָל יְבוּל הָאָדָמָה נוֹתֵן כַּח בְּתִפְלָתוֹ כַּנִּ"ל.  
זֶה יְבוּל - רָאשֵׁי-תְבוּת: וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בְּשָׂדֵה - שְׁכָל יְבוּל  
הַשָּׂדֵה הַתְּפִלָּלוֹ עִמוֹ, כַּנִּ"ל:  
(זה הענין מבאר היטב במאמר "תקעו בחדש שופר", המתחיל בדרך א, עיין שם):

All plant life, "every shrub of the field," is obliged to do this. When a person stands in prayer—and thus attains the Word of God, prayer's supernal root—the plants put their power back into the prayer, which is *their* supernal root. And so when a person prays over some illness, those plants which have the power to heal that illness are obliged to put their potency back into the prayer, since it is their root, the Word of God.

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Perhaps more than any other spiritual practice, Rebbe Nachman exhorted his followers to engage in *hitbodedut*—personal, secluded prayer in which a person cries out his heart to God in his mother tongue. Setting aside time each day for personal conversation with God enables a person to beseech the Creator for everything one needs, physically, financially, emotionally and spiritually. A more comprehensive discussion of *hitbodedut* can be found in the following works: *Outpouring of the Soul*; *Where Earth and Heaven Kiss*; and *Crossing the Narrow Bridge* (Chapter 9). The Rebbe once said: It is best if one's *hitbodedut* is outside the city, where there is plant life, because the grass and trees awaken the heart (*Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #227). In the prayer which Reb Noson composed based on this lesson he explains that praying in the fields refers particularly to *hitbodedut* (*Likutey Tefilot*). The three daily prayers are meant to be prayed in the synagogue with a *minyan* (quorum of ten men). On the other hand, *hitbodedut*, reciting psalms and other optional supplications benefit from the surrounding influence of fields and meadows. It is interesting to note that in Talmudic times the synagogues were actually built in the fields, outside the city limits (*Tosafot, Berakhot* 6a, s.v. *hamitpallel*). The reason for this may have been what the Rebbe teaches here: in order that the "song" of the flora might enter the prayers and strengthen them.

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Recalling a conversation which Rebbe Nachman had during the spring of 1805, Reb Noson writes: The Rebbe said, "Winter is pregnancy and summer is birth." He then spoke wonderfully, but most of it was forgotten. I do recall that he spoke of the summer which was then approaching.... The Rebbe said that in the winter, all the plants and grasses die. Their strength is dissipated and they are like the dead. But when the summer comes, they awaken and return to life. It is then really good *lasuach* in the fields—*sichah* being prayer (see n.4 above), entreaties of longing and yearning for God. [In spring and summer,] when every *siach* (shrub) begins to live and blossom, they yearn to be included in *sichah* (*Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #98).

must empower and assist the prayer. But when this is impeded or delayed, it thus states: “and the soil will not yield its produce.”<sup>6</sup>

Now, even when a person does not pray in the fields, the earth’s produce—i.e., whatever is near the person, such as his food and drink and the like—aids his prayer.<sup>7</sup> But when he is in the field, because he is particularly close to these things, all the flora and all the soil’s *yevul* (produce) empower his prayer.<sup>8</sup>

And this is *YeVUL*—the first letters of *Vayeitzei Yitzchak Lasuach Basadeh* (“And Yitzchak went out to converse in the field”). All the produce of the field prayed together with him.<sup>9</sup>

(This matter is thoroughly explained in *Likutey Moharan II*, 1:11, “Sound the Shofar at the New Moon”; see there.<sup>10</sup>)

flare against you, and He will restrain the heavens so there will be no rain, and the soil will not yield its produce; and you will perish swiftly from the goodly Land that God gives you.”

**6. But when this is impeded or delayed...its produce.** The verse immediately preceding the one containing the Curse warns: “Be careful lest your heart be tempted to go astray and worship other gods, bowing down to them” (Deuteronomy 11:16). In the context of our lesson, the presence of idolatry or even merely a blemish of faith implies a laxity in prayer. This lack of *SiChah* results in a lack of rainfall and the soil not producing its yield of *SiaCh*. In *Likutey Moharan II*, 5:1, Rebbe Nachman speaks of the importance of faith in order to draw blessing and healing. But when faith is blemished, neither medicinal plants, nor one’s prayers, nor ancestral merit has the power to effect healing.

**7. does not pray...aids his prayer.** Rebbe Nachman now extends the relationship between prayer and “Every shrub...and every grass of the field...” to also include the food and drink in a person’s house. As brought in note 1, each plant pushes itself toward each person standing in the field in order to rise and become a part of his prayer. The Rebbe teaches here that even when a person is not in the field, his prayers are assisted by whatever produce of the field which is nearby.

**8. particularly close to these things....** That is, if the earth’s produce strengthens one’s prayers even away from its natural setting, how much more so when one prays to God from the fields where the produce develops, surrounded by the plants, grasses and trees which grow there?

**9. YeVUL...Vayeitzei Yitzchak Lasuach Basadeh....** In citing this verse earlier as proof of the great benefit of praying amidst the grasses and trees, Rebbe Nachman pointed to the link between *laSuaCh/SiChah* and *SiaCh*, i.e. prayer and the flora of the fields. He has since shown that this also includes the earth’s foodstuffs, its *yevul* (produce). This is hinted to by the word *YeVUL* (יבול), which is an acronym for *Vayeitzei Yitzchak Lasuach Basadeh* (ויצא יצחק לשוב בשדה)—Yitzchak went out to the field where his prayer to God was assisted and strengthened by the *siach* and *yevul* that grew there.

**10. see there.** In *Likutey Moharan II*, 1:11 (and see nn 134-135), Rebbe Nachman teaches that all the plants draw their potency and power from the Word of God, which is prayer. Therefore, when prayer is rectified, the plants return their power to the Word of God. The Rebbe teaches: