



TORAH OHR • THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

פרשת לך לך

Parshas Lech Lecha



The 6 maamarim of Torah Ohr on the parsha.

The Hebrew, a translation, a short explanation of every section, and the sources

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

Dedicated in honor of the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchok



Likkutei Torah

THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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ענין לך לך וילך למסעיו ממטה למעלה מלמעלה...

The subject of “Go forth”: “And he went on his journeys,”
from below upward and from above downward



Avram, av ram, is the hidden intellect beyond all thought, and his mission is to descend step by step until G-d's hidden wisdom and delight are revealed even in physical deeds. That descent is really an ascent: whatever reaches lowest is rooted in what is highest, in Keser, above wisdom itself.

Each section: the Hebrew, then the translation, then a short explanation under a gold rule. Small numbers in the Hebrew are the notes at the end.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar reads Avram's name as av ram, the “exalted father,” an intellect hidden from all thought, whose task is to be revealed through the chain of worlds down to Malchus. Avraham's Chesed is a revelation that connects, but it reaches created beings only through concealment, and it requires circumcision to remove the husk that blocks it; revelation in turn gives the power to elevate the sparks scattered in the world, like a candle absorbed into a torch. Becoming Avraham, with the added hei of Binah, seems a descent, but Binah's expansion comes from Atik and Keser, above Chochmah, as a sage needs a greater mind to explain an idea in parables. So too the Torah, clothed in physical mitzvos, draws from Keser, and a physical mitzvah reveals more than wisdom in its own place. Avraham kept the Torah only inwardly; its outward, physical fulfilment needed a light from above the chain of worlds, drawn down through circumcision, the hard labor of Egypt, and the alef of “Anochi.” The maamar ends by reading Avram's journeys, Lot's separation, and the names of Avraham and Sarah as stages of this drawing-down.

OUTLINE

1 Av ram: the hidden intellect revealed

¶11-3

Avram is the intellect hidden from all thought; his Chesed must be revealed through the worlds, by way of concealment, so that a created world can exist and be nullified to G-d.

- 2 Circumcision and the power of refinement** ¶14-6
Circumcision removes kelipas nogah; the resulting revelation elevates sparks like a candle before a torch, and Avram's call begins the World of Rectification.
-
- 3 The added hei: descent as ascent** ¶17-9
The hei of Avraham is Binah, where Atik is revealed; as with Shlomo's parables and the tip of the yud, expansion comes from a higher level, Keser.
-
- 4 Torah and mitzvos in physical things** ¶10-13
Supernal wisdom is grasped only when clothed in physical mitzvos, which draw from Keser; charity and tefillin unify above; the Patriarchs prepared the way for the Torah.
-
- 5 Inner and outer fulfilment of the Torah** ¶14-19
Avraham kept the Torah inwardly; physical fulfilment needed a light from above hishtalshelus, drawn through circumcision, the Egyptian labor, and the alef of Keser at Sinai.
-
- 6 Avram's journeys, Lot, and the names** ¶20-22
Leaving Charan, the separation from Lot, and the names Avraham and Sarah read as the passage of revelation from the hidden intellect down to Malchus.
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KEY CONCEPTS

The hidden intellect שכל הנעלם מכל רעיון

A level of mind so deep that no thought can grasp it, higher even than Chochmah; the maamar identifies it with Avram, av ram.

Atik עתיק

The innermost level of Keser, the source of divine delight, revealed specifically in Binah.

Keser (the Crown) כתר

The level above wisdom; because it transcends the chain of worlds, it can reach down even into physical things.

Kelipas nogah קליפת נוגה

The translucent husk that covers holiness but contains good that can be elevated; represented by the foreskin removed at circumcision.

A candle before a torch כנר בפני האבוקה

The image of lesser light absorbed into greater light: how sparks of holiness are drawn into the revealed Shechinah.

Inner and outer dimensions פנימיות וחיצוניות

Avraham kept the mitzvos in their inner, spiritual dimension; their outer, physical fulfilment came only with the Torah given at Sinai.

SECTION 1 • 11-3

Av ram: the hidden intellect revealed

1 (ענין לך לך וילך למסעיו² ממטה למעלה³ מלמעלה למטה⁴ כו' לה' הנראה⁵ כו' לה' סתם)^{6,7}

(The subject of “Go forth” [Lech Lecha]; “And he went on his journeys” — from below upward, from above downward, etc.; “to G-d who appeared,” etc.; “to G-d,” unqualified.)

A heading listing the verses the maamar will explain: G-d's call to Avram, “Go forth,” and Avram's later journeys, which the Alter Rebbe reads as a movement both from below upward and from above downward. The two altars Avram built, one “to G-d who appeared to him” and one simply “to G-d,” will stand for a revealed level of G-dliness and a higher, unqualified one.

2 הנה אברם הוא השכל הנעלם מכל רעיון⁸ א”ב ר”ם⁹ וצ”ל בבחי' גילוי דהיינו להיות סדר השתלשלות

מבחי' חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעה בבחי' ירידה ממדרגה למדרגה עד סוף כו'

Now, Avram is the intellect hidden from all thought — av ram, “exalted father”; and it must come to be in a state of revelation, that is, that there be the ordered chain of descending worlds (hishtalshelus) from the level of “wise, but not with a knowable wisdom,” in the manner of descent from level to level, down to the end, etc.

The name Avram is read as av ram, “exalted father”: a level of intellect so deep that no thought can reach it, higher even than Chochmah. Avram's task is to bring this hidden level into revelation, so that it descends step by step through all the worlds down to the lowest.

והתכלית הוא להיות גילוי בבי”ע¹⁰ ג”ע עליון ותחתון תענוג הנבראים שיוכלו לקבל גילוי התענוג כו'.

And the purpose is that there be revelation in [the worlds of] Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah — the upper and lower Gan Eden, the delight of the created beings — so that they may receive the revelation of the delight, etc.

The goal of this descent is that G-dliness be revealed even in the lower created worlds (Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah). There it is experienced as Gan Eden, where souls and created beings receive a revelation of divine delight.

3 וזהו ענין חסד אתגלי בפומא דאמה¹¹ להיות גילוי ההשפעה בבחי' התקשרות והוא יושב פתח האהל¹² כו'.

And this is the meaning of “Chesed is revealed in the mouth of the amah”: that there be a revelation of the flow of influence in the manner of connection; and “he was sitting at the entrance of the tent,” etc.

The Zohar says that Chesed (kindness) is revealed at the “mouth of the amah,” Yesod, the channel of giving and connection. Avraham, the man of Chesed, embodies this flow of kindness that binds giver and receiver; this is why he sits “at the entrance of the tent,” the point where the inside opens outward.

אך גילוי זה הוא ע"י צמצומים והעלם בחי' חשך דיצחק ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום¹³ א'

But this revelation comes through contractions (tzimtzumim) and concealment — the level of the darkness of Yitzchak — “And there was evening and there was morning, one day,”

Yet the revelation of kindness can only reach created beings through contractions and concealment, associated with Yitzchak (Gevurah). The verse of creation, “there was evening and there was morning,” shows darkness, the concealment, coming first, and only then light.

כדי להיות בחי' יש ובו יהיה יום אחד המשכת אחד שיהיה היש בטל דהיינו שיהיה בחי' יש ובטל כו'.¹⁴

so that there be the level of a [created] something (yesh), and in it there will be “one day” — the drawing down of “One” — that the something be nullified; that is, that there be the level of something and [yet] nullified, etc.

The concealment exists so that there can be a created “something” (yesh) at all. But within that something there should be “one day”: G-d's Oneness drawn into it, so that it exists and is at the same time nullified before Him.

SECTION 2 • 14-6

Circumcision and the power of refinement

4 והנה להיות גילוי זה צ"ל מצות מילה להסיר ערלה היא קליפת נוגה החופפת כו' שלא יהיה לה יניקה שא"א להמשיך בחי' גילוי בעודה שם כ"א כשיעור חיותה כו'.

Now, for this revelation to be, there must be the mitzvah of circumcision, to remove the foreskin, which is kelipas nogah that covers over [it], etc., so that it have no nurture; for it is impossible to draw down the level of revelation while it is there, except to the measure of its life-force, etc.

For G-dliness to be revealed, the mitzvah of circumcision is needed. The foreskin stands for kelipas nogah, the “translucent husk” that covers holiness and draws nourishment from it; while it is there, revelation can come only in the limited measure that sustains it.

ולכן כתיב אחר מצות מילה כי אב המון גוים שלכאורה אינו מובן מה ענין גוים לכאן

Therefore it is written after the mitzvah of circumcision, “For [I have made you] the father of a multitude of nations” — which at first glance is not understood: what do nations have to do with this?

The Alter Rebbe asks why, right after the command of circumcision, the Torah calls Avraham “father of a multitude of nations.” What do the nations have to do with circumcision?

אלא שנעשה כח הבירור ע"י גילוי זה כי למה הצדיקים דומים¹⁵ בפני השכינה כנר בפני האבוקה שנכללים בבחי' בטול באבוקה.^{16, 17}

Rather, the power of refinement comes about through this revelation; for “To what are the righteous comparable before the Shechinah? Like a candle before a torch,” in that they are absorbed, in a state of self-nullification (bittul), into the torch.

He answers that the revelation brought about by circumcision gives the power to refine and elevate. As the Talmud says, the righteous before the Shechinah are like a candle before a torch: the small flame is absorbed into the great one. So too what is near the revealed light is drawn into it.

5 ואמרו גלו לאדום¹⁸ כו' כי לא גלו אלא כדי שיתוסף עליהם גרים¹⁹ והן הניצוצות²⁰ שבק"י שבמאכלים ומשקים שמתעלים להתכלל בקדושה מפני גילוי שכינה שע"י"ז הם בטלים ונכללים כנר בפני אבוקה²¹ כו'.

And [the Sages] said, “They were exiled to Edom,” etc.; for “they were exiled only so that converts would be added to them” — and these are the sparks within kelipas nogah that are in foods and drinks, which are elevated to be absorbed into holiness because of the revelation of the Shechinah, through which they are nullified and absorbed, like a candle before a torch, etc.

The Talmud teaches that Israel was exiled among the nations only so that converts would join them. The Alter Rebbe reads this inwardly: the “converts” are the sparks of holiness trapped in kelipas nogah, in the permitted food and drink of this world. When the Shechinah is revealed, these sparks are nullified before it and absorbed into holiness, like a candle before a torch.

6 וזהו ענין פ' זו ויאמר ה' אל אברם²² א"ב ר"ם שיהא יורד ומשתלשל בבחי' גילוי כדי להיות תיקון ובירור

And this is the meaning of this passage, “And G-d said to Avram” — av ram — that it should descend and come down by stages in a state of revelation, so that there be rectification and refinement.

This is the inner meaning of G-d's call to Avram: av ram, the hidden intellect, is to descend by stages into revelation. The purpose is tikkun (rectification) and birur (refinement): repairing the world and sifting out the good in it.

כי עד אברם הי' שבה"כ דור המבול כו'. ומאברם מתחיל עולם התיקון לך לך יציאת שם מ"ה המתקן ומברר כו'.

For until Avram there was the shattering of the vessels — the generation of the Flood, etc. And with Avram begins the World of Rectification: “Go forth” (lech lecha) — the emergence of the Name Mah, which rectifies and refines, etc.

The generations before Avram, up to the Flood, correspond to the Kabbalistic “shattering of the vessels,” a state of disorder. With Avram the World of Rectification begins; “Go forth” is read as the going forth of the Name Mah, the divine power of rectifying and refining.

וצ"ל ירידה אחר ירידה מא"ב ר"ם בחי' יסוד אבא עד אל הארץ בחי' מל'. אשר אראך.

And there must be descent after descent, from av ram — the level of Yesod of Abba — down to “the land,” the level of Malchus. “That I will show you.”

The descent is gradual, level after level: from av ram, identified with Yesod of Abba (the outlet of Chochmah), down to “the land,” which stands for Malchus, the lowest Sefirah. “That I will show you” then introduces the goal of this journey.

פי' אראה ואגלה אותך בעצמך כלומר שאתה תבא לידי התגלות במצות מילה. והיה שמך אברהם²³ אב המון גוים כו':

This means: I will show and reveal you yourself; that is, you will come to be revealed through the mitzvah of circumcision. “And your name shall be Avraham, [for I have made you] the father of a multitude of nations,” etc.

“That I will show you” is read as “I will reveal you to yourself”: the hidden intellect in Avram will become revealed through the mitzvah of circumcision. Hence the verse joins circumcision to the new name Avraham, “father of a multitude of nations.”

SECTION 3 • 17-9

The added hei: descent as ascent

7 והנה לפ"ז היא ירידה להיות מא"ב ר"ם אברהם. אך הענין מה שנתוסף לו²⁴ ה' הוא ה' עילאה²⁵ ובזוהר²⁶ אי' גבי ועבד הלוי הוא²⁷.

Now, according to this, it is a descent to become Avraham from av ram. But the point is that what was added to him, the hei, is the upper hei; and in the Zohar it is stated on “And the Levite shall perform the service, he”:

It might seem that becoming Avraham is a descent from the lofty av ram. But the hei added to his name is the “upper hei,” which stands for Binah, and the Zohar’s reading of a verse about the Levites shows its greatness.

הוא דא עתיקא²⁸ שהתגלות עתיק הוא בבינה²⁹ דוקא ולא בחכמה כי חכמה נקי' עדן³⁰ ואין שם התגלות עתיק

“He” — this is Atika; that is, the revelation of Atik is specifically in Binah and not in Chochmah; for Chochmah is called Eden, and there is no revelation of Atik there,

The Zohar reads the word “he” (hu) in that verse as Atika, the “Ancient One,” the innermost level of Keser. Its revelation is specifically in Binah, not in Chochmah, which is called “Eden” and has no revelation of Atik.

כי עתיק הוא מקור התענוגים והתענוג הוא למעלה מן החכמה³¹ ובחכמה עצמה שהיא בחי' נקודה עדיין לא בא לידי גילוי כ"א

for Atik is the source of delights, and delight is above Chochmah; and in Chochmah itself, which is the level of a point, it has not yet come to revelation, except

Atik is the source of all delight, and delight is above wisdom. In Chochmah, which is only a “point,” an undeveloped flash, delight cannot yet show itself.

ע"י בינה נקודה בהיכלא³² נקבה תסובב גבר³³ שמקבלת הארת עתיקא. והענין כנודע שלהיות³⁴ התפשטו' וירידת המדרגו' הוא דוקא ע"י בחי' ומדרגה יותר עליונה כו':

through Binah — “a point in a palace”; “a female shall encompass a male” — for it receives the light of Atika. And the explanation, as is known, is that for there to be an expansion and descent of the levels, this comes specifically through a level and rank that is higher still, etc.

Delight shows itself only in Binah, where the point of insight is spread out in a “palace” and understood. The verse “a female shall encompass a male” hints that Binah, the receiving “female,” encompasses and receives the light of Atik. The rule behind it: every expansion and descent comes from a level higher still.

8 ולהבין זה היטב³⁵ הנה כתיב בשלמה וידבר שלשת אלפים משל.³⁶ הענין הוא כמו שאנו רואין שהחכם אף שיודע דבר חכמה בעצמו³⁷ אעפ"כ אינו יכול להסביר החכמה ההיא לזולתו עד שקודם

To understand this well: it is written of Shlomo, “And he spoke three thousand parables.” The explanation is as we see, that a wise man, even though he himself knows a matter of wisdom, nevertheless cannot explain that wisdom to another until, before

To clarify the principle, the Alter Rebbe turns to King Shlomo, who “spoke three thousand parables.” Knowing an idea is not the same as being able to explain it to someone else.

שהוא מסביר צריך לקשר דעתו בחוזק ולהתיישב איך ומה שיכול להסביר ולהשתלשל למטה בדברים תחתונים ולהלבישם במשל דהיינו שיהי יכול למצוא דבר החכמה ההיא גם בדברים תחתונים.

he explains [it], he must bind his mind with strength and settle [his thought on] how and what he can explain, and [how to] bring [it] down by stages into lower matters and clothe them in a parable; that is, that he be able to find that matter of wisdom also in lower things.

Before explaining, a teacher must concentrate intensely and work out how the idea can be brought down into simpler terms and dressed in an analogy, finding the same wisdom present in lower things.

כי לזה צריך חכם גדול שיוכל להלביש חכמתו גם בדברים תחתונים שלמטה ממנו. רק שלמה המלך ע"ה ברוב בינתו היה יכול למצוא שלשת אלפים משל

For this a great sage is needed, who can clothe his wisdom even in lower matters that are beneath him. Only King Shlomo, peace be upon him, in the abundance of his understanding, could find three thousand parables,

This takes a truly great mind. Shlomo's vast understanding let him find three thousand parables for a single idea.

דהיינו ג' אלפים מדרגות שלמטה ממנו גם שם היה יכול למצוא ולהראות אותו דבר חכמה בעצמה שהיה יודע.

that is, three thousand levels beneath him; even there he could find and show that very matter of wisdom that he knew.

The three thousand parables are three thousand descending levels; at each one Shlomo could still find and show the very same wisdom he knew.

לכן כשנצרך להשתלשל המדרגה שתהיה ההתבוננות בהרחבה צריך שיהיה מן מקור עליון הגבוה ביותר מבחי חכמה ואז יכול להיות התגלות בינה

Therefore, when the level must come down by stages so that the contemplation be in breadth, it must come from a higher source, loftier than the level of Chochmah, and then there can be the revelation of Binah.

The lesson: for an idea to come down and spread out into broad, detailed understanding (Binah), the power must come from a source higher than the original insight (Chochmah).

אבל מן חכמה עצמה אין יכול לירד להשתלשל ממנה בחי בינה רק שרש בינה והתגלותה היא התגלות עתיק בה ועיי נשתלשלה ונתגלה בהרחבה.

But from Chochmah itself the level of Binah cannot descend and come down by stages; rather, the root of Binah and its revelation is the revelation of Atik within it, and through [this] it came down by stages and was revealed in breadth.

Binah cannot simply flow out of Chochmah. Its root is the revelation of Atik, above Chochmah, within it, and through that it develops and spreads out in breadth.

9 ואף כאן להיות הארת הבינה אורך ורוחב מבחי יו"ד חכמה בחי נקודה כו' הוא עיי גילוי בחי עליונה³⁸ יותר היא בחי עתיק בחי קוצו של יו"ד שעייז מתפשט היו"ד בה"א.

So too here: for there to be the light of Binah, [with its] length and breadth, from the level of the yud — Chochmah, the level of a point, etc. — this comes through the revelation of a higher level still, namely the level of Atik, the level of the tip of the yud, through which the yud expands into the hei.

The same holds in the letters of the Divine Name: the yud, a mere point, stands for Chochmah; the hei, with length and breadth, for Binah. The yud can expand into the hei only through its "tip" (kotz), which stands for Atik, a level above Chochmah.

וכמבואר בפרדס³⁹ שהיו"ד יש לו גי' קוצין ומקוץ התחתון נמשך ההי' ובקוץ התחתון יש בחי' הקוץ העליון

And as is explained in the Pardes, the yud has three tips; from the lower tip the hei is drawn forth, and within the lower tip there is [something of] the level of the upper tip.

Rabbi Moshe Cordovero's Pardes explains that the yud has three tips; the hei is drawn from the lower tip, and the lower tip holds within it something of the upper tip.

ונמצא שיש הארת קוץ העליון בבינה ולכן ירידה זו היא בחי' עילוי מאוד שנמשך אור הכתר ולכן וילך למסעיו מנגב.

It follows that there is a light of the upper tip in Binah. Therefore this descent is a very great elevation, for the light of Keser is drawn down. And therefore, "And he went on his journeys from the Negev" —

So Binah, the hei, carries a light from the upper tip, Keser. That is why the descent from av ram to Avraham is really a great elevation: through it the light of Keser is drawn down. This is also hinted in Avram's journeys "from the Negev."

חסד. ועד בית אל.⁴⁰ מל'. מלמעלה למטה. ומלמטה למעלה. מלה הנראה⁴¹ כו⁴² עד לה' סתם:

Chesed — “and as far as Beis El” — Malchus: from above downward, and from below upward; from “to G-d who appeared,” etc., to “to G-d,” unqualified.

The stations of the journey are mapped onto the Sefiros: the Negev (south) is Chesed, Beis El is Malchus. The journey runs from above downward and from below upward, from the altar “to G-d who appeared” (a revealed level) to the altar simply “to G-d” (the higher, unqualified level).

SECTION 4 • ¶10-13

Torah and mitzvos in physical things

10 והנה להבין זה בעבודה⁴³ הנה אמרו נובלות חכמה של מעלה תורה^{44,45} שהתורה שהיא בדברים

גשמיים היא מבחי' חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעא כי

Now, to understand this in [terms of] divine service: [the Sages] said, “The fallen fruit of the wisdom above is Torah”; that is, the Torah, which is [clothed] in physical things, is from the level of “wise, but not with a knowable wisdom.” For

Now the Alter Rebbe applies this to a person's divine service. The Sages call the Torah the “fallen fruit” (nov-los) of supernal wisdom: what has dropped down from above. Yet the Torah, clothed in physical things, comes from the very highest level of wisdom, “wise, but not with a knowable wisdom.”

הנה חכמה עליונה אין לה השגה רק דוקא בהתלבשותה בדברים גשמיים שאזי בלקיחת האתרוג עד"מ מאחר שהחכמה מלובשת בו ה"ז כאלו אוחז בחכמה העליונה.⁴⁶

the supernal Chochmah cannot be grasped except specifically through its being clothed in physical things; so that in taking the esrog, for example, since the wisdom is clothed in it, it is as though one grasps the supernal Chochmah.

Supernal wisdom as it is cannot be grasped at all; only when it is clothed in physical things can we take hold of it. So when a person takes the esrog on Sukkos, since G-d's wisdom is clothed in it, it is as if he is holding the supernal wisdom itself.

11 והנה המשכת חכמה עליונה בדברים גשמיים הוא ע"י אור הכתר כי אורייתא מחכמה נפקת^{47,48} בבחי' גילוי

Now, the drawing down of the supernal Chochmah into physical things is through the light of Keser; for “the Torah comes forth from Chochmah” in a state of revelation,

How does supernal wisdom come down into physical things? Through the light of Keser, which is above wisdom. The Zohar's saying that the Torah “comes forth from Chochmah” describes only its revealed level.

אבל מקורה הוא למעלה שתרי"ג מצות דאורייתא וז' דרבנן הם תר"ך עמודי אור⁴⁹ והוא מארחין לבנונית דגלגלתא⁵⁰ בחי' כתר שהוא מלי' דא"ס ועי"ז נמשך למטה כ"כ.

but its source is higher: for the 613 mitzvos of the Torah and the seven of the Rabbis are the 620 pillars of light, and it [comes] from “the paths of the whiteness of the Skull (Gulgalta),” the level of Keser, which is the Malchus of the Infinite One (Ein Sof); and through this it is drawn so far down.

Its source is higher: the 613 Torah commandments and seven Rabbinic ones make 620, the numerical value of keter (Keser), and are called 620 “pillars of light.” They come from the “paths of whiteness” of the Gulgalta, the “skull” of Keser, which is the Malchus of the Infinite One; because they come from so high, they can reach so low.

12 ולכן גילוי חכמה עליונה המלובשת בפי' קדש^{51,52} עדי"מ הוא יותר מגילוי החכמה עצמה במקומה העליון לפי שנמשך ע"י הכתר שלמעלה מהחכמה.

Therefore the revelation of the supernal Chochmah that is clothed in the passage of “Kadesh,” for example, is greater than the revelation of Chochmah itself in its supernal place, because it is drawn [down] through Keser, which is above Chochmah.

“Kadesh” is one of the Torah passages written on the parchment of the tefillin. Because G-d's wisdom reaches that parchment through Keser, which is above wisdom, its revelation there is greater than the revelation of wisdom in its own lofty place.

ולכן נעשה יחוד עליון ע"י דברים גשמיים כמו ע"י צדקה נעשה יחוד עליון באצי' למעלה מג"ע תענוג הנשמות

Therefore a supernal unification is brought about through physical things; as through charity (tzedakah) a supernal unification is brought about in Atzilus — above Gan Eden, the delight of the souls,

That is why physical mitzvos can bring about a “supernal unification,” a joining of divine levels, high in Atzilus. Giving charity, for example, has an effect above Gan Eden, where souls enjoy the radiance of G-dliness.

שהוא בבריאה ומלי דאצילות נעשה עתיק דבריאה כו' שמצדק נעשה צדקה ד נעשה ה כמ"ש בזהר⁵³ עד לא קבילת דכר⁵⁴ כו'.

which is in Beriah — and Malchus of Atzilus becomes the Atik of Beriah, etc.; so that from tzedek comes tzedakah — the dalet becomes a hei — as is written in the Zohar, “As long as she has not received a male,” etc.

Gan Eden is in the World of Beriah, whose innermost source (its Atik) is the lowest level of Atzilus, Malchus. Through charity, Malchus is raised and completed: tzedek (צדק, justice), ending in dalet, becomes tzedakah (צדקה), gaining a hei. The Zohar says that before Malchus receives from the masculine, giving level, she is a poor dalet.

13 ולכן לא נאמר בתורה מעלת אברהם שהיה מאכיל אורחים כו' עד שבא לא"י⁵⁵ ולא בחו"ל הגם שכבר היה בן ע"ה כו'

Therefore the Torah does not state the virtue of Avraham, that he would feed guests, etc., until he came to the Land of Israel, and not outside the Land, even though he was already seventy-five years old, etc.

The Torah praises Avraham's hospitality only after he reached the Land of Israel, although he was already seventy-five when he arrived. This suggests that his kindness before that did not have the same effect.

אלא שמתחלה אף אם היה עושה לא היה ממשיך כלום⁵⁶ ולא היה נוגע ליחוד עליון עד שויאמר ה' אל אברם⁵⁷ במאמר זה ויאמר ה' מאציל עליון המשיך אל א"ב ר"ם⁵⁸ לך לך כו'

Rather, at first, even if he did [so], he did not draw down anything and did not touch the supernal unification, until “And G-d said to Avram” — with this utterance, “And G-d said,” the supernal Emanator drew down to av ram “Go forth,” etc.,

Before G-d's call, his good deeds did not draw G-dliness down or affect the supernal unification. Only with “And G-d said to Avram, Go forth” did the supernal Emanator draw the power of descent into av ram.

להיות ירידה והשתלשלות כו' ואזי נמשך להיות יחוד עליון תלוי במעשה התחתונים ועיקר גילוי היחוד הוא ע"י התורה.

for there to be descent and hishtalshelus, etc.; and then it was drawn down so that the supernal unification depends on the deeds of those below; and the main revelation of the unification is through the Torah.

From then on the unification above could depend on the deeds of people below. The main way this unification is revealed is the Torah.

אך האבות עשו הכנה לבחי' התורה כמ"ש ותורה שם בישראל⁵⁹ ע"י ישראל. כי ע"י אברהם נמשך קו ימין חסד כו'.

But the Patriarchs made a preparation for the level of the Torah, as it is written, "And He placed Torah in Israel" — through Israel. For through Avraham the right line, Chesed, was drawn down, etc.

The Patriarchs prepared the way for the Torah. The verse "He placed Torah in Israel" is read to mean that Torah was set in place through "Israel," the Patriarchs themselves; through Avraham, the "right line" of the Sefiros, Chesed, was drawn down.

וזהו ענין ס' בראשית שאין בו מצות התורה רק פ' אברהם ופ' יצחק כו' שהם קודם התורה והם הם שהמשיכו להיות בחי' התורה כו':⁶⁰

And this is the meaning of the book of Bereishis, in which there are no mitzvos of the Torah, only the portion of Avraham and the portion of Yitzchak, etc., which are before the Torah; and they are the ones who drew down [so] that there be the level of the Torah, etc.

This explains why the book of Bereishis has almost no commandments: it tells the stories of Avraham and Yitzchak, who lived before the Torah was given, but who drew down what made the Torah possible.

SECTION 5 • ¶14-19

Inner and outer fulfilment of the Torah

14 אך לפי"ז⁶¹ צריך להבין מדוע לא זכו ישראל לקבל התורה עד שהיו בגלות מצרים⁶² וימררו בחומר ובלבנים⁶³ הלא כבר זכו ע"י אבות.

But according to this, it must be understood why Israel did not merit to receive the Torah until they were in the exile of Egypt, "and they embittered [their lives] with mortar and with bricks"; had they not already merited [it] through the Patriarchs?

A question: if the Patriarchs had already prepared the Torah, why did Israel receive it only after the hard slavery of Egypt, with its "mortar and bricks"?

וגם איך היה יכול לעשות כל היחודים קודם שנימול כי המילה ניתנה לו אח"כ כשהיה בן צ"ט שנה.⁶⁴

And also, how could he perform all the unifications before he was circumcised, since circumcision was given to him afterward, when he was ninety-nine years old?

A second question: Avraham was circumcised only at ninety-nine. How could he bring about unifications above before that, if circumcision is what makes revelation possible?

רק דאיתא קיים אברהם כל התורה⁶⁵ כולה ואיך הניח תפילין אשר נזכר שם יציאת מצרים ואז עדיין לא היה כלל גלות מצרים. אך באמת יש פנימי וחיצוני והקיום שלו היה בפנימי.

But it is stated that Avraham fulfilled the entire Torah — and how did he put on tefillin, in which the Exodus from Egypt is mentioned, when there was as yet no exile of Egypt at all? But in truth there is an inner dimension and an outer dimension, and his fulfillment was in the inner dimension.

The Mishnah says Avraham kept the whole Torah, yet tefillin mention the Exodus, which had not yet happened. The answer: mitzvos have an inner and an outer dimension, and Avraham kept them in their inner, spiritual dimension.

15 ויאמר הוי"ה היינו התגלות והמשכת אא"ס כ"ע מלמעלה למטה בבחי' פנימי אבל שיוכל להתגלות גם בחיצונית שיהיה בדבר גשמי בקלף ממש גילוי אלקות כנ"ל.

"And Havayah said" means the revelation and drawing down of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), the supernal Keser, from above downward, in the inner dimension. But that it can be revealed also in the outer dimension — that in a physical thing, in actual parchment, there be a revelation of G-dliness, as explained above —

"And Havayah said" to Avram means G-d's infinite light, from Keser, was drawn down to him in the inner dimension. But for G-dliness to be revealed in the outer dimension, in physical objects such as the parchment of tefillin, something more is needed.

אין זה דרך השתלשלו' רק ע"י וימררו חייהם כו' בכל עבודה קשה⁶⁶ נעשה התגלות מבחי' למעלה מהשתלשלות

this is not by way of hishtalshelus; only through "And they embittered their lives," etc., "with all hard labor," does a revelation come about from the level that is above hishtalshelus,

That cannot happen through the ordinary step-by-step descent of the worlds. It came only through the bitter slavery of Egypt, which drew down a revelation from a level above the whole chain of worlds.

כי אז יוכל להתגלות גם למטה מהשתלשלות כי שם מעלה ומטה שוין גם חכמה לבחי' עשי' יחשב כולם בחכמה עשית.⁶⁷

for then it can be revealed also below hishtalshelus; for there, above and below are equal — even Chochmah is reckoned as the level of Asiyah: "You made them all with wisdom."

A level above the chain can be revealed even below it, because for it high and low are the same. The verse "You made them all with wisdom" hints that from that height Chochmah and Asiyah (action) are equal.

16 וזהו כי עגולי אריך מקיפי רגלי עשיי היינו שהמשכי והתגלות הוא מן מקיף עליון הכולל אבי"ע כו' ואז יכול להשתלשל רצונו ית' גם בדבר גשמי בקלף וכדומה.

And this is [the meaning of] “for the circles of Arich encompass the feet of Asiyah”: that is, the drawing down and revelation is from the supernal encompassing [light] that includes [the worlds of] Atzilus, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, etc.; and then His will, blessed be He, can descend by stages even into a physical thing, into parchment and the like.

A Kabbalistic saying: the “circles” (encompassing lights) of Arich Anpin surround even the “feet” of Asiyah, the lowest world. The revelation comes from an encompassing light that includes all four worlds equally, so G-d’s will can come down even into parchment and similar physical things.

אבל אברהם לא המשיך רק בבחי' פנימית⁶⁸ מלמעלה לכן לא הי' עדיין התגלות במעשי המצות בגשמיות ממש בבחי' חיצונית רק הקיום שלו כל התורה היה בבחי' פנימית.

But Avraham drew down only in the inner dimension, from above; therefore there was not yet a revelation in the actual physical performance of the mitzvos, in the outer dimension; rather, his fulfillment of the whole Torah was in the inner dimension.

Avraham drew G-dliness down only in the inner dimension. So in his time there was not yet a revelation through the actual physical performance of mitzvos; his keeping of the Torah was inward.

17 וכשהיה בן צ"ט⁶⁹ ניתנה לו במתני' מצות מילה במעשה ממש בכדי שיולד ממנו יצחק שיצא מאתו אח"כ יעקב תמים ובניו יקבלו התורה⁷⁰ בהתגלות חיצונית מצות מעשה ממש

And when he was ninety-nine, the mitzvah of circumcision in actual deed was given to him as a gift, in order that Yitzchak be born from him, from whom Yaakov the wholehearted would afterward come forth, and his sons would receive the Torah in outward revelation — mitzvos of actual deed.

At ninety-nine Avraham received circumcision as a physical mitzvah, a “gift” from above. Its purpose was that Yitzchak be born, and from him Yaakov, whose sons would receive the Torah as mitzvos done in physical deed.

לכן לא קבל אברהם התורה לפי שיצא ממנו ישמעאל וכי רק אחר שנימול ונולד יצחק אחר המילה אז יוכל להוליד יעקב תמים אשר קבלו בניו התור' במצוי' מעשה.

Therefore Avraham did not receive the Torah, because Yishmael came forth from him, etc. Only after he was circumcised and Yitzchak was born after the circumcision could he then father Yaakov the wholehearted, whose sons received the Torah in mitzvos of deed.

That is why Avraham himself did not receive the Torah: Yishmael was born to him before his circumcision. Only after the circumcision was Yitzchak born, leading to Yaakov, whose children received the Torah of practical mitzvos.

הארה מן העגולי' כו' אף בבחי' חיצונית כי לנגדו למעלה מן השתלשלות מעלה ומטה הכל חד כו'

A light from the circles, etc., even in the outer dimension; for before Him, above hishtalshelus, above and below are all one, etc.

Circumcision drew down a light from the encompassing “circles” even into the outer dimension, because before G-d, above the chain of worlds, above and below are one.

(ועמ"ש ע"פ משה ידבר^{71,72} שם נת' היטב ההפרש בין מה שקיים אברהם כל התורה כו' למ"ת עולה בקנה א' עם מ"ש כאן):⁷³

(And see what is written on [the verse] “Moshe would speak”: there the difference between Avraham’s fulfilling the whole Torah, etc., and the Giving of the Torah is well explained, and it accords with what is written here.)

A parenthetical cross-reference to another maamar in Torah Ohr (on “Moshe would speak”), which explains the difference between Avraham’s keeping of the Torah and the Giving of the Torah at Sinai.

18 וזהו הוא עשנו ולא אנחנו⁷⁴ ולו קרי בוי"ו וכתוב לא באל"ף וביאור הענין⁷⁵ כי איך יכול להיות שנהיי אנחנו עמו על ידי השתלשלות רק כי הוא עשנו ולא באל"ף זהו בחי' כתר

And this is [the meaning of] “He made us, and not we [ourselves]”: the word lo is read with a vav and written with an alef. And the explanation of the matter: for how can it be that we would be “His people” by way of hishtalshelus? Only because “He made us,” and lo with an alef — this is the level of Keser,

The verse “He made us, and we are His” has a word, lo, that is read with a vav (לו, “His”) but written with an alef (לא, “not”). How could created beings become “His people” through the ordinary chain of worlds? Only through the alef, which stands for Keser.

כי א' רישא דאתון כתר ועי' יכול להיות ולו בוי' אנחנו עמו כי מאחר שזהו למעלה מן השתלשלות הארתו יכול להיות גם למטה מן השתלשלות.

for alef is the head of the letters — Keser; and through this there can be “and we are His” (lo, with a vav), “His people”; for since this is above hishtalshelus, its light can be also below hishtalshelus.

Alef, the first letter, is the “head of the letters,” Keser. Because Keser is above the chain of worlds, its light can reach below it too, and so we can truly be “His.”

19 ולכן כשנתנה התורה ונצטוו מצות במעשה ממש מצוה הראשונה היא מתחלת באל"ף אנכי⁷⁶ כו'. כי

שיקויים המצות במעשה ויעשה יחודים

Therefore, when the Torah was given and they were commanded mitzvos in actual deed, the first commandment begins with an alef: “I (Anochi),” etc. For that the mitzvos be fulfilled in deed, and that one bring about unifications

So when the Torah was given as commandments to be done physically, the very first commandment began with alef: “Anochi” (“I am”). Carrying out the mitzvos in physical deed and bringing about unifications through them...

ע"י קיום מצות במעשה אי אפשר רק שיתגלה הארה מבחי' כתר כו' לכן מצוה ראשונה מתחלת באל"ף בחי' כתר הארה מלבנונית הכתר כו'.

through fulfilling mitzvos in deed, is impossible unless a light from the level of Keser is revealed, etc.; therefore the first commandment begins with alef — the level of Keser — a light from the whiteness of Keser, etc.

...is possible only if a light from Keser is revealed. Hence the first commandment opens with alef, which stands for Keser, the light of the “whiteness” of Keser.

SECTION 6 • ¶20-22

Avram's journeys, Lot, and the names

20 וזהו ואברם בן ע"ה שנה בצאתו מחרן⁷⁷ היינו כי ממוחין למדות צריך לילך דרך הגרון ואחר שירד

ממדרגת מוחין ועדיין לא נעשו מדות קודם שיבאו להלב נק' אז חרן וכשהיה אברם בן ע"ה

And this is [the meaning of] “And Avram was seventy-five years old when he left Charan”: that is, from the intellect (mochin) to the emotive attributes (middos) one must pass by way of the throat; and after it has descended from the level of the mochin but has not yet become middos, before they reach the heart, it is then called Charan. And when Avram was seventy-five —

Avram's leaving Charan at seventy-five is read inwardly. Between the mind (mochin) and the emotions (middos) there is a passage, the “throat”: the stage after thought has left the mind but before it has become feeling in the heart. This in-between stage is called Charan.

היינו ז"פ עשר⁷⁸ בחי' חיצוני' וה' חסדי' בחינת פנימי' יצא מחרן שבא הארה והתגלות מחכמה למדות.

that is, seven times ten, the outer level, and five chasadim, the inner level — he left Charan; for a light and revelation came from Chochmah to the middos.

Seventy-five is seven times ten (the seven middos in their outer aspect) plus five, the five chasadim (kindnesses) in their inner aspect. Leaving Charan at that age means that light from Chochmah finally came through into the middos.

21 והנה כמו שאיתא רישא דעשו בעטפוי דיצחק^{79,80} כמו"כ קודם הבירור הי' לוט כלול באברהם בקדושה

Now, just as it is stated that “the head of Esav [rested] in the bosom of Yitzchak,” so too before the refinement, Lot was included within Avraham in holiness,

The Targum says Esav's head was buried in Yitzchak's lap: something of Esav was rooted in holiness. So too Lot, before he was sifted out, was contained within Avraham in holiness.

כמו סיגים אשר קודם הצירוף ובירור מעורבים הם עם זהב.⁸¹ ולו"ט בגי' מ"ה⁸² אחורי' דשם מ"ה.

like dross that, before the smelting and refining, is mixed with gold. And Lot is numerically [equal to] Mah — the back of the Name Mah.

He was like dross mixed with gold before refining. Lot (לוט) has the numerical value 45, the same as Mah, the Name of rectification; he is its “back,” its outermost aspect.

אך הוא מקור חו"ב דקליפה לכן נק' לוט לשון קללה ולכן הלך לוט את אברהם קודם הבירור

But he is the source of the Chochmah and Binah of kelipah; therefore he is called Lot, a term of curse; and therefore Lot went with Avraham before the refinement.

Lot is also the root of the Chochmah and Binah of kelipah, the intellect of the side opposed to holiness; his name recalls a curse. That is why he went along with Avraham before the refining took place.

ולכן יצא מלוט עמון ומואב אשר יצאה מהם רות המואביה⁸³ ונעמה העמוניי⁸⁴ כי מואב חכ' דקליפה⁸⁵
ונעמה הוא לשון נועם⁸⁶ בינה התגלות עתיק בבינה

And therefore from Lot came Amon and Moav, from whom came Rus the Moabite and Naamah the Ammonite; for Moav is the Chochmah of kelipah, and Naamah is a term of pleasantness (noam) — Binah, the revelation of Atik in Binah.

From Lot came Amon and Moav, and from them Rus (Ruth) the Moabite and Naamah the Ammonite, both ancestresses of the house of David. Moav is the Chochmah of kelipah, and Naamah, from noam (pleasantness), corresponds to Binah, where Atik is revealed.

וע"י בירור יצאה רות המואביה ונעמה העמוניי מן חו"ב דקליפה ואחר הבירור נפרדו סיג' לוט מאברהם:⁸⁷

And through refinement, Rus the Moabite and Naamah the Ammonite came forth from the Chochmah and Binah of kelipah; and after the refinement, the dross of Lot separated from Avraham.

Through refinement, Rus and Naamah, holy souls, were drawn out from that intellect of kelipah. Once the good had been sifted out, the dross of Lot separated from Avraham.

22 ויאהל אברם עד מקום שכם⁸⁸ כתפין חו"ג דנוק' ואלון מורה ת"ת דנוק' כי כל המשכות והתגלות היי אברהם ממשיך להמלכות מן שכל הנעלם לכן אמר לו ישמעאל יחיה לפניך⁸⁹

“And Avram pitched his tent as far as the place of Shechem” — [Shechem meaning] shoulders: the Chesed and Gevurah of Nukva; “and Elon Moreh” — the Tiferes of Nukva. For all the drawings-down and revelation, Avraham would draw down to Malchus from the hidden intellect. Therefore he said to Him, “May Yishmael live before You!”

Avram's route through the land is mapped onto the Sefiros of Nukva (Malchus as a full configuration): Shechem, which also means “shoulder,” is her Chesed and Gevurah, the two arms; Elon Moreh is her Tiferes. Everything Avraham drew down from the hidden intellect reached Malchus, and this is why he could plead for Yishmael, hoping to elevate him too.

כי אחרי שנקרא אברהם בה"א⁹⁰ שע"י המשיך התגלות בבחי' מל' ונתנה לו המילה הי' יכול להעלות נצוצות כנר בפני אבוקה שיהיו נכללי' בבחי' מל' כו' וכמ"ש ואת הנפש אשר עשו⁹¹ וכו'.

For after he was called Avraham, with a hei, through which he drew down revelation into the level of Malchus, and circumcision was given to him, he was able to elevate sparks, like a candle before a torch, so that they be absorbed into the level of Malchus, etc.; as it is written, "and the souls that they had made," etc.

Once Avram became Avraham, with the added hei, and received circumcision, he could draw revelation into Malchus and raise the sparks of holiness around him, absorbing them like a candle into a torch. The verse about "the souls they had made" in Charan, the people Avraham and Sarah brought close to G-d, is read in this light.

גם שרי היתה נקראת מקודם ביו"ד מורה על צמצום ואח"כ כשהיתה צריכה להוליד את יצחק היתה נק' בה"א בהרחבה להורות על המשכה והתגלות.⁹²

Also Sarai was at first called [by a name ending] with a yud, indicating tzimtzum; and afterward, when she was to give birth to Yitzchak, she was called with a hei, expansively, to indicate drawing down and revelation.

Sarai's name likewise changed: its yud, a small point, signified contraction; when she was to bear Yitzchak she became Sarah with a hei, a broad letter, signifying expansion and revelation.

וזהו ויקרא שם אברם בשם⁹³ ה'. ויקרא היינו המשכה מא"ב ר"ם שכל הנעלם המשכ' מיסוד אבא לע"ס דנוק' הנק' שם ה' כו':

And this is [the meaning of] "And Avram called there in the Name of G-d." "And he called" means drawing down from av ram, the hidden intellect: a drawing down from Yesod of Abba to the ten Sefiros of Nukva, which are called "the Name of G-d," etc.

"Avram called there in the Name of G-d" is read as drawing down: from av ram, the hidden intellect (Yesod of Abba), to the ten Sefiros of Nukva, which are called "the Name of G-d." This is the maamar's theme in brief: the hidden made revealed, all the way down to Malchus.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Supernal wisdom cannot be grasped in itself, but only as it is clothed in physical mitzvos: taking the esrog, putting on tefillin, giving charity. So a person should see the physical mitzvah not as a lowering of the spiritual but as the place where G-d's highest wisdom is actually held, and through which unifications above are brought about.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the maamar insist that becoming "Avraham" is not a descent from "Avram" but an elevation?
2. How does the parable of Shlomo's three thousand parables show that expansion depends on a higher source?
3. Why is G-dliness in the parchment of tefillin said to be greater than wisdom in its own supernal place?
4. What is the difference between Avraham's keeping of the Torah and Israel's keeping of it after Sinai?
5. What role do concealment and hardship (Yitzchak's darkness, the labor of Egypt) play in making revelation possible?

FOR CHILDREN • AGES 9-13

For the children at the table

Going down to bring G-d's wisdom into deeds

THE BIG IDEA

G-d's highest wisdom is held in the simple, physical mitzvos we do, so bringing it down into deeds is really going up.

The name Avram can be read as av ram, "exalted father": a wisdom so high that it is hidden from every thought. G-d told Avram, "Go forth," and his journey was to bring that hidden wisdom down, step by step, until it shines even in our world. Avraham's quality is Chesed, kindness, which gives and connects. When Avram became Avraham, the letter hei was added to his name. That might look like going down, from high wisdom to explaining it in detail. The maamar shows the opposite: to explain an idea in many simple ways, a person needs a power even higher than the idea itself. The same is true of the Torah. Its wisdom can reach into physical mitzvos, like taking an esrog, putting on tefillin and giving tzedakah, because it comes from Keser, G-d's will, which is above wisdom. So a physical mitzvah holds more of G-d than wisdom on its own. Avraham kept the Torah in a spiritual way. The power to bring it into physical deeds came later, at Mount Sinai, where the Ten Commandments begin with Anochi, "I," whose first letter, alef, stands for Keser.

THE MASHAL

A wise man may understand an idea well, yet to explain it to others he must think hard and find a parable, showing the same idea in simpler things. That takes even greater wisdom. King Shlomo was so wise that he could explain one idea in three thousand parables.

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

1. What does the name Avram, av ram, tell us about him?
2. Why does explaining an idea with a parable need more wisdom than just knowing it?
3. Which physical mitzvah will you do this week, and how can you remember that G-d's highest wisdom is inside it?

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SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

- 1 **ענין לך לך**
An early transcript of this same maamar, recorded by a disciple of the Alter Rebbe; it opens with the verse of Avram's journeys rather than with "Go forth."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסי הנחות הר"פ ע"ה בהתחלה: וילך למסעיו ממעלה למטה כו' עם איזה הגהות מהצ"צ. הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי באוה"ת כרך ו' תרעב, א (הנדפס מלקו"ת לג"פ פב, א) עם הגהות מהצ"צ. גוכתי"ק כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי בכוך 1025 קכו, ב. והוא משנת תקס"ו. ראה לעיל ציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע. עוד הגהות וקיצורים באוה"ת בכרך ד' תרפ"ה, א. תרפ"ה, ב.

- 2 Avram's return journey "from the Negev as far as Beis El"; the maamar reads the stations of this journey as levels of the Sefiros.

בראשית י"ג:3

וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמַסְעָיו מִנֶּגֶב וְעַד־בֵּית־אֵל עַד־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה שָׁם אֶהְלֶה בְּתַחֲלָה בֵּין בֵּית־אֵל וּבֵין הָעֵי:

And he went on his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Ai;

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- 3 **ממטה למעלה**
The Kehot note directs the reader to this Zohar passage on Lech Lecha for the idea of Avram's journey as an ascent from below upward.

זח"א ע"ה, Zohar I, 78a

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"א ע"ה, א. ראה ד"ה לך לך תשמ"ו.

- 4 **מלמעלה למטה**
The Kehot note points to this passage (in the Sisrei Torah section) for the complementary movement from above downward.

ספר הזוהר, אחרי מות נ"ו:שנ"ד-59:362-57:354, Zohar, Achrei Mot
נ"ט:שס"ב

- 5 **לה הנראה**
Avram builds an altar "to G-d who had appeared to him": G-dliness at the level where it is revealed.

בראשית י"ב:7

וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ זֹאת וְיָכֵן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו:

And the L-RD appeared unto Abram, and said: 'Unto thy seed will I give this land'; and he builded there an altar unto the L-RD, who appeared unto him.

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- 6 **בכמה מקומות מציינים לד"ה זה**

the page is on Sefaria, but its text shares nothing with the note (unconfirmed)

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה הנה אברם — לקו"ת שלח מה, ד. ואתחנן י, ג. ובכמה מקומות מציינים: בד"ה לך לך. בלקו"ת אמור לט, א מציין לכאן. לכללות מאמר זה ראה מאמרי אדה"ז פרשיות כרך א ע"פ. ד"ה לך לך תשל"ח (נדפס בלקו"ת ש"כ ע' 295).

- 7 **וממעלה למטה**

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"ג (בסתרי תורה) ע"ה, א.

PARAGRAPH 2

- 8 **שכל הנעלם מכל רעיון**

A later discourse on the "intellect hidden from all thought."

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה סה"מ תרנ"ז ע' קסד. ד"ה לך לך תרצ"ד, שכל העמוק ביותר שמוסתר ונעלם לגמרי נקי שכל הנעלם מכל רעיון להיות שגם אפס קצהו אינו מושג כלל. שהוא למעלה גם מבחי" חכמה, כי חכמה (עם היותה ראשית כל הכחות פנימיים) היא בחי" גילוי, משא"כ אברם הוא שכל הנעלם מכל רעיון — ד"ה לך לך תשל"ח. וראה מאמרי אדה"א במדבר כרך א ע' שי (במילואים למ"מ). ובד"ה ואברהם זקן תשל"ד (מהנחה בלתי מוגה) מבאר דענין שכל הנעלם מכל רעיון יש בו ב' נקודות מצד אחד הרי יש בו ההגדרה דשכל, אבל לאידך הרי הוא שכל באופן כזה שהוא נעלם מכל רעיון, ע"ש שמביא רא"י מסה"מ תרס"ו ע' פ. באוה"ת תולדות כרך ד' תרפ"ה, א מביא זה בשם: ברע"מ. וראה באמרי בינה ח"ג פרק קמא: ובלשון הגאונים.

- 9 **א"ב ר"ם**

The Zohar reads the name Avram as av ram, the "exalted father," a supernal level; the Alter Rebbe identifies it with the hidden intellect.

זח"א ע"ה, Zohar I, 79b

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"א ע"ה, ב. וראה גם תו"ח כאן פ, א. בהנחת הר"פ נוסף: חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעה.

- 10 **להיות גילוי בכי"ע . . פתח האהל**

The note quotes a gloss saying that this revelation in the lower worlds "was new with Avraham," and sends the reader to that discourse on the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

KEHOT'S NOTE

כמ"ש בלקו"ת בדרוש עשי"ת ד"ה להבין פי' יג"מ מי כמוך כו' נושא עון ע"ש פ"ב . . זה נתחדש לאברהם ועי' בלקו"ת להאריז"ל פי' לך לך הנהגה מזיו השכינה והוה גילוי החסדים, לזה נאמר והוא יושב פתח האוהל — מאמרי אדמו"ר הזקן הנחות הר"פ ע' ה'.

PARAGRAPH 3

11 חסד אתגלי בפומא דאמה

The Zohar (Idra Rabba) teaches that Chesed is revealed at the “mouth of the amah”; the Alter Rebbe reads it as the revelation of divine influence through connection.

Zohar III, 142a קמב, זח"ג

Zohar II, 36a לז, זח"ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ג קמב, א. וראה גם זח"ב לו, א. ובאוה"ת לך לך כרך ד תרפה, ב: "ומ"ש כאן [בתו"א] דפ"י חסד אתגלי בפומא דאמה היינו להיות גילוי ההשפעה בבחי' התקשרות" ע"ש שמציין לאגה"ק סד"ה להבין משל ומליצה. וראה באוה"ת שם תרפד, ב. ענין זה לא נזכר בהנחת הר"פ. ושם יש הגה"ה מהצ"צ: "ואבל המשכת יחוד העליון זהו שיהי' הגילוי למטה כמו למעלה כמ"ש בלקו"ת בדרוש עשי"ת ד"ה להבין פ"י יג"מ מי כמוך כו' נושא עון ע"ש פ"ב פ"י לשיקבה"ו זה נתחדש לאברהם. ועי' בלקו"ת מהאריז"ל פ' לך לך נהנה מזיו השכינה זהו גילוי החסדים": לזה נאמר והוא יושב . . . וראה בתו"ח כאן פ, ב בענין גם שקודם שבא אברהם לעולם נמשך סדר ההשתלשלות דאב"י ע.

12 והוא יושב פתח האוהל

Avraham sits at the entrance of his tent; here the “entrance” is the point where hidden kindness opens outward.

Genesis 18:1 א"ה: ראשית

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה' בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרָא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל כַּחַם הַיּוֹם:

And the L-RD appeared unto him by the terebinths of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יח, א.

13 ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום א'

The first day of creation: evening, darkness, precedes morning, showing that concealment comes before revelation.

Genesis 1:5 א"ה: ראשית

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹקִים לְאֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד:

And G-d called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית א, ה. בלקו"ת שלח מה, ד מציין לכאן.

14 כי אב המון גוים

The words here quote Genesis 17:5; the passage is shown below.

Genesis 17:5 א"ה: ראשית

וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָהָם כִּי אֲבִי־הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם:

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יז, ה.

PARAGRAPH 4

15 למא צדיקים דומים

The Talmud compares the righteous before the Shechinah to a candle before a torch; the Alter Rebbe uses it for being absorbed in self-nullification into a greater light.

Pesachim 8a:4 ד"ה: פסחים

וְאֲבֻקָּה לֹא? וְהָאֵמֶר רָבָא, מַאי דְּכָתִיב: "וְנִגְנָה כְּאוֹר תְּהִיָּה קֶרֶן מִיָּדוֹ לֹא וְשֵׁם חֲבִיּוֹן עֲזוּי, לְמָה צְדִיקִים דּוֹמִין בְּפָנֵי שְׂכִינָה — כְּנֶר בְּפָנֵי הָאֲבֻקָּה. וְאֵמֶר רָבָא: אֲבֻקָּה לְהַבְדִּילָהּ מִצִּנּוֹת מִן הַמּוֹבָחָר!

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KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים ח, א.

16 שנכללים בבחי' בטול באבוקה

The discourse there, beginning near the cited column, discusses the standing of souls relative to angels; the note cites it for the idea of being absorbed in self-nullification like a candle in a torch.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת ברכה צח, ב. בהנחת הר"פ נוסף: כשמקרבין נר לאבוקה בסמוך לה נסתלק השמן הנר ונכלל באבוקה, ככה ע"י מעשה הצדיקים נבררים הנציצות מבי"ע ונכללים במלי' דא"ס". ובהנחת כ"ק אדה"א הנדפס באוה"ת תתערב, ב (מלקו"ת לג"פ) בארוכה יותר.

17 G-d changes Avram's name to Avraham, "for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations"; the verse comes in the chapter of circumcision.

Genesis 17:5 א"ה: ראשית

וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָהָם כִּי אֲבִי־הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם:

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee.

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PARAGRAPH 5

18 גלו לאדום

The source of the saying "They were exiled to Edom" is noted at the earlier maamar in Torah Ohr, 5a.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לעיל לדרך ה, א.

19 לא גלו אלא כדי שיתוסף עליהם גרים

The Talmud says G-d exiled Israel among the nations only so that converts would be added to them; the Alter Rebbe

applies it to the sparks elevated from kelipas nogah.

Pesachim 87b:14"ד:ב: פסחים

ואמר רבי אלעזר: לא הגלה הקדוש ברוך הוא את ישראל לבין האומות
אלא כדי שיתוספו עליהם גרים, שנאמר: "וירעתיה לי בארץ". כלום
אדם זורע סאה אלא להכניס כמה כורין.

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Zohar I, 244a, זח"א רמד,

KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים פז, ב. זח"א רמד, א. בגוכת"ק הג"ל: "שיתוספו", ותי עליהם
ליתא.

20

והן הניצוצות

A later passage in Torah Ohr that returns to the sparks
within the husks.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן קיו, ב. נתבאר בארוכה בביאור"ז לאדה"א קלו, א.

21

ונכללים כנר בפני אבוקה

Rabbi Pinchas's transcript reads: when he was called
Avraham with the hei, a revelation of light in Malchus,
"the entrance of the tent," he became "father of a multi-
tude of nations," for the multitude of nations become con-
verts and are absorbed into Malchus: the light swallowed
in Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah from the shattering of the
vessels.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בהנחת הר"פ: "נמצא כשנקרא אברהם בה' התגלות אור בבחי' מלי פתח
האוהל אז נעשה אב המון גוים כי המון גוים נעשה גרים ונכללים בבחי' מלי
אור הגוים הנכללים בבחי' משבירת הכלים". וכן בהנחת אדה"א מדגיש
ענין "פתח האהל".

PARAGRAPH 6

22

ויאמר ה' אל אברם

G-d's call to Avram, "Go forth from your land ... to the land
that I will show you," read here as the descent of the hid-
den intellect.

Genesis 12:1א:ב: בראשית

ויאמר ה' אל-אברם לה-לה מארצה וממולדתה ומבית אביה אל-הארץ
אשר אראך:

Now the L-RD said unto Abram: 'Get thee out of thy country,
and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the
land that I will show thee.

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23

The renaming of Avram as Avraham, which the maamar
links to the revelation through circumcision.

Genesis 17:5ה:ו: בראשית

ולא יקרא עוד את-שםך אברם והיה שםך אברהם כי אבי-המון גוים
נתתיך:

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy
name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of na-
tions have I made thee.

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PARAGRAPH 7

24

מה שנתוסף לו ה'

The Tzemach Tzedek refers back to this passage on the hei
added to Avraham's name.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת ויחי שפ, א מציין לכאן.

25

ה' עילאה

A further treatment of the "upper hei."

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע' באוה"ת פ' נצבים ע' אקד.

26

ובוזהר אי

The passage in Terumah explains that the main revelation
of delight from intellect is in Binah, when a thing is under-
stood thoroughly, citing this Zohar on "and the Levite
shall serve, he: this is Atika," and refers back to the hei of
Avraham in Lech Lecha.

Zohar III, 178a, זח"ג קעח,

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ג קעח, א. ראה לקמן פ, ב שמציין לכאן.

27

"And the Levite, he shall perform the service"; the Zohar
reads the extra word "he" as a hint to Atika.

Numbers 18:23ג:ח: במדבר

ועבד הלוי הוא את-עבדת אהל מועד והם ישאו עונם חקת עולם
לדורתיכם וכתוך בני ישראל לא ינחלו נחלה:

But the Levites alone shall do the service of the tent of meet-
ing, and they shall bear their iniquity; it shall be a statute for
ever throughout your generations, and among the children
of Israel they shall have no inheritance.

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28

ובוזהר אי גבי ועבד הלוי הוא. הוא דא עתיקא

The Zohar's reading of "he" as Atika, the source for the
revelation of Atik in Binah.

Zohar, Korach 8:37-41א"מ:ל"ז-קרח ח:ל"ז-מ"א

At the moment when the day was about to be sanctified the
spirits of the demons issued forth, but the day was sanctified
before their bodies were created, and so the world was left
deficient. When Israel were sanctified and all their grades
completed with the Levites on the left side, then this defi-
ciency of the world on the left side was made good, and all
was then subordinated to the right and the world was freed
from defect. Hence it says "the Levite shall do", i.e. "make"
or "complete". ...

The Zohar; London, Soncino Press, 1933 (Public Domain)

29

שהתגלות עתיק הוא בבינה

The passage in Tzav notes that Binah is sometimes called
Atika in the Zohar and that the revelation of Atik is in
Binah, referring to Lech Lecha.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת צו יא, א. במדבר יב, רע"ג. פ' עקב טו, ג. ר"ה נו, א מציין לכאן. ע'
באוה"ת פ' חיי שרה קיט, ב. ובפ' ראה בתחלתו. ובדרושים ליוהכ"פ ע'

אִתְקַצַּג "כִּי הִתְעַנּוּג אִינוּ אֵלָא כְּשִׁמוּשֵׁג הַדְּבָר" וְעִ"ש בְּעֻמּוֹד אִתְקַצַּד. וְרָאָה בְּבִיאורֵי הַזֶּהָר לְהַצִּי"צ פִּי אַחֲרֵי עֻמּוֹד שֶׁסָּד שְׁלִפְעָמִים אִיתָא לְהִפְךָ דְּפִנְיָמִי אַבָּא הוּא פְּנִימִי עֵתִיק עִ"ש. רָאָה ד"ה זֶה הַיּוֹם תֵּרִיס עִי כִב. בְּגוֹכְתִּי"ק לִיתָא תִּי "דָּא" וְתִי "עֵתִיק". בְּאוֹהֶ"ת כֵּאֵן תִּתְרַעֲזוּ, אִי שֶׁ הִגְהִי"ה שְׁמִצִּי"ן לְהַנְחִית הַר"פ.

30 **חכמה נקי עדן**
A talk of the Rebbe Rashab cited for Chochmah being called "Eden."

תקו"ז תיקון נד 87b:75 · Tikkunei Zohar

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים, אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם עִי הַחַיִּים, וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ כֹּל עִי נִחְמַד לְמִרְאָה, וְהָאָרֶץ הִיָּתָה תְּהוֹ וְנָהוּ דָּא עִי הַדְּעַת טוֹב וְרָע, וְדָא רְזָא תְּהוֹ עֵמֶק רָע, בְּהוֹ עֵמֶק טוֹב, וְדָא עִי הַדְּעַת טוֹב וְרָע, כִּי שֵׁם כָּלִל יְהוּ"ה שְׁפֵת כֹּל הָאָרֶץ (שֵׁם יָא ט), וּמִהָּכָא נִפְקַ כֹּל עֲרֻבּוּקָא דְטוֹב וְרָע, דְּאִיְהוּ רְזָא וְדְצִדִּיק וְרָע לֹא רָשָׁע וְטוֹב לֹא.

Tikkunei Zohar - Vocalized (Public Domain)

KEHOT'S NOTE

רָאָה תִּי"ז נִד. תִּי"ז בְּשַׁעֲה"כ בְּעִרְכּוֹ וּמֵאוּיָא בְּעִרְכּוֹ, וְרָאָה בְּתוֹרַת שְׁלוֹם עִי 159.

31 **והתענוג הוא למעלה מן החכמה**
The Tzemach Tzedek refers from this idea to the Maggid's Or Torah at the beginning of Lech Lecha, likening it to "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom."

KEHOT'S NOTE

רָאָה בְּסִפְרֵי יְצִירָה פ"ב מ"ד "אִין טוֹבָה לְמַעְלָה מִנִּיגָנ". וּבְאוֹהֶ"ת בְּרֵאשִׁית כֹּרֶךְ ג' תִּקְנָה, ב' מִצִּי"ן עִי"ז לְעִי"ן בְּאוֹי"ת מִהִמְגִּיד ר"פ לֹא לֹךְ שׁוֹה עִי"ד אֵל יִתְהַלֵּל הַחֶכֶם כִּי עִי"ש.

32 **בינה נקודה בהיכלא**
Binah as "a point in a palace": the point of Chochmah spread out and housed in Binah.

Zohar I, 6a, ו' זח"א

תקו"ז תיקון ה' 19a:11-14 · Tikkunei Zohar

בְּרֵאשִׁית בִּי רֵאשִׁית. נְקוּדָה בְּהִיכְלִיָּה. וְהָאִי נְקוּדָה אִיְהִי מַחְשְׁבָה סְתִימָא. אֲדַחֲכִי אֵא אֵלִיָּהוּ אֲזוּמָן לְגַבִּיָּה. אֵ"ל. רַבִּי רַבִּי וְהָאִי בִי פְתִיחָא אִיְהִי. אִם כֵּן בְּמֵאִי אִיְהִי מַחְשְׁבָה סְתִימָא בְּה. אֵלָא בְּרִישׁ *הוֹרֻמוֹנָתָא דְמַלְכָא בּוֹצִינָא דְקִרְדִּינּוֹת' כִּד מִדִּי מִשְׁחָא. הָאִי נְקוּדָה נִפִּיק מִינָה קוֹ דְּסִתִּים נִיצוּצָא הֵיאָה מַחְשְׁבָה כְּגוּוֹנָא דָּא הָא.

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א ו', א. תִּי"ז תִּי"ה. רָאָה אֲגַהֲ"ק סִי"ה (קו, א).

33 **נקבה תסובב גבר**
"A female shall encompass a male," read in Kabbalah as the receiving level encompassing and drawing on a higher light; here Binah receiving the light of Atik.

Jeremiah 31:22: לִיָּא: כִּי־בִינָה

עֲדִמְתִּי תִתְחַמְקִין הַבֵּת הַשּׁוֹכֵנָה כִּי־בָרָא ה' תְּדַשָּׁה בְּאָרֶץ נְקֵבָה תְּסוּבֵב גְּבֵר:

How long wilt thou turn away coyly, O thou backsliding daughter? For the L-RD hath created a new thing in the earth: A woman shall court a man.

...ענין לך לך וילך למסעיו ממטה למעלה מלמעלה)

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמ' לא, כב.

34 **והענין כנודע שלהיות התפשטות וירידת המדריגו**
The following section of this maamar is brought there with changes and additions.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בְּהַבָּא לְקַמֵּן רָאָה בְּהַמְשָׁךְ מִצָּה ז' תִּרְ"מ עִי קֶסֶה בְּשִׁינּוּיִים וְהוֹפּוֹת. וְרָאָה תוֹרִיָּה לֹךְ לֹךְ פֶּא, ב' וְאִילָךְ. אוֹהֶ"ת לֹךְ לֹךְ (כֹּרֶךְ ד' ע' תִּרְצ, ב' וְאִילָךְ. כֹּרֶךְ ו' ע' תִּתְרַעֲג, א' וְאִילָךְ). וְרָאָה הַמְשָׁךְ תִּרְס"ו עִי עַח וְאִילָךְ. ד"ה מְעִין גָּנִים תִּרְצ"א (סִה"מ קוֹנְטֵרְסִים ח"א ע' 404 וְאִילָךְ) וּבְכ"מ. לְקוּ"ש ח"א ע' 42 הַעֲרָה 32.

PARAGRAPH 8

35 **ולבין זה היטב**
From here to the end of the maamar the text comes from Rabbi Pinchas's transcript, with additions by the Tzemach Tzedek.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מִכָּאֵן עַד סִיּוֹם הַמַּאמֵר הוּא מִהֶנַּחַת הַר"פ ע' ו'. בְּכּוּךְ 1135 לֵה, ב' בְּגוֹכְתִּי"ק כְּתַב הַצִּי"צ אַחֲרֵי הַמַּאמֵר שֶׁמִּכָּאֵן הוּא הֶנַּחַת הַר"פ וְהוּא בִּיאֹר. וְגַם בְּקֻטֶּעַ זֶה יֵשׁ הוֹסְפוֹת מִהַצִּי"צ.

36 **וידבר שלשת אלפים משל**
King Shlomo "spoke three thousand parables"; the Alter Rebbe reads them as three thousand levels into which he could bring down one idea.

I Kings 5:12: מַלְכִּים א' ה': י"ב

וַיְדַבֵּר שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים מִשְׁלֵי וַיְהִי שִׁירוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה וְאַלְף:

And he spoke three thousand parables; and his songs were a thousand and five.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מַלְכִּים-א' ה', יב. רָאָה ד"ה עַל חוֹמוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְלִי"ח עִי רִמָּח.

37 **שהחכם אף שיודע דבר חכמה בעצמו**
A lengthy treatment of the parable of the sage who knows an idea but must work to explain it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

רָאָה בְּאֵרוּכָה בְּאוֹהֶ"ת מִסְעִי עִי אִתְּלָא.

PARAGRAPH 9

38 **הוא עיי גילוי בחיי עליונה**
Passages in Likkutei Torah that refer back to this idea that expansion comes through revelation of a higher level.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בְּלִקוּתֵי הוֹסְפוֹת לְוִיקְרָא נִד, ג'. בְּלֻק עָה, ב' מִצִּי"ן לְכָאן.

39 **וכמבואר בפדרס**
Rabbi Pinchas's transcript reads here instead: the yud is Chochmah, but Binah is revealed through the light of the upper tip, the light of Keser; through Keser Avraham be-

comes the upper hei, Binah, and from it the chasadim descend to the lower hei, Malchus.

KEHOT'S NOTE

שער האותיות ס"פ יג. מכאן עד סיום הקטע — הגהת כ"ק הצ"צ. בהנחת הר"פ כאן מתיי ואף כאן, עד התחלת הקטע "והנה להבין" "וזהו ענין קוצו של יי העליון היינו יי חכמה אך שיתגלה בחי' בינה הוא ע"י הארת קוץ העליון על היו"ד הארת הכתר נתגלה קוץ התחתון באות ה' עילאה היינו בינה וזהו ויאמר ה' אל אברם ע"י בחי' כתר נעשה אברהם ה' עילאה בינה ומוזה נשתלשל ונגלה החסדים עד ה' תתאה בחי' מלי ואז וילך למסעיו ממעלה למטה וממטה למעלה הנ"ל: והנה אמרו נובלות חכמה. מכאן עד סיום הקטע שונה מהנחת הר"פ ע"ש ע' ו. בלקו"ת מטות פו, ב מציין לכאן. ושם מביא דעת הרח"ו: שקוץ התחתון הוא הדעת והיינו שהדעת מחבר חו"ב. ע"ש. וראה לקו"ת שלח מו, ב.

40 וילך למסעיו מנגב. חסד. ועד בית אל

"He went on his journeys from the Negev as far as Beis El"; the south (Negev) is Chesed and Beis El is Malchus.

בראשית י"ג:3

וילך למסעיו מנגב ועד בית אל עד המקום אשר היה שם אֶהֱלֶה בְּתַחֲלֵה בֵּין בֵּית־אֵל וּבֵין הָעֵצִי:

And he went on his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Ai;

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41 מלה הנראה

The altar "to G-d who had appeared to him," the revealed level.

בראשית י"ב:7

וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזֶרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וַיְכֵן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' הִנְרָאָה אֵלָיו:

And the L-RD appeared unto Abram, and said: 'Unto thy seed will I give this land'; and he builded there an altar unto the L-RD, who appeared unto him.

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42 מלה הנראה כו'

An explanation of the movement from "to G-d who appeared" to "to G-d," unqualified.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ביאור ע"י באוה"ת פ' לך לך כרך ד תרפח, ב (מלקו"ת לג' פרישיות עט, ג). ספר המאמרים תש"ב ע' 100.

PARAGRAPH 10

43 והנה להבין זה בעבודה

A section beginning here is brought there with changes.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן מובא בהמשך בד"ה מצה זו תר"מ פרק כד ע' קסה בשינויים.

44 נובלות חכמה של מעלה תורה

The Midrash calls the Torah the "fallen fruit" of the wisdom above; the Alter Rebbe shows that this lowered form

is precisely what lets us grasp supernal wisdom.

בראשית רבה י"ז:5

... נובלת מיתה - שינה; נובלת נבואה - חלום; נובלת העולם הבא - שבת. רבי אבין מוסיף: עוד תרתין: נובלת אורה של מעלה - גלגל חמה; נובלת חכמה של מעלה - תורה:

"The L-rd G-d cast a deep slumber upon the man, and he slept. He took one of his sides, and He closed it with flesh in its place [tahtena]" (Genesis 2:21). "The L-rd G-d cast [hipil] a deep slumber" - Rabbi Yehoshua of Sikhnin said in the name of Rabbi Levi: The beginning of downfall [mapala] is sleep. When a person sleeps, he does not toil in Torah and does not do any work. literally means, "He caused to fall down." Rav said: There are three slumbers: the slumber of

...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר יו, ז. מד, יז. וראה שם פמ"ד. מובא גם לקמן ע, א. ונתבאר בע"ה שער הכללים ספ"א. וע"פ חסידות בדרך מצותיך מ, ב. ראה אוה"ת ירמ"י ע' שמ. מובא בסה"מ תרל"ב כרך ב ע' תרכב. בלקו"ת שה"ש ה, ד מציין לכאן. קטע מובא בסה"מ תרל"ב ח"ב ע' תרכב.

45 נובלות חכמה של מעלה תורה

The same teaching appears again in the Midrash on Avraham's vision, as the Kehot note cites.

בראשית רבה מ"ד:17

... נובלות מיתה - שינה, נובלות נבואה - חלום, נובלות העוה"ב - שבת. ר' אבין מוסיף תרתין: נובלות אורה של מעלה - גלגל חמה, נובלות חכמה של מעלה - תורה. והנה אימה חשיכה גדולה נופלת עליו אימה, זו בכל, דכתיב (דניאל ג): באדין נבוכדנצר התמלי חמא. חשיכה, זו מדי, שהחשיכה עיניהם של ישראל, בצום ובתענית. גדולה, זו יון. ר' סימון ורבנן רבי סימון אמר: מאה ועשרים דוכסים, מאה ועשרים אפרכון, מאה ועשרים אסטרטליטין. ורבנן אמרי: משישים שישים, דכתיב (דברים א): נחש שרף ועקרב. נחש, זו בכל. שרף, זו מדי. עקרב, ...

"It was as the sun was setting, and a slumber fell upon Abram, and, behold, dread, a great darkness, fell upon him" (Genesis 15:12). "It was as the sun was setting, [and a slumber fell]" - Rabbi Yehoshua of Sikhnin said in the name of Rabbi Levi: The beginning of downfall is sleep, as when one sleeps one does not toil in Torah study, when one sleeps one does not do any work. Rav said: There are three kinds of slumber - the slumber of sleep, the slumber of prophecy, ...

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46 כאלו אוחד בחכמה העליונה

It adds an analogy: letters engraved on a gem cannot be read because of the gem's brilliance, only once they are stamped in wax.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בהמשך מצה זו תר"מ ע' קסה נוסף: ועד"מ אותיות החקוקי על האבן טוב מחמת רוב בהירות האבן טוב א"א לקרוא אותם, כ"א דוקא כשחותמים על השעוה אז יכולים לקרות אותם:

ח"ב לח, ב.

PARAGRAPH 11

47 והנה המשכת . . אורייתא מחכמה נפקת

The Zohar says "the Torah comes forth from Chochmah"; the Alter Rebbe adds that its deeper source is Keser.

Zohar II, 121a א, ח"ב קכא,

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ב קכא, א. וראה שם פה, א.

48 אורייתא מחכמה נפקת

A parallel Zohar passage the Kehot note points to.

ספר הזוהר, יתרו כ"א:שע"ח-כ"ב:שפ"ט 21:378-22:389 Zohar, Yitro
According to R. Judah, "father" represents Wisdom (Hokhmah) and "mother" Understanding (Binah). Said R. Judah: 'Both interpretations mean one and the same thing, for we have been taught that the Torah emanated from the Supernal Wisdom.' R. Jose said that the Torah emanated from Understanding, for it says: "to perceive the words of understanding" and "forsake not the Torah of thy mother".

The Zohar; London, Soncino Press, 1933 (Public Domain)

49 שתרי"ג מצות . . וז' . . תר"ך עמודי אור

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

פרדס שער ח' פ"ג.

50 והוא מארחין לבנונית דגלגלתא

The Idra's description of the "paths" of whiteness in the Skull of Arich Anpin, a level of Keser; the Kehot note cites it for the source of the mitzvos.

Zohar III, 129a א, ח"ב קכט,

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"ב קכט, א.

PARAGRAPH 12

51 המלובשת בפי קדש

A further discussion of supernal wisdom clothed in the tefillin passages.

KEHOT'S NOTE

עי באוה"ת פי ראה עי תשנז.

52 בפי קדש

The passage opening "Sanctify (kadesh) to Me every first-born," one of the four passages in the tefillin.

Exodus 13:2:יג:ב' שמות

קדש-לי כל-בכור פטר כל-רחם בבני ישראל באדם ובבהמה לי הוא:

'Sanctify unto Me all the first-born, whatsoever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast, it is Mine.'

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53 כמ"ש בזהר

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

54 כמ"ש בזהר עד לא קבילת דכר

The Zohar teaches that as long as Malchus has not received from the male she is a "poor" dalet; the Alter Rebbe applies it to tzedek becoming tzedakah through charity.

ספר הזוהר, בא ה'קכ"ט-ו'קמ"א 5:129-6:141 Zohar, Bo

To indicate the union which took place on that night between the Masculine and Feminine aspects in the Divine attributes, and also the same union which will take place in the future Redemption:

The Zohar; London, Soncino Press, 1933 (Public Domain)

PARAGRAPH 13

55 ולכן לא נאמר בתורה . . שהי מאכיל אורחים כו' עד שבא לא"י

Parallel discussions of why Avraham's hospitality is mentioned only after he came to the Land of Israel.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת לך לך כרך ד תרפב, א. כרך ו תתרעה, א. תתרעו, א. לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 160 הערה 28. כרך כה ע' 47 ואילך.

56 לא הי ממשיך כלום

The Tzemach Tzedek notes there that a reason must be given why Avraham's deeds before the call drew nothing down.

KEHOT'S NOTE

עיין אוה"ת בראשית כרך ד פי לך לך תרפב, א סעי' ב' שצ"ל הטעם לזה. ובלקו"ש חט"ו ע' 84 הערה 13.

57 ויאמר ה' אל אברם

G-d's call to Avram, read as the moment the supernal Emanator drew the power of descent into av ram.

בראשית י"ב:1:א' Genesis 12:1

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-אַבְרָם לְהֵיטֵף מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמִּלְכָּתָהּ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיהָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ:

Now the L-RD said unto Abram: 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee.

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58 א"ב ר"ם

It adds after av ram: "the level of the intellect hidden from all thought."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בהמשך מצה זו תר"מ נוסף: בחי' שכל הנעלם מכל רעיון.

59 ותורה שם בישראל

"He placed Torah in Israel"; the Alter Rebbe reads "Israel" as the Patriarchs, through whom the Torah was prepared.

תהילים ע"ח:ה' Psalms 78:5

וַיָּקֶם עֲדוּת בְּעֵקֶב וְתוֹרָה שָׁם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת-אַבְרָהָם לְהוֹדִיעָם לְבְנָיהֶם:

For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they

should make them known to their children;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים עה, ה. בהמשך מצה זו תר"מ שם נוסף: "ועי' במד"ר [ב"ר פס"ג ג] שכל האבות נקי ישראל ומביא פסוקי ע"ז."

60

ומלי דאצי נעשה עתיק לבריא

On the phrase in the previous paragraph that Malchus of Atzilus becomes the Atik of Beriah: the Miketz passage explains that the Keser of Beriah comes from the lowest level of Atzilus, just as Malchus of Adam Kadmon (called Malchus of the Infinite One) becomes the Atik and Keser of Atzilus.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לקמן לה, ד. קיג, ב.

PARAGRAPH 14

61

אך לפי

There this section is marked "biur" (explanation).

KEHOT'S NOTE

במאמרי אדמו"ר הזקן — הנחות הר"פ ז"ל עי' ז' נרשם ע"ז: ביאור. וכן באוה"ת כרך ו' תתרעז, ב משמע שזהו ביאור.

62

מדוע לא זכו ישראל . . בגלות מצרים

A later discourse that refers to this question of why the Torah was given only after the Egyptian exile.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסה"מ תרס"ט ע' קלט מציין לכאן.

63

וימררו בחומר ובלבנים

The Egyptians "embittered their lives with hard labor, with mortar and with bricks."

שמות א': י"ד Exodus 1:14

וימררו את־חַיִּיהֶם בַּעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה בְּחֹמֶר וּבִלְבָּנִים וּבְכָל־עֲבֹדָה בַּשָּׂדֶה אֶת כָּל־עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר־עָבְדוּ בָהֶם בְּפֶרֶךְ:

And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; in all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigour.

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64

כשהיה בן צ"ט שנה

"Avraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised."

בראשית י"ז: כ"ד Genesis 17:24

וְאַבְרָהָם בֶּן־תְּשַׁעִּים וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנָה בָּהֶמְלוּ בְּשַׁר עָרְלָתוֹ:

And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

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65

קיים אברהם כל התורה

The Mishnah states that Avraham kept the entire Torah before it was given; the Alter Rebbe asks how, and answers

...ענין לך לך וילך למסעיו ממטה למעלה מלמעלה)

that he kept it inwardly.

Kiddushin 82a:10"י"א: פ"ב

בְּנִעְרוּתוֹ מָהוּ אוֹמֵר? "וְקוֹיָהּ ה' יִחְלִיפוּ כָח". בְּזִקְנוּתוֹ מָהוּ אוֹמֵר? "עוֹד יִנּוּבוֹן בְּשִׁיבָה", וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר בְּאַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ: "וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן... וְה' בָּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל" - מְצִינוּ שֶׁעָשָׂה אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ אֶת כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כּוֹלָה עַד שְׁלֹא נִיתְּנָה, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "עָקֹב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע אַבְרָהָם בְּקִלִּי וַיִּשְׁמַר מִשְׁמַרְתִּי מִצֻּוֹתֵי חֻקֹּתַי וְתוֹרָתִי"

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

משנה סוף קידושין פב, א. וראה בארוכה בספר הערכים-חב"ד כרך א עי' כד.

PARAGRAPH 15

66

וימררו חייהם כו' בכל עבודה קשה

The embittering labor of Egypt, read as what drew down a revelation from above hishtalshelus.

שמות א': י"ד Exodus 1:14

וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת־חַיִּיהֶם בַּעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה בְּחֹמֶר וּבִלְבָּנִים וּבְכָל־עֲבֹדָה בַּשָּׂדֶה אֶת כָּל־עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר־עָבְדוּ בָהֶם בְּפֶרֶךְ:

And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; in all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigour.

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67

כולם בחכמה עשית

"You made them all with wisdom," read as Chochmah and Asiyah being equal at a level above them both.

תהילים ק"ד: כ"ד Psalms 104:24

מַה־רַּבּוּ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ ה' כָּל־ם בְּחִכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ מְלֶאכָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנָה:

How manifold are Thy works, O L-RD! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; The earth is full of Thy creatures.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קד, כד.

PARAGRAPH 16

68

בבחי פנימית

A parallel discussion of the inner and outer dimensions of the mitzvos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

עי' באוה"ת פ' ראה עי' תשנט, ד"ה אנכי תרצ"ט.

PARAGRAPH 17

69

וכשהיה בן צ"ט

Avraham's circumcision at ninety-nine.

בראשית י"ז: כ"ד Genesis 17:24

וְאַבְרָהָם בֶּן־תְּשַׁעִּים וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנָה בָּהֶמְלוּ בְּשַׁר עָרְלָתוֹ:

And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

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70 ניתנה לו במתנה מצות מילה . יקבלו התורה

The note compares the point there that Avraham was a prophet even before circumcision.

KEHOT'S NOTE

להעיר מלקו"ת פי תוריע בד"ה למנצח על השמינית פ"ב (כא, א) גבי ולכן הי' אברהם נביא גם קודם המילה וכו', וראה ביאורי זוהר לכ"ק הצ"צ ע' רנג.

71 ע"פ משה ידבר

the page is on Sefaria, but its text shares nothing with the note (unconfirmed)

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקמן סז, ד. וראה באוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תרפב, א.

72 משה ידבר

"Moshe would speak, and G-d would answer him with a voice," the verse of the maamar referred to.

שמות י"ט:19 Exodus 19:19

ויהי קול השפף הולך וְחָזַק מִשֵּׁה יְדַבֵּר וְהָאֱלֹהִים יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּקוֹל:

And when the voice of the horn waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and G-d answered him by a voice.

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73 (ועמ"ש . מ"ש כאן)

This parenthesis is a gloss of the Tzemach Tzedek, printed also in Rabbi Pinchas's transcript.

KEHOT'S NOTE

זהו הגהת הצ"צ, ונדפס גם בהנחות הר"פ ע' ז, אבל בכת"י 2062 (שהוא כתי"י מעתיק מהנחת הר"פ) ליתא.

PARAGRAPH 18

74 הוא עשנו ולא אנחנו

"He made us, and we are His," where lo is written with an alef and read with a vav; the Alter Rebbe reads the alef as Keser.

תהילים קי"ג:3 Psalms 100:3

דַּעוּ כִּי־Havayah הוא אֱלֹהִים הוּא־עֲשֵׂנוּ וְלוֹ אֲנַחְנוּ עֲמוֹ וְצֹאן מְרִעִיתוֹ:

Know ye that the L-RD He is G-d; it is He that hath made us, and we are His, His people, and the flock of His pasture.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים ק, ג. ראה לקמן סח, ב. מובא בלקו"ת אמור לד, א ושם מציין "וע"ד מ"ש באדר"ז דרצ"ב סע"ב ע"פ ולו נתכנו עלילות" ע"ש.

75 וביאור הענין

The Tzemach Tzedek's commentary on Tehillim, which also explains this verse.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע' יהל אור במילואים ע' תשב.

PARAGRAPH 19

76 אנכי

The first of the Ten Commandments, "I (Anochi) am G-d your G-d," which opens with alef.

שמות כ"ב:2 Exodus 20:2

אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים:

I am the L-RD thy G-d, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

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PARAGRAPH 20

77 ואברהם בן ע"ה שנה בצאתו מחרן

"Avram was seventy-five years old when he left Charan," read as the passage from mind to emotion.

בראשית י"ב:4 Genesis 12:4

וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה' וַיֵּלֶךְ אֹתוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־חַמֶּשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן:

So Abram went, as the L-RD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

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78 וכשהיה אברהם בן ע"ה היינו ז"פ עשר

The Tzemach Tzedek quotes this reading of seventy-five as seven times ten plus five.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא באוה"ת בראשית כרך ז תתשעד, א.

PARAGRAPH 21

79 רישא דעשו בעטפוי דיצחק

A maamar on Toldos that also cites this Targum.

בראשית נ"ג:13 Genesis 50:13

וַיֵּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ בְּנָיו אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמַעְרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֶּלֶה אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשְּׂדֵה לְאַחֲזוֹת־קֶבֶר מֵאֵת עֶפְרָן הַחֲתִי עַל־פְּנֵי מִמְרָא:

For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, in front of Mamre.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל בראשית נ, יג. וראה לקמן כ, ב.

80 רישא דעשו בעטפוי דיצחק

The Targum relates that Esav's head rolled into Yitzchak's lap in the Cave of Machpelah; the Alter Rebbe uses it for something rooted in holiness before it is sifted out.

תרגום יונתן על בראשית נ"ג:13 Targum Jonathan on Genesis 50:13

... פְּלָגוֹת מַעְרַת כְּפִילְתָּא וּמִן דְּרָמוֹ לְחוּשִׁים בְּרִדּוֹ וְנִטְלָא סִיפָא וְקָטַע רִישִׁיָּה דְעֶשָׂו וְשִׁיעָא וְהָוָה רִישִׁיָּה דְעֶשָׂו מְתַלְגֵּל עַד דְּעַל לְגוֹ מַעְרַתָא וְאַתְנָן בְּגוֹ עֵיטְפִיָּה דְיִצְחָק אָבוי וְגוֹפִיָּה קִבְּרוֹ בְּגוֹ דְעֶשָׂו בְּחֻקְלָא כְּפִילְתָּא

ובתר כן קברו יתיה בנוי ליעקב במערת הקל כפילתא דיובן אברהם ית
הקלא לאחסנת קבורתא מן עפרון התאה על אנפי ממרא
But when his sons had brought him into the land of Kenaan,
and the thing was heard by Esau the Wicked, he journeyed
from the mountain of Gebala with many legions, and came
to Hebron, and would not suffer Joseph to bury his father in
the Double Cave. Then forthwith went Naphtali and ran, and
went down to Mizraim, and came in that day, and brought
the Instrument that Esau had written for Jakob his brother in
the controversy of the Double Cave. And immediately he
beckoned to Hushim the ...

Targum Jonathan on Genesis (Public Domain) • The Targum of Jonathan
ben Uzziel, trans. J. W. Etheridge, London, 1862 (Public Domain)

81 מעורבים הם עם זהב

The Rebbe notes that “gold” appears in many places, but it
seemingly should say “silver,” since that is Avraham’s
level.

KEHOT’S NOTE

כן הוא בכ”מ, ולכאורה צ”ל: כסף שהרי הוא מדריגת אברהם — הערת כ”ק
אדמו”ר ז”ע בהנחת הר”פ ז”ל ע” קצב לעמוד ח’.

82 ולוט בגי מ”ה

The source for Lot equalling Mah (45) in gematria, with
references to the Arizal’s writings.

KEHOT’S NOTE

מאוי”א ל, כז. וביאיר נתיב שם מציין לכמה מקומות בכתבי האריז”ל.

83 רות המואביה

Rus the Moabite, the ancestress of David, drawn out from
Moav.

רות א: כ”ב: Ruth 1:22

ותשב נעמי ורות המואביה כלתה עמה השבה משדי מואב והמה באו
בית לחם בתחלת קציר שעירים:

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-
in-law, with her, who returned out of the field of Moab—and
they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

84 ונעמה העמוני

Naamah the Ammonite, mother of Rechavam son of
Shlomo.

I Kings 14:21 כ”א: י”ד

ורחבעם בן שלמה מלך ביהודה בן ארבעים ואחת שנה רחבעם בן מלכו
ושבע עשרה שנה מלך בירושלם העיר אשר בחר ה’ לשום את שמו שם
מכל שבטי ישראל ושם אמו נעמה העמונית:

And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah.
Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to
reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city
which the L-RD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to
put His name there; and his mother’s name was Naamah the
Ammonite.

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מואב חכ’ דקליפה

The entry identifying Moav as the Chochmah of kelipah.

KEHOT’S NOTE

לקו”ת להאריז”ל פ’ וירא. מאוי”א אות מ’ סעיף פה. וראה גם לקו”ת חקת
סו, ג.

86 הוא לשון נועם

KeHOT’s note points to where this is explained further:
Likkutei Torah of the Arizal.

KEHOT’S NOTE

לקו”ת להאריז”ל פ’ וירא.

87 נפרדו סיגי לוט מאברהם

Avram and Lot part from one another, read as the dross
separating after refinement.

בראשית י”ג:11 Genesis 13:11

ויבחר לו לוט את כל-כפר הירדן ויסע לוט מקדם ויפרדו איש מעל
אחיו:

So Lot chose him all the plain of the Jordan; and Lot jour-
neyed east; and they separated themselves the one from the
other.

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PARAGRAPH 22

88 ויאהל אברם עד מקום שכם

Avram passes through the land “as far as the place of
Shechem, as far as Elon Moreh,” read here as the Sefiros
of Nukva.

בראשית י”ב:6 Genesis 12:6

ויעבר אברם בארץ עד מקום שכם עד אלון מורה והכנעני אז בארץ:

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of
Shechem, unto the terebinth of Moreh. And the Canaanite
was then in the land.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

בראשית יב, ו.

89 לו ישמעאל יחי לפניך

Avraham’s plea, “May Yishmael live before You,” ex-
plained as flowing from his power to draw revelation into
Malchus.

בראשית י”ז:18 Genesis 17:18

ויאמר אברהם אליהאלקים לו ישמעאל יחיה לפניך:

And Abraham said unto G-d: ‘Oh that Ishmael might live be-
fore Thee!’

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KEHOT’S NOTE

בראשית יז, יח.

90 כי אחרי שנקרא אברהם בה”א

The Rebbe infers from here that only after he was called
Avraham could he elevate sparks, and refers to another

talk explaining that the converts Avraham made did not have continuity.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בלקו"ש חט"ו ע' 177 הערה 40 מדייק מכאן שרק אחרי שנק' אברהם הי' יכול להעלות נצוצות, ומציין ללקו"ש ח"י ע' 89 הערה 14 דשם מבאר שלהגרים דגייר אברהם לא הי' להם המשך וקיום ע"ש.

91

ואת הנפש אשר עשו

“The souls that they had made in Charan,” read as the sparks and souls Avraham elevated.

Genesis 12:5 בראשית י"ב:ה'

וַיִּקַּח אֹתָם אֶת־שָׂרֵי אֲשֶׁתוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בְּדֹאֲחָיו וְאֶת־כָּל־רִבְוֹשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בַּחֲרֹן וַיֵּצְאוּ לִלְכָּת אֶרֶצָה כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶצָה כְּנָעַן׃

And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יב, ה.

92

בה"א . . המשכה והתגלות

Kehot's note points to where this is explained further:
Likkutei Torah of the Arizal.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת להאריז"ל ס"פ מקץ וטעמי המצות ס"פ לך לך.

93

וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם אֲבִרָם בֶּשֶׁם ה'

Avram “called there in the Name of G-d,” read as drawing the hidden intellect down to the Sefiros of Nukva.

Genesis 13:4' י"ג:ד' בראשית

אֶל־מָקוֹם הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה שָׁם בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם אַבְרָם בְּשֵׁם ה'
 unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the
 first; and Abram called there on the name of the L-RD.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יג, ד.

. פי' מגן אברהם. דהנה נודע שאברהם הוא...

“I am a shield to you”: the meaning of “Shield of Avraham”



Avraham's kindness is boundless, and boundless kindness would give endless life even to evil; the “shield” G-d places over Avraham's kindness measures it, so that the world receives kindness for its good while evil receives only what it needs and can finally be removed.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar explains G-d's promise “I am a shield to you” and the blessing “Shield of Avraham.” Avraham embodies Chesed without restraint: he sees all as good, and even knowing what Yishmael was, he asked that Yishmael live forever, by limitless kindness. This is why the Sifrei says Yishmael came forth from Avraham: from the overflow of his kindness. But such kindness cannot be the world's final order, since the days of Mashiach require that death be swallowed up and impurity removed from the land. So Yitzchak came with judgment; yet harsh judgment produced Eisav, and only Yaakov's balanced bed was complete. A shield is a covering, like the sheath of the sun in “a sun and a shield”: it tempers the great light so that it can be borne, until the Time to Come when G-d takes the sun out of its sheath. Every morning Avraham's kindness is aroused, and G-d wishes to lead the world with kindness. Without a shield, that kindness would give the kelipos unlimited life-force, though they are meant to receive only what they need for darkness to be turned into light. So each morning we bless G-d as “Shield of Avraham,” asking Him to shield Avraham's kindness for our good.

OUTLINE

- 1 **Avraham's boundless kindness** ¶1
Avraham is Chesed without restraint; he asked that Yishmael live forever, by kindness without limit, though he knew what Yishmael was.
- 2 **Why unlimited kindness is not enough** ¶2
Yishmael came from Avraham's excess kindness and Eisav from Yitzchak's harsh judgment; the days of Mashiach require evil to be removed, and only Yaakov's balance was complete.

3 What a shield is

¶3

A shield is a covering, like the sheath that makes the sun's light bearable until the Time to Come.

4 The morning blessing "Shield of Avraham"

¶4

Each morning Avraham's kindness is aroused; we ask that it be shielded and contracted so the kelipos receive only what they need and evil can be eradicated.

KEY CONCEPTS

Chesed (kindness) חסד

Expansive giving without limit, the quality of Avraham, which sees only good and gives even to the unworthy.

Shield (magen) מגן

A covering that screens and tempers; here, the measure placed on Avraham's kindness so that it can be received rightly.

Sheath (nartik) נרתק

The covering of the sun that makes its great light bearable; the Sages say it will be removed in the Time to Come.

Judgment (din) דין

The quality of Yitzchak: restraint and strict measure, the opposite of unlimited kindness.

tzimtzum (contraction) צמצום

Giving in a contracted, measured way, so that the kelipos receive only the life-force they need.

kelipos (the husks) קליפות

The forces of concealment that oppose holiness; they must be sustained for a purpose, the transformation of darkness into light, but not without limit.

SECTION 1 • 11

Avraham's boundless kindness

1 (אנכי מגן לך).^{1,2} פ"י מגן אברהם.^{3,4} דהנה נודע שאברהם הוא בחי' חסד גדול עד מאד בלי שום מונע

וכולם טובים בעיניו והוא רק טוב

("I am a shield to you.") This means "the Shield of Avraham." For it is known that Avraham is the level of an exceedingly great Chesed (kindness), without any restraint at all; all are good in his eyes, and he is only good.

G-d's promise to Avraham, "I am a shield to you," is the source of the phrase "Shield of Avraham" that closes the first blessing of the Amidah. To understand what the "shield" is, the Alter Rebbe first describes Avraham himself: he embodies Chesed, kindness that flows out with nothing holding it back, seeing only good in everyone because he himself is only good.

ולכן אמר לו ישמעאל יהיה לפניך⁵ שפ"י שיחיה לעד לפניך שהוא בחי' א"ס בלי גבול ואעפ"י

Therefore he said, "O that Yishmael might live before You," which means that he should live forever before You, which is the level of the endless (ein sof), without limit. And even though

When G-d promised Avraham a son from Sarah, Avraham answered, "O that Yishmael might live before You." The Alter Rebbe reads "live before You" as a request for life without end, an endless, limitless life: the natural wish of boundless kindness.

שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל⁶ אעפ"כ מחמת חסד גדול וטובו הגדול⁷ רוצה שיחיה ולא זו בלבד אלא שרצה שיחיה לחסד בלי גבול.⁸

he knows what Yishmael is, nevertheless, because of [his] great kindness and his great goodness, he wants him to live; and not only this, but he wanted him to live by a kindness without limit.

Avraham was not blind to Yishmael's faults; he knew what Yishmael was. Yet his kindness was so great that he wanted Yishmael to live, and to live not by merit but by kindness that has no limit.

SECTION 2 • 12

Why unlimited kindness is not enough

2 וזהו דאיתא לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל^{9,10} ויצא מחמת רוב חסדו.¹¹ אבל באמת אין מהראוי כן.

And this is what is taught: “Not like Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth”; and he came forth because of the abundance of his kindness. But in truth this is not fitting.

The Sifrei contrasts the patriarchs: from Avraham came Yishmael, and from Yitzchak came Eisav, but all of Yaakov's children were righteous. The Alter Rebbe explains why Yishmael came from Avraham: it was the overflow of his abundant kindness. Yet such limitless kindness, extended even to what is unworthy, is not really how things should be.

דהנה בביאת משיח אי"ה כתיב בלע המות לנצח.¹² ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר מן הארץ.¹³ וצריך לבער כל הרע מן הארץ

For of the coming of Mashiach, G-d willing, it is written, “He will swallow up death forever,” and “I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land”; and all the evil must be eradicated from the land.

The goal of history is the time of Mashiach, when, as the prophets say, death will be swallowed up forever and the spirit of impurity removed from the land. That requires that evil be entirely eradicated, not endlessly sustained.

ואם יתנהג העולם בחסדו הגדול כנ"ל לא היה העולם יכולים לבא למדרגה הנ"ל של משיח.¹⁴

And if the world were to be conducted by his great kindness, as said above, the world would not be able to come to the aforementioned level of Mashiach.

If the world ran only on Avraham's unlimited kindness, evil would keep receiving life without end, and the world could never reach the perfection of the days of Mashiach.

ולכן בא יצחק בחי' דין ואף יצחק יצא ממנו עשו מחמת דינו הקשה על חרבך תחיה.¹⁵ אך יעקב היתה מטתו שלימה:

Therefore Yitzchak came, the level of judgment; yet from Yitzchak, too, Eisav came forth, because of his harsh judgment: “By your sword shall you live.” But Yaakov's bed was complete.

So Yitzchak came, embodying din (judgment and restraint), the opposite quality. But judgment alone also produces an imbalance: from Yitzchak came Eisav, whose blessing was “By your sword shall you live,” a life of harshness. Only Yaakov, who combines the two qualities, had a “complete bed”: all his children were fit and holy.

SECTION 3 • 13

What a shield is

3 והנה נודע כי מגן נקי¹⁶ דבר המכסה למשל במלחמה¹⁷ נקי מגן מה שמכסה בו שלא ישלוט עליו הקשת.¹⁸

Now, it is known that a shield (magen) is the name for something that covers; for example, in war, what one covers oneself with, so that the bow will not prevail over him, is called a shield.

Now the Alter Rebbe defines “shield”: something that covers. In battle a shield is what a soldier holds over himself so that the enemy’s arrows cannot reach him.

והנה כתיב כי שמש ומגן¹⁹ הי' אלקים שכמו שהשמש אם לא היה לו נרתק לא היו יכולים לסבול אורו הגדול והנרתק הוא המגין²⁰ שנוכל לסבול.

Now it is written, “For a sun and a shield is Havayah Elokim.” That is: just as with the sun, if it had no sheath [people] could not bear its great light, and the sheath is what shields, so that we can bear [it].

The verse pairs “sun” and “shield” with two Names of G-d. The sun’s light is so strong that no one could bear it without a covering, a “sheath” that screens it. The sheath is the shield: it does not block the light completely but tempers it so that we can bear it.

וזהו לעתיד לבא הקב"ה²¹ מוציא חמה מנרתקה וצדיקים מתהנים בה ורשעים נדונים בה.

And this is [the meaning of the teaching that] in the Time to Come the Holy One, blessed be He, will take the sun out of its sheath, and the righteous will benefit from it and the wicked will be judged by it.

The Sages teach that in the Time to Come G-d will take the sun out of its sheath: the unscreened light will benefit the righteous and be a judgment for the wicked. This shows what the sheath does now: it makes the great light bearable for everyone.

SECTION 4 • 14

The morning blessing “Shield of Avraham”

4 והנה נודע שבכל בוקר דאברהם בחי' חסד מתעורר בעולם²² וישכם אברהם בבוקר²³ וכדאיתא בזוה"ק²⁴ והקב"ה רוצה להנהיג את העולם בבחי' חסד.

Now, it is known that every morning [the quality] of Avraham, the level of Chesed (kindness), is aroused in the world, [as it is written,] “And Avraham rose early in the morning,” and as is taught in the holy Zohar; and the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to conduct the world with the level of kindness.

Each morning Avraham's quality, Chesed, is awakened in the world, as the verse “And Avraham rose early in the morning” connects Avraham with the morning. G-d's wish is to run the world with kindness.

אם לא היה מגן לבחי' חסד הנ"ל לצמצם חסדו וטובו ולתת דרך צמצום²⁵ כמו שצריך רק להחיות הקליפות מפני שצריכין בשביל סטרא דקדושה שיהיה אתהפכא חשוכא לנהורא כידוע.

[But] were there no shield for the aforementioned level of kindness, to contract His kindness and goodness and to give by way of tzimtzum (contraction) just as much as is needed merely to give life to the kelipos (the husks), since they are needed for the sake of the side of holiness, so that there be a transformation of darkness into light, as is known;

But kindness needs a shield that measures it out. Even the kelipos, the forces that conceal holiness, must receive some life, because holiness needs them: their darkness is meant to be turned into light. The shield ensures they receive only the bare minimum they need, through tzimtzum (contraction).

ואם לא היה דרך צמצום היה חיותם בלי גבול ולא היו יכולים לבער הרע מן הארץ.

and were it not by way of tzimtzum, their life-force would be without limit, and it would not be possible to eradicate the evil from the land.

Without that contraction, the kelipos would receive unlimited life-force, just as Yishmael would have from Avraham's boundless kindness, and evil could never be eradicated from the world.

ולכן בכל בוקר כשמתעורר מדת אברהם מדת חסד כנ"ל אנו צריכין לברך ברכת מגן אברהם. מגין שיעשה מגין לבחי' אברהם הנ"ל לטובתנו:²⁶

Therefore every morning, when the attribute of Avraham, the attribute of kindness, is aroused, as said above, we must recite the blessing “Shield of Avraham”: a shield, meaning that He make a shield for the aforementioned level of Avraham, for our good.

This is the meaning of the blessing “Shield of Avraham” in the morning prayer: as Avraham's kindness wakes each morning, we ask G-d to place a shield over it, measuring the kindness so that it benefits us and does not feed evil without limit.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Every morning, as Avraham's kindness awakens in the world, the blessing "Shield of Avraham" in prayer asks G-d to shield that kindness, measuring it so that it is for our good and does not give evil unlimited life.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the Alter Rebbe read Avraham's plea "O that Yishmael might live before You" as a request for life without limit?
2. If Avraham knew what Yishmael was, why did he still want him to live, and what does that reveal about unlimited kindness?
3. Why does neither pure kindness (Avraham) nor pure judgment (Yitzchak) produce a "complete bed," while Yaakov does?
4. How does the sheath of the sun illustrate a shield that tempers light rather than blocking it?
5. Why must the kelipos receive some life-force at all, and why only as much as they need?

FOR CHILDREN • AGES 9-13

For the children at the table

Shield of Avraham

THE BIG IDEA

Kindness is very great, but it needs a measure, as the sun needs a covering, so that it brings only good.

G-d told Avraham, “I am a shield to you,” and every day in the Amidah we call G-d “Shield of Avraham.” What does this mean? Avraham’s quality is Chesed, kindness. He saw good in everyone, and his kindness had no limits. But kindness with no limit at all is not enough. It would give endless strength even to what is not good, and the world is meant to reach the days of Mashiach, when all that is bad is gone and darkness is turned into light. Strictness alone is not complete either. Only Yaakov’s way, a balance of kindness and strictness, was complete. A shield is a covering. The verse says that G-d is “a sun and a shield.” Every morning Avraham’s kindness wakes up in the world, and G-d wants to lead the world with kindness. So we ask Him to be “Shield of Avraham”: to measure that kindness so that it goes to what is good, and so that what is not good receives only what it needs, until it can be removed completely.

THE MASHAL

If the sun had no covering, no one could bear its great light. The covering, like a shield, holds back some of the light so that we can enjoy it. In the Time to Come, G-d will take the sun out of its covering.

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

1. Why does even kindness need a measure?
2. How is the covering of the sun like a shield?
3. When you are kind to someone this week, how can you make sure your kindness really does good?

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SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 אנכי מגן לך

The note records that the Tzemach Tzedek refers to this maamar by its theme, "the meaning of Shield of Avraham," and that a text of it is also printed in Or HaTorah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הצ"צ קורא למאמר זה בענין "פ"י מגן אברהם" — אוה"ת בשלח ע' תנב. נדפס גם באוה"ת כרך ד תרצג, א. [מלקו"ת לג"פ פז, ד]. וראה גם ד"ה והיה ברכה תרל"ט ע' א. ד"ה זה נזכר לקמן קטו, ב. בלקו"ת אמור טז, ב "בפ' וירא". שה"ש יט, ד. ראה בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע.

2 אנכי מגן לך

After the war with the kings, G-d tells Avram in a vision, "Fear not, Avram, I am a shield to you; your reward is very great." This is the verse the maamar explains.

בראשית ט"ו:15

אחר הדברים האלה הִנֵּה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם בַּמַּחֲזֶה לֵאמֹר אֶל־תִּירָא אֲבָרָם אֲנֹכִי מִגֹּן לְךָ שָׂכָרְךָ תִּרְבֶּה מְאֹד:

After these things the word of the L-RD came unto Abram in a vision, saying: 'Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, thy reward shall be exceeding great.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית טו, א.

3 פ"י מגן אברהם

According to the note, the Tzemach Tzedek there cites the Midrash Rabbah on Lech Lecha (chapter 44) for two interpretations of "shield." It adds midrashic background to the blessing "Shield of Avraham."

תהילים י"ח:ט"ו

וַיִּשְׁלַח חֲצֵיו וַיַּפִּיצֵם וּבָרָקִים רַב־וַיַּהֲמֵם:

And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them; and He shot forth lightnings, and discomfited them.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ב"ר ר"פ מ"ח מגן ישעך (תהלים יח, טו) זה אברהם, וראה גם אוה"ת סידור ע' קכב בשם רבות פ' לך פ' מד בי פ"י במגן.

4 מגן אברהם

The Midrash reads "You have given me the shield of Your salvation" as referring to Avraham, linking the idea of G-d's shield with Avraham, as in the blessing "Shield of Avraham."

בראשית רבה מ"ח:א

"וירא אליו ה' באלוני ממרא והוא יושב פתח האהל" כתיב (תהלים יח, לו): "ותתן לי מגן ישעך וימינה תסעדני וענותה תרבני" - "ותתן לי מגן ישעך" - זה אברהם, "וימינה תסעדני" - בכבשן האש ברעבון

ובמלכים "וענותך תרבני" מה ענוה הרכה הקב"ה לאברהם שהיה יושב והשכינה עומדת הה"ד "וירא אליו ה'":

"The L-rd appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day" (Genesis 18:1). "The L-rd appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he was sitting at the entrance of the tent." It is written: "You have given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your right hand has supported me; Your humility has made me great" (Psalms 18:36). "You have given me the shield of Your salvation" - this refers to Avraham. Your ...

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5 When told that Sarah would bear him a son, Avraham said to G-d, "O that Yishmael might live before You!" The Alter Rebbe takes this as the expression of Avraham's limitless kindness.

בראשית י"ז:18

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבְרָהָם אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר לִפְנֶיךָ:

And Abraham said unto G-d: 'Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee! '

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6 ואעפ"י שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל

The note contrasts this line with the Tzemach Tzedek's statement there that had Avraham known Yishmael would go so badly astray, he would not have wanted to support him at all; he thought Yishmael would also be decent and worthy, only not like Yitzchak.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ולהעיר מאוה"ת ח"ש (קכא, א. תמה, רע"א) שאילולי ה' יודע שיצא לתרבות רעה כ"כ לא ה' רוצה כלל להחזיקו אלא ה' סבור שיהי גם הוא הגון וחשוב רק לא כיצחק — לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 196.

7 שו"ה ישמעאל — חסד גדול וטובו הגדול

A variant reading: the manuscript has "his kindness and his great goodness" instead of "great kindness and his great goodness."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 2056: חסדו וטובו הגדול.

8 שו"ה זו בלבד — שיחיה לחסד בלי גבול, וזהו דאיתא

A variant reading: instead of "that he live by a kindness without limit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 2056: שיחיה לעד וזשארז"ל.

PARAGRAPH 2

9 לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל

the page is on Sefaria, but its text shares nothing with the note (unconfirmed)

KEHOT'S NOTE

ספרי דברים לב, ט. ראה לקמן כה, ב.

10

לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל

On "For G-d's portion is His people; Yaakov is the lot of His inheritance," the Sifrei contrasts Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth, and Yitzhak, from whom Eisav came forth, with Yaakov, all of whose children were worthy. The Alter Rebbe explains the cause of each.

ספרי דברים ש"ב:א-ב' 312:1-2

... צאו מתוך שלי, אי אפשי שתהיו בתוכה, תנו לי חלקי שאהא מכירו. כך קשבא אברהם אבינו לעולם יצאה ממנו פסולת, ישמעאל וכל בני קטורה. כא יצחק לעולם יצאה ממנו פסולת, עשו וכל אלופי אדם. חזרו להיות רעים יותר מן הראשונים. וכשבא יעקב לא יצאה ממנו פסולת, אלא נולדו כל בניו קשרים, כענין שנאמר (בראשית כה כז): "ויעקב איש תם יושב אהלים". מהיכן המקום מכיר את חלקו? מיעקב, שנאמר: כי חלק ה' עמו יעקב חבל ...

"For the portion of the L-rd is His people": An analogy: A king had a field and gave it to tenant-farmers, who began to steal from it — upon which he gave it to their sons — who began to be worse than the first. When a son was born to him, he said to them: Get out of what is mine. You cannot remain there. Give me my portion so that I can recognize it. Similarly, when our father Abraham came to the world, there issued from ...

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11

ויצא מחמת רוב חסדו

There "came forth" is explained to mean that Yishmael came forth from Avraham as his dross and refuse, that is, the excess of the holy kindnesses that emerged from Avraham, the man of kindness.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה וראיתם אותו תרס"ו ע' רסד מפרש "פ"י יצא שיצא ממנו בבחי' סיגים ופסולת שלו כו' דהיינו בחי' מותרי החסדי דקדושה שיצא מאברהם איש החסד כו", ע"ש.

12

בלע המות לנצח

Isaiah's prophecy of the future: "He will swallow up death forever." It shows that the redemption requires the end of all that opposes life and holiness.

ישעיהו כ"ח:ח' 25:8

בלע המות לנצח ומה אדני ה' דמעה מעל כל-פנים וחרפת עמו יסיר מעל כל-הארץ כי ה' דבר:

He will swallow up death for ever; And the L-rd GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; And the reproach of His people will He take away from off all the earth; For the L-RD hath spoken it.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י כה, ח.

13

ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר מן הארץ

"I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land": in the days to come impurity will be removed from the world en-

tirely, which is why evil cannot be sustained without limit.

זכריה י"ג:ב' 13:2 Zechariah

והיה ביום ההוא נאם ה' צבאות אכרית את-שמות העצבים מן-הארץ ולא יזכרו עוד וגם את-הנביאים ואת-רוח הטמאה אעביר מן-הארץ:

And it shall come to pass in that day, Saith the L-RD of hosts, That I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, And they shall no more be remembered; And also I will cause the prophets And the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

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14

שו"ה הארץ — ואם יתנהג העולם . . הנ"ל של משיח

A variant reading with the same meaning: "And if the world were conducted by his great kindness, the world could not come to the aforementioned levels of Mashiach."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 2056: ואם היה העולם מתנהג בחסדו הגדול לא הי' העולם יכולים לבוא למדרגות של המשיח הנ"ל.

15

על חרבך תחי

Yitzhak's blessing to Eisav, "By your sword shall you live." The Alter Rebbe cites it as the sign of the harsh judgment from which Eisav came.

בראשית כ"ז:40 Genesis

ועל-חרבך תחיה ואת-אחיך תעבד והיה כאשר תריד ופרקת עלו מעל צווארך:

And by thy sword shalt thou live, And thou shalt serve thy brother; And it shall come to pass when thou shalt break loose, That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כז, מ.

PARAGRAPH 3

16

מגן נקי

The Kehot note refers here to the Midrash on "I am a shield to you" in Bereshit Rabbah, chapter 44, which discusses G-d's promise to protect Avram.

בראשית רבה מ"ד:א-ב' 44:1-2 Bereshit Rabbah

אחר הדברים האלה היה דבר ה' אל אברם במחזה לאמר וגו'. (תהלים יח) האל תמים דרכו אמרת ה' צרופה מגן הוא לכל החוסים בו. אם דרכיו תמימים, הוא על אחת כמה וכמה! רב אמר: לא נתנו המצות, אלא לצרף בהן את הבריות. וכי מה איכפת ליה להקב"ה למי ששוחט מן הצואר או מי ששוחט מן העורף?! הוי, לא נתנו המצות, אלא לצרף בהם את הבריות. דבר אחר: האל תמים דרכו, זה אברהם, שנאמר (נחמיה ט): ומצאת את לבבו נאמן לפניך. אמרת ה' צרופה, שצרפו הקדוש ברוך הוא בכבשן האש. מגן ...

"After these matters, the word of the L-rd came to Abram in a vision, saying: Fear not, Abram, I am a shield for you; your reward is very great" (Genesis 15:1). "After these matters, the word of the L-rd came to Abram in a vision, saying..." "The Almighty's way is faultless; the word of the L-rd is refined [tzerufa]. He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him"

(Psalms 18:31) – if His ways are faultless, all the more so that He Himself is. Rav said: The mitzvot ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ב"ר פמ"ד.

17

מגן נקי דבר המכסה למשל במלחמה

That maamar quotes a section from here and remarks that most discourses explain the level of the "shield" as the parochos (curtain), the partition between Atzilus and Beriah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן מובא בד"ה והי ברכה — סה"מ תרל"ט ע"ג, והעיר ע"ז "אך ברוב הדרושים פ"י דבחי מגן ז"ע הפרוכת, שהוא הפרסא שבין אצי לבריא כמ"ש בכ"ד".

18

נקי מגן — מה שמכסה בו שלא ישלוט עליו הקשת

It quotes this maamar's reading of "a sun and a shield" (the sheath that lets us bear the sun, removed only in the Time to Come), then notes the more common explanation of the shield as the parochos between Atzilus and Beriah, referring to the maamar "VeAtah Tetzaveh" in Parshas Tetzaveh on the parochos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה והי ברכה תרל"ט ע"ג: ועפ"ז פ"י הפסוק שמש ומגן כו' שהשמש אם לא הי' לו גתק לא היו יכולים לסבול אורו הגדול, והנתק הוא המגין שנוכל לסבול, רק לע"ל הקב"ה מוציא חמה מנתקה כו', אך ברוב הדרושים פ"י דבחי מגן ז"ע הפרוכת, שהוא הפרסא שבין אצי לבריא כמ"ש בכ"ד וע' בפ' תצוה בד"ה ואתה תצוה גבי וענין הפרוכת הוא.

19

כי שמש ומגן

"For a sun and a shield is Havayah Elokim; G-d gives grace and glory." The Alter Rebbe reads "shield" as the sheath that makes the sun's light bearable.

Psalms 84:12 כ"ב: תהילים

כי שמש ומגן הי' אלקים הן וכבוד יתן הי' לא ימנע טוב להלכים בתמים:

For the L-RD G-d is a sun and a shield; the L-RD giveth grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

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Zohar II, 224b כד, זח"ב רכד,

KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים פד, יב. וכ"פ זח"ב רכד, ב אנכי מגן לך ע"ד שמש ומגן.

20

והנתק הוא המגין

The note points to a maamar in Tetzaveh for a further use of the sheath and shield.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן פא, ד. וביהל אור ע' שא.

21

לעתיד לבא הקב"ה

The Talmud teaches that in the future G-d will take the sun out of its sheath: the righteous will be healed by it and the

wicked judged by it. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that the sheath now tempers the light.

Nedarim 8b:6 ב' ו' נדרים

ופליגא דרבי שמעון בן לקיש, דאמר: אין גיהנם לעולם הבא, אלא הקדוש ברוך הוא מוציא חמה מנתיקה, צדיקים מתרפאין בה ורשעים נידונין בה. שנאמר: ונתקה לכם יראי שמי שמש וגו'. ולא עוד, אלא שמתעניין בה, שנאמר: ויצאתם ופשתם כעגלי מרבק".

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

Avodah Zarah 3b:3 ג' ב' עבודה זרה

איכא דמתני להא דרבי יצחק אהא, דתנא: רבי יוסי אומר: לעתיד לבא באין אומות העולם ומתגזרין. ומי מקבלינן מיניה? והתנא: אין מקבלין גרים לימות המשיח, כיצא בו לא קבלו גרים לא בימי דוד ולא בימי שלמה!

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

Zohar III, 17a זח"ג יז,

KEHOT'S NOTE

נדרים ח, ב. ע"ז ג, ב. ב"ר ו, י. זח"ג יז, א. תניא ח"ב פ"ד. וראה הביאור באוה"ת ויקהל ע' ביקעד.

PARAGRAPH 4

22

שבכל בוקר דאברהם בחי חסד מתעורר בעולם

On Avraham as the kindness of the world: the Yitro passage explains that Avraham is the Chesed of Atzilus, whereas Moshe drew divine light further down, into the lower worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בענין אברהם הוא חסד עולם, ראה לקמן סט, א. פב, א ואילך. מאמרי אדה"ז תקס"ה ח"א ע' דש ואילך. מאמרי אדה"א שמות ח"ב ע' שלח ואילך. סה"מ תרכ"ז ע' קצט. תרל"ט ע' א.

23

וישכם אברהם בבוקר

"And Avraham rose early in the morning" (the same words also open Genesis 19:27 and 21:14). The verse links Avraham, the quality of Chesed, with the morning.

Genesis 22:3 ג' ב' ראשית

וישכם אברהם בבקר ויחבש את־חמרו ויחך את־שני נעריו אתו ואת יצחק בנו ויבקע עצי עלה ויקם וילך אל־המקום אשר־אמר־לו האלקים:

And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he cleaved the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which G-d had told him.

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24

וכדאיתא בזוה"ק

The Kehot note gives this Zohar passage as the source for Avraham's quality of kindness being aroused in the world every morning.

Zohar I, 203a זח"א רג,

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"א רג, א.

25 שו"ה הנ"ל — דרך צמצום

A variant reading: instead of giving life to the kelipos, the manuscript speaks of contraction "to give life to the nations as much as they are needed for the sake of Israel, or because of the subjugation to the kingdoms, as is known"; otherwise their life-force would be without limit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 2056: דרך צמצם להחיות האומות כפי שצריכים בשביל ישראל או מפני שעבוד מלכיות כנודע הי' החיות בלי גבול: ולא היו יכולים.

26 שו"ה ורשעים — נדונים בה . . וישכם

The manuscript adds between the paragraphs: "So it is with these Names: Havayah is Chesed, and Elokim is a shield and the contraction of His kindness and light, so that the world can bear it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 2056 נוסף: כך הוא בשמות אלו, הוי"ה הוא חסד, אלקים הוא מגן וצמצום חסדו ואורו בכדי שיהי' העולם יכול לסובלו: והנה נודע שבכל בוקר נתעורר מדת אברהם בחי' חסד כמ"ש: וישכם.

ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברם והיה שמך אברהם...

Your name shall no longer be called Avram



G-d left creation unfinished so that man would perfect it: the screens that hide G-dliness make a world possible, and through circumcision, and through weekday labor done in holiness, what was hidden is revealed and the mundane is raised up into Shabbos.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar asks why circumcision changed Avram's name to Avraham. Following the Midrash, everything created in the six days needs perfecting by man, as bitter lupines must be sweetened. The Alter Rebbe explains why: creation is renewed each day from nothing, and the physical can come into being only through screens (parsa), like the curtain before the Holy of Holies. Each partition gives birth to a new, derivative light. Some screens stay within holiness ("holy and holy"); the screen between holy and mundane hides the light until realms feel separate from G-d, though He still sustains them. Within the mundane, the Jewish week is "mundane prepared in the purity of the holy": Shabbos shines into it, yet it must stay veiled so that work is possible, and through that work man renews creation and brings it up into Shabbos. Circumcision is the same perfecting: Avram, the "exalted father" hidden behind a screen, becomes Avraham, whose added hei reveals Chochmah and Binah (milah = mal plus Yud-Hei, "mal" meaning speech and facing). Below, circumcision uncovers the source of life "for our children," without taking away its loftiness.

OUTLINE

- | | | |
|----------|---|----|
| 1 | Creation needs perfecting | ¶1 |
| | Circumcision and the Midrash of the lupines: G-d created the world to be completed by man. Daily renewal needs a screen, like the Temple curtain, between each world. | |
| 2 | The offspring light | ¶2 |
| | Each partition produces a new light, not of the essence of the first, until physical matter results. | |

3	Holy and mundane	¶3
	Unlike the screens within holiness, the screen between holy and mundane conceals so fully that realms feel independent, while G-d still sustains them as “G-d of gods.”	
4	The working week	¶4
	The mundane made holy: Shabbos shines into the weekdays, which must stay veiled so work can be done; labor renews creation and is raised up into Shabbos.	
5	Avram becomes Avraham	¶5-7
	Avram is the exalted source behind a screen; circumcision (mal plus Yud-Hei) reveals Chochmah and Binah, like speech and the Chashmal, down to the Time to Come.	
6	Circumcision in man	¶8
	Below, circumcision and peri’ah uncover the source of life “for our children,” keeping its loftiness; for Jews, havdalah means the mundane made holy.	

KEY CONCEPTS

Screen / partition (masach, parsa) מסך, פרסא

A barrier through which divine light passes from one level to the next. It hides the light enough for something new and distinct to come into being.

Offspring light (or shel toladah) אור של תולדה

The new light born on the far side of a partition, derived from the first light but not of its essence.

Holy and mundane בין קדש לחול

The deepest screen, which hides the light so completely that what is below it feels separate from G-d, unlike the separation of “holy from holy.”

Mundane prepared in the purity of the holy חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקדש

Mundane activity permeated by holiness, like chol hamoed and the week that draws from Shabbos, while still veiled enough for work.

Perfecting (tikkun) תקון

Man’s completion of a creation that G-d deliberately left unfinished, like sweetening bitter lupines; circumcision is its model.

Milah: mal and Yud-Hei מילה - מל י"ה

Circumcision as revealing: Yud-Hei stands for Chochmah and Binah, and “mal” means speaking and facing, so the hidden becomes open.

SECTION 1 • 11

Creation needs perfecting

1 ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברהם^{1,2} והיה שמך אברהם כי אב המון גוים וכי.

“Your name shall no longer be called Avram; rather, your name shall be Avraham, for [I have made you] the father of a multitude of nations,” etc.

The maamar opens with G-d’s words to Avraham at the covenant of circumcision, when the letter hei was added to his name. The question behind the whole maamar is why the circumcision should change his name and make him “father of a multitude of nations.”

הענין כי הטעם למילה דכתיב אשר ברא אלקים לעשות לתקן³ שעדיין צריך תקון ע”י האדם כי הגם שכבר ברא אלקים את האדם לא בראו בשלימות

The explanation: the reason for circumcision [is that] it is written, “which G-d created to make,” [meaning] to perfect, for it still needs perfecting by man. For although G-d has already created man, He did not create him complete.

The Alter Rebbe reads the phrase “which G-d created to make” as “created in order to be perfected”: G-d deliberately left creation unfinished so that man would complete it. Circumcision is the model: the body G-d made is completed by a human act.

וכדאיתא במדרש רבה⁴ (פ' בראשית פ' י"א) ששאל על המילה⁵ אם חביבה היא המילה למה נברא האדם ערל⁶ והיתה התשובה שכל מה שנברא⁷ בשימ"ב צריכים עשייה ותקון וכמו התורמסין שצריכין תיקון.^{8,9,10}

As is found in Midrash Rabbah (Parshas Bereishis, chapter 11): [someone] asked about circumcision, “If circumcision is so dear, why was man created uncircumcised?” And the answer was that everything that was created in the six days of creation needs [further] making and perfecting, just as lupines need perfecting.

In the Midrash a philosopher asks why, if circumcision is so beloved, the first man was not given it, and the answer is that everything made in the six days of creation needs further work, just as bitter lupines must be sweetened before they can be eaten. The lupine becomes this maamar’s image for perfecting creation.

ולהבין המשל איך הוא דומה לנמשל. הנה נודע מאמר המחדש בטובו¹¹ בכל יום תמיד מע”ב

And [we must] understand how the analogy resembles what it illustrates. Now, the saying is well known: “Who in His goodness renews each day, continually, the work of creation.”

Now the parable must be applied: in what sense is the world itself like an unfinished body or a bitter lupine? The Alter Rebbe begins from the morning blessing before the Shema, which says that G-d renews the work of creation every day.

תמיד הוא החדוש יש מאין וענין התהוות יש וגשמי מאין ורוחני א"א להיות כך רק ע"י בחיני מ"ש והבדילה הפרוכת¹² לכם בין הקודש כו'

"Continually" is the renewal of something from nothing. And the coming into being of something [tangible] and physical from nothing and spiritual cannot happen except through the level of what is written, "The curtain shall separate for you between the Holy," etc.

"Continually" means that creation is not a past event but an ongoing bringing of something out of nothing. For something tangible and physical to come out of what is spiritual, there must be something like the curtain in the Mishkan that divided the Holy from the Holy of Holies.

כי בהמ"ק שם היה מקור ההשפעה וגילוי השכינה¹³ בקד"ק ולהיות ההשפעה נמשך משם ולהלאה לא היה ע"י גילוי כל כך

For in the Beis HaMikdash, there, in the Holy of Holies, was the source of the flow [of divine influence] and the revelation of the Shechinah (Divine Presence). And for the flow to be drawn from there onward, it could not be through revelation to such a degree,

In the Beis HaMikdash, G-d's presence was openly revealed in the Holy of Holies, and from there blessing flowed out to the world. But if the flow had gone out with that same openness, nothing distinct from G-d could have come into being.

כי א"כ היה הכל אחד רק שנמשך ע"י מסך מבדיל והוא הפרוכת המבדיל בין קד"ק ששם הי' גילוי השכינה לבחי'

for if so, all would be one. Rather, it is drawn through a separating screen: this is the curtain that separates between the Holy of Holies, where the revelation of the Shechinah was, and the level of

Under full revelation everything would stay absorbed in G-d, "all one," leaving no room for a world that feels itself to exist. So the flow passes through a separating screen, pictured by the curtain before the Holy of Holies.

קדש ופרכת ת"א פרסא וכמה בחי' פרוכת הי' בבהמ"ק ומשכן שכל ההשתלשלות מעולם ועד עולם הוא ע"י מסך פרסא מפסיק בין כל עולם כו'.¹⁴

the Holy. And "paroches" (curtain), Targum Onkelos renders "parsa" (partition). And there were several kinds of curtain in the Beis HaMikdash and the Mishkan, for the whole chain of descending worlds (hishtalshelus), from world to world, is through a screen, a partition that interrupts between each world, etc.

The text notes that the Aramaic Targum renders "paroches" as "parsa," the word Kabbalah uses for the partitions between worlds. The several curtains of the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash reflect that every step of descent, from one world to the next, passes through such a partition.

SECTION 2 • 12

The offspring light

2 וזהו ענין המחדש בטובו שהתהוות מאין ליש הוא ע"י חדוש דהיינו ע"י מסך ופרסא נעשה אור חדש אור של תולדה¹⁵ ואין זה ממהות אור הראשון¹⁶ וכשירד ומשתלשל נעשה עוד פרסא עד שנתהווה גשמיות ממש:¹⁷

And this is the meaning of "Who in His goodness renews": the coming into being from nothing to something is through renewal. That is, through a screen and partition a new light comes to be, a light that is an offspring, and it is not of the essence of the first light. And as it descends and devolves further, there comes to be yet another partition, until actual physicality comes into being.

This is why the blessing speaks of "renewal": when light passes through a partition, what comes out on the other side is not the original light made smaller but a new light born from it, as a child is distinct from its parent. Each further partition produces yet another new light, until physical matter comes into being.

SECTION 3 • 13

Holy and mundane

3 אך יש כמה מיני מסכים המבדילין¹⁸ שיש עוד בחינה שאומרים במוצאי שבת¹⁹ המבדיל בין קדש²⁰ לחול

However, there are several kinds of separating screens. For there is another level, [of which] we say at the close of Shabbos, "Who separates between holy and mundane."

Now a distinction. The screens described so far separate levels within holiness; the havdalah blessing names a different kind, the separation between holy and mundane.

שהוא מסך מבדיל גמור ואינו דומה לפרסא שמפסיק בין הקודש לקדה"ק שזהו דרך השתלשלות אותו אור עצמו שנתגשם

This is a complete separating screen, and it is unlike the partition that interrupts between the Holy and the Holy of Holies, for that is the way of the chain of descent (hishtalshelus) of that very same light, as it becomes more material,

The curtain between the Holy and the Holy of Holies lets the same light come down and grow coarser. What lies beyond it is still that light, only in a lesser form.

וגם לאחר הפרסא הוא קודש (וע"ד שמבדילין במ"ש ליו"ט המבדיל בין קדש לקדש) משא"כ בין קדש לחול הוא מסך שמעלים ומסתיר האור עד שנעשה נפרד ממש

and even after the partition it is holy (in the manner that at the close of Shabbos into Yom Tov we say the separation, "Who separates between holy and holy"). Not so between holy and mundane: that is a screen which hides and conceals the light until [what is beyond it] becomes actually separate,

That is why what lies past such a partition is still holy, as the havdalah said when Yom Tov follows Shabbos separates "holy from holy." The screen between holy and mundane hides the light so completely that what is below it experiences itself as a separate existence.

כמו היכלות החיצונים²¹ המגביהים א"ע לומר לי יאורי²² כו' אלא שואתה מחיה את כולם²³ וקרו ליה אלהא דאלהיא²⁴ ואינן כופרים ממש

like the outer chambers, which exalt themselves to say, "My river is mine," etc., only that "You give life to them all," and they call Him "the G-d of gods," and they are not outright deniers.

The "outer chambers" are the realms outside holiness, which the Siddur version explains as the seventy heavenly ministers of the nations. They exalt themselves as self-made, like Pharaoh's boast "My river is mine," yet G-d gives them life, and the Talmud says they call Him "G-d of gods": they concede a supreme G-d and do not deny Him outright.

וזהו הודו לאלקי האלקי²⁵ כל"ח שלעולם חסדו והשפעתו מעולם ועד עולם עד שהוא בבחי' אלקי האלקים במקום ההעלם וההסתר והחושך ועל מסך מבדיל זה נאמר אלביש שמים קדרות²⁶ וכו':

And this is [the meaning of] "Give thanks to the G-d of the gods, for His kindness is le'olam (forever)": that His kindness and His flow [extend] from world to world, until He is at the level of "G-d of the gods" in the place of hiddenness, concealment and darkness. And of this separating screen it is said, "I clothe the heavens in blackness," etc.

The Alter Rebbe reads "His kindness is le'olam" as "to the worlds": G-d's kindness reaches from world to world, even into the deepest concealment, where He is known only as the G-d above their gods. This thick covering is the screen of Isaiah's "I clothe the heavens in blackness."

SECTION 4 • 14

The working week

4 והנה בבחי' חול זה יש ב' בחינות א' חול גמור היכלות דנוגה²⁷ דקרו ליי אלקא דאלקיא כנ"ל.

Now, within this level of the mundane there are two levels. The first: the completely mundane, the chambers of Nogah, which call Him “the G-d of gods,” as mentioned above.

The mundane itself has two levels. The first is the wholly mundane: the “chambers of Nogah,” the realm of kelipas nogah (the translucent husk that mixes good with bad), which, as said, acknowledge G-d only from afar as “G-d of gods.”

הב' הוא בחי' חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקדש חולו של מועד דהיינו שנמשך הארה מקדושה בחי' בטול גם בהחול וכמו ע"י שמירת שבת יש הארה בששת ימי החול מבחי' קדושת השבת.

The second is the level of “mundane things prepared in the purity of the holy,” [such as] the mundane days of the festival (chol hamoed). That is, an illumination from holiness, the level of self-nullification (bittul), is drawn even into the mundane; just as through keeping Shabbos there is an illumination in the six weekdays from the level of the holiness of Shabbos:

The second is the mundane permeated with holiness. The phrase comes from halachah: ordinary food handled with the purity rules of sacred food. Chol hamoed, the working days of a festival, is the model: days of work that still carry the festival's holiness, just as Shabbos shines into the days of the week.

ג' ימים הראשונים משבת שעברה וג' ימים אחרונים משבת הבא וזה נמשך לישראל בששת ימי המעשה²⁸ מקדושת שבת להיות כל מעשיהם בחול

the first three days from the Shabbos that has passed, and the last three days from the coming Shabbos. And this is drawn to the Jewish people in the six workdays from the holiness of Shabbos, so that all their deeds in the mundane should be

The week is split in two: Sunday to Tuesday draw from the Shabbos just past, Wednesday to Friday from the Shabbos to come. In this way a Jew's weekday activity itself can carry holiness.

ע"ד חולין שנעשו עטה"ק (וזהו ענין הבדלה במו"ש ברוך המבדיל כו' הברכה היא המשכה שיהיו החולין נעשי עטה"ק)²⁹ וע"ז נאמר ששת ימים תעשה מעשיך³⁰ וכי

in the manner of "mundane things prepared in the purity of the holy." (And this is the meaning of havdalah at the close of Shabbos, "Blessed ... Who separates," etc.: the blessing is a drawing down, that the mundane things be prepared in the purity of the holy.) And of this it is said, "Six days you shall do your work," etc.

So havdalah is not only a separation but a blessing, and in Chassidus a blessing means a drawing down: it draws holiness into the week so that the working days become "prepared in the purity of the holy." The verse "Six days you shall do your work" is read as the charge to do this.

וצריך להיות ששת ימי המעשה דוקא ע"י ההעלם ומסך (המבדיל בין קדש לחול) שאל"כ היה בטול ממש

And the six workdays must be specifically through the concealment and the screen (that separates between holy and mundane), for otherwise there would be actual self-nullification,

Yet the working days must stay veiled, with the screen in place. Otherwise the holiness would overwhelm them into complete self-nullification, and no work could be done.

וכמו ענין תפלת שמו"ע בהשתחוואי וכמו שא"א להרים יד לפני המלך כו' ומאן דמחוי במחוג קמי מלכא³¹ כו'.

as in the matter of the Shemoneh Esreh prayer with its bowings, and just as it is impossible to raise a hand before the king, etc., and "one who gestures with a finger before the king," etc.

Compare the Shemoneh Esreh, where one stands and bows before G-d as before a king: in such a presence one may not raise a hand or even point a finger. Full revelation leaves no room for action.

ובאמת כתי' יגיע כפיך כי תאכל³² ע"י ל"ט מלאכות הזורע והחורש והקוצר כו' דהיינו שע"י המעשה ממשיך הוי"ה חדשה והתהוות דבר חדש להיות המחדש בטובו מעשה בראשית דוקא וזהו אשר ברא אלקים לעשות.

And in truth it is written, "When you eat the toil of your hands," through the thirty-nine labors, sowing, plowing, reaping, etc. That is, through the deed one draws down a new existence and the coming into being of a new thing, so that there be "Who in His goodness renews the work of creation" specifically. And this is [the meaning of] "which G-d created to make."

The Torah praises eating from the toil of one's hands, the thirty-nine categories of creative work, because through work a person brings something new into being, just as G-d "renews" creation. That is the meaning of "which G-d created to make": G-d created, and man's making completes it.

תורמוסין צריכין תקון להפוך מרירו למיתקו להיות מי שטרח³³ בע"ש יאכל בשבת שיתעלה הכל בבחי' שבת

Lupines need perfecting, to turn their bitterness into sweetness, so that "one who toiled on the eve of Shabbos will eat on Shabbos," that all be elevated into the level of Shabbos.

Back to the Midrash's lupines: the world's bitterness is sweetened through human work, as the Talmud says that only one who prepared on Friday eats on Shabbos. The weekday effort is what is finally lifted up into Shabbos.

כי שבת היא מנוחה בחי' בטול כמו שמו"ע וא"א להיות כולו שבת כמו כולו שמו"ע רק תחלה להיות ימי החול כו'.

For Shabbos is rest, the level of self-nullification, like the Shemoneh Esreh; and it is impossible for it to be all Shabbos, just as [it cannot be] all Shemoneh Esreh; rather, first there must be the weekdays, etc.

Shabbos is rest, a state of self-nullification like the Shemoneh Esreh, and life cannot consist only of that. The weekdays, with their concealment, must come first, and then they are raised up.

SECTION 5 • 15-7

Avram becomes Avraham

5 ותקון זה הוא ג"כ בחי' המילה כי עד שלא נימול אברהם היה שמו אברם אב הוא בחי' ראשית הגילוי יש מאין

And this perfecting is also the aspect of circumcision. For until Avraham was circumcised his name was Avram. "Av" (father) is the level of the first revelation of something from nothing,

Circumcision is the same kind of perfecting. Before it, Avraham was called Avram, and "Av" (father) stands for the source of all flow, the first revelation of something from nothing.

שהוא מקור ההשפעה נק' בשם אב³⁴ והיה בבחי' רם על כל גוים כו' מפני שהיה ע"י מסך.

which, being the source of the flow, is called by the name "father." And it was in the state of "ram" (exalted), "high above all nations," etc., because it was through a screen.

"Ram" (exalted) describes that source as it stands above the world, "high above all nations," because it came through a screen and stayed hidden from them.

6 וע"י המילה נק' אברהם אב המון גוים להוסיף התכללות ניצוצות כי להיות ההארה בגלוי גמור עד שיתקרב הניצוץ ליכלל תחת כנפי השכינה הוא ע"י המילה כי מילה אותיות מל^{35,36,37} י"ה הם חו"ב.

And through the circumcision he was called Avraham, "father of a multitude of nations," to add the inclusion of sparks. For the illumination to be in complete revelation, until the spark draws near to be included under the wings of the Shechinah, is through circumcision. For milah (circumcision) is the letters mal [and] Yud-Hei, which are Chochmah and Binah.

With the added hei he becomes "father of a multitude of nations": his influence now reaches outward to gather the sparks of holiness among the nations, until they come "under the wings of the Shechinah," the phrase used for one who joins the Jewish people. The word milah (מילה) divides into mal (מל) and the letters Yud-Hei, which stand for Chochmah and Binah.

ומל הוא ל' התגלות³⁸ כי מל מלשון ממללא שהדבור הוא המגלה את החכמה להיות החכמה יוצאת מכח אל הפועל ומהעלי אל הגילוי

And "mal" is a term of revelation, for "mal" is from the word "memalela" (speaks), for speech is what reveals the wisdom, so that the wisdom goes out from potential to actual, and from concealment to revelation.

"Mal" is related to the Aramaic "memalela," speaks. Speech brings hidden wisdom into the open, so circumcision means the revealing of Chochmah and Binah.

ולכן לע"ל דכתי' אז אהפך אל עמים³⁹ שפה ברורה כתי' וראו כל בשר יחדיו⁴⁰ כי פי ה' דבר מחמת שיהי גילוי בחי דבור התגלות אלקות⁴¹ התגלות חכמה:

And therefore, in the Time to Come, of which it is written, "Then I will turn to the peoples a clear language," it is written, "And all flesh together shall see that the mouth of Havayah has spoken": because there will be the revelation of the level of speech, the revelation of G-dliness, the revelation of Chochmah.

The prophets foretell that in the Time to Come the peoples will have a "clear language" and "all flesh" will see that G-d has spoken. That is the full revelation of divine speech, which is the revelation of G-dliness and of Chochmah.

7 וגילוי זה למעלה הוא בבחי' חשמל עתים חשות⁴² דהיינו שלפעמים הוא בבחי' העלם סייג לחכמה שתיקה^{43,44} ועתים ממללות בחי' דבור וגילוי

And this revelation above is in the aspect of Chashmal: “at times silent” (chashos), that is, sometimes it is in the state of concealment, “a fence for wisdom is silence”; “and at times speaking” (memalelos), the level of speech and revelation.

The Talmud reads chashmal, the radiance in Ezekiel’s vision, as “chash” (silent) and “mal” (speaking): at times silent, at times speaking. So revelation above alternates: sometimes held back in silence, “a fence for wisdom,” and sometimes expressed in speech.

וגם מל מלשון והוא ישב ממולי⁴⁵ שהוא פי' נגדי כלומר דבר שנראה כאילו הוא לנוכח עיניו.

And also, “mal” is from the phrase “and he dwells opposite me” (mimuli), which is explained as “facing me”; that is to say, a thing that appears as though it is before one’s eyes.

“Mal” also means “opposite,” as in Balak’s words about Israel “dwelling opposite me.” Revelation means something set right before one’s eyes, seen face to face.

SECTION 6 • 18

Circumcision in man

8 ולמטה באדם התחתון הנה כתיב נעשה אדם בצלמנו⁴⁶ כדמותנו יש ג"כ מסך על אבר המשפיע שהוא בבחי' רם.

And below, in the lower man (for it is written, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”), there is also a screen on the bestowing organ, which is in the state of “ram” (exalted).

The idea now comes down to man below, made “in G-d’s image,” so that his body mirrors the structure above. In him too there is a screen, the foreskin, over the organ through which life passes to the next generation; like the “ram” of Avram, the source of the flow is covered and hidden.

הנסתרות לה' אלקינו⁴⁷ חו"ב והנגלות לנו ולבנינו שע"י המילה נעשה נגלות לנו ולבנינו שהגילוי אינו אלא בבחי' לבנינו שהוא בחי' הולדה כי

“The hidden things belong to Havayah our G-d”: [these are] Chochmah and Binah; “and the revealed things are for us and for our children”: for through the circumcision they become “revealed for us and for our children,” since the revelation is only in the aspect of “for our children,” which is the aspect of begetting.

The verse contrasts “hidden things,” which belong to G-d, with “revealed things,” which are “for us and for our children.” The Alter Rebbe reads the hidden things as Chochmah and Binah, which circumcision reveals, and the revealing is “for our children,” in begetting, the power to bring new life.

לכן כאשר נתוסף ה' באברהם מ"מ לא נעקר הרי"ש באברהם שעדיין הוא בחי' רם אלא שנתוסף בחי' ה' להיות בחי' רם זה בגילוי.

For this reason, when the hei was added to Avraham, the reish was nevertheless not uprooted from Avraham, for he is still in the state of “ram” (exalted); only the level of the hei was added, so that this level of “ram” would be in revelation.

That is why the hei added to Avraham’s name did not remove the reish of “ram”: the source stays exalted, but now it is revealed. Circumcision does not do away with the loftiness; it lets it shine openly.

והנה המילה היא גילוי (ופריעה היא גילוי יותר כמו ופרע את ראש האשה.⁴⁸ שחיטה מפורעת כו').

Now, circumcision is revelation (and peri’ah [uncovering] is even greater revelation, as in “and he shall uncover the woman’s head”; “an uncovered slaughter,” etc.).

Circumcision itself is a revealing, and peri’ah, the second stage of the mitzvah, in which the thin membrane is drawn back, reveals still more. The verse about uncovering the woman’s head and the phrase “an uncovered slaughter” show that the root of peri’ah means uncovering.

המסך המבדיל בין קדש לחול דישאל חולין שנעשו על טה"ק שהיא עיקר ההבדלה כי בשבעה⁴⁹ הבדלות להבדיל בין הטמא כו' אין אנו אומרים לפי שא"צ כ"כ כי מאחר שמעבירים ההבדלה שבין קדש לחול כו':

The screen that separates between holy and mundane, for the Jewish people, is “mundane things prepared in the purity of the holy,” which is the main separation. For of the seven separations, “to separate between the impure,” etc., we do not say, because it is not so necessary; for since one removes the separation between holy and mundane, etc.

For the Jewish people, the screen between holy and mundane is not the wall of the wholly mundane but the thin screen of “mundane things prepared in the purity of the holy,” and this is the essence of havdalah. The passage ends abruptly, and the Kehot note records the Rebbe’s remark that its wording needs some correction.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

The weekdays are not a lapse from holiness but its workshop: a person must do his work in the six days, with the screen of concealment in place, yet draw the light of Shabbos into it so that his labor becomes “mundane prepared in the purity of the holy.” Through that effort he perfects creation, sweetens its bitterness and brings it up into Shabbos.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why would G-d create a world, and a human body, that deliberately need perfecting by man?
2. How does the “offspring light” born through a partition differ from the original light, and why is that difference necessary for creation?
3. What distinguishes the screen “between holy and holy” from the screen “between holy and mundane”?
4. Why must the weekdays remain veiled rather than be full of revelation like Shabbos or the Shemoneh Esreh?
5. Why does the hei added to Avraham’s name leave the reish of “ram” in place, and what does that teach about revelation?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברהם

The note says the Siddur prints a transcript of this maamar by the Mittlerer Rebbe.

בראשית ל"ח:4: Genesis 38:4

וַתֵּהָר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אוֹנָן:

And she conceived again, and bore a son; and she called his name Onan.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי בסידור קמה, א. הנחת הר"מ בן אדה"ז בסה"מ תקס"ו ע"נ. בהתחלה "הנה בריתי אתך" בכותרת: "יום חמישי פי תולדות תורה ברבים בסעודת מצוה בברית מילה". ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר ז"ע. המאמר (בשינויים) עם הגהות באוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשטו, א. המאמר כמו שנדפס בסידור עם הגהות וקיצורים, שם תש"ו, א. וראה שם תשיג, א. לכללות המאמר ראה גם דרך מצותיך מצות מילה (ח, ב). ד"ה כרמי כ"ו האלף לך שלמה תרל"ט ע"ח. פלא הרמון בראשית לח, ד.

2 ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברהם

G-d changes Avram's name to Avraham at the covenant of circumcision, "for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations." This is the verse the maamar explains.

בראשית י"ז:5: Genesis 17:5

וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שְׁמְךָ אֲבְרָם וְהָיָה שְׁמְךָ אֲבְרָהָם כִּי אֲבִי־מִלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם יִתְקַיֵּם:

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יז, ה.

3 אשר ברא אלקים לעשות לתקן

Quoted in the note: everything created in the six days needs perfecting; the lupine, which stands for kelipas nogah, must have its bitterness turned to sweetness, and this perfecting is also circumcision, removing the screen that conceals.

בראשית רבה י"א:7: Bereshit Rabbah 11:7

ר' יוחנן בשם ר' יוסי בר חלפתא אמר: אברהם שאין כתוב בו שמירת שבת ירש את העולם במדה שנאמר (בראשית יג) "קום התהלך בארץ לארכה ולרחבה" וגו', אבל יעקב שכתוב בו שמירת שבת, שנאמר (שם/בראשית/ לג) "ויהן את פני העיר", נכנס עם דמדומי חמה, וקבע תחומין מבעוד יום, ירש את העולם שלא במדה שנאמר (שם/בראשית/ כח) "והיה זרעך כעפר הארץ" וגו'.

Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei bar Halafta: Abraham, in whose regard observance of Shabbat is not mentioned, inherited the world with a limited measure, as it is stated: "Arise, walk about in the land to its length and to

its breadth, [as to you I will give it]" (Genesis 13:17). But Jacob, in whose regard observance of Shabbat is mentioned, as it is stated: "He encamped before the city" (Genesis 33:18) - he entered with the dimming of the sun and established Shabbat boundaries [for his ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ב"ר יא, ז. וע' בפרש"י שם. מובא באוה"ת ש"ש ע' א'תפט "אך כי באמת הרי ארז"ל ע"פ אשר ברא אלקים לעשות לתקן כל מה שנברא בשי"ב צריכים תקון תורמסין שהוא ק"ג צריכים תקון להפך מרירו למיתקא ותיקון זה הוא ג"כ בחי המילה להעביר המסך המסתיר שמק"נ כ"ו ע"ש".

4 במדרש רבה

The note also points to the Midrash at the end of Vayishlach, "the straw and the stubble... wait until the threshing floor comes," and says Or HaTorah quotes and explains it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם מד"ר ס"פ וישלח ס"פ פ"ג התבן והקש כ"ו המתינו עד שתבוא הגורן כ"ו. מובא באוה"ת לך לך כרך ד ע' תשטו, א. תשכח, ב. ומבואר באוה"ת יתרו כרך ז ע' ביתש.

5 ששאל על המילה

The Tzemach Tzedek discusses the Midrash's question about circumcision in his explanation of the mitzvah of milah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה דרך מצותיך ח, ב.

6 למה נברא האדם ערל

It discusses the tradition that Adam was born circumcised, which bears on the Midrash's question why man was created uncircumcised.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ש חכ"ה ע' 14 הערה 9 בענין שאדה"ר נולד מהול ע"ש.

7 שכל מה שנברא

A later maamar discussing the Midrash's teaching that everything created needs perfecting.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ספר המאמרים תש"ג ע' 100.

8 והיתה התשובה . . שצריכין תקון

The Tzemach Tzedek asks why creation was made so that it needs perfecting at all, and answers that it is so that man's service, an arousal from below, has a place.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת לך לך כרך ד תשטו, א מבאר "ועדיין אינו מוכן כי למה נברא שיהי צריך תיקון" ע"ש וראה שם תש"ו, א שמבאר שלכאורה הכוונה כדי שיהי שייך עבודת האדם באתעדל"ת ע"ש בארוכה (המאמר הנ"ל הוא הגהות לסידור שער המילה קמה, א). וראה בסה"מ תרכ"ז ע' שיב. (הוצאת תש"ס)

ע' שלה. בלקו"ש חכ"ה ע' 14 נתבאר איך לתווך זה עם מארז"ל עולם על מליאתו נברא ע"ש באריכות.

9 התורמסין שצריכין תיקון

It explains the image of lupines that need to be made fit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה באוה"ת יתרו כרך ז' ע' ב'תש.

10 שכל מה שנברא בשימ"ב צריכים עשייה ותקון וכמו התורמסין שצריכין תיקון

A philosopher asks Rabbi Hoshaya why, if circumcision is beloved, it was not given to the first man; he answers that everything created in the six days needs further making: mustard and lupines must be sweetened, wheat ground, and even man needs perfecting. The Alter Rebbe builds the maamar on this answer.

Bereshit Rabbah 11:6 ו"א: בראשית רבה

פלוסופוס אחד שאל את רבי הושעיה, א"ל אם חביבה היא המילה מפני מה לא נתנה לאדם הראשון? א"ל מפני מה אותו האיש מגלח פאת ראשו, ומניח את פאת זקנו? א"ל מפני שגדל עמו בשטות, א"ל אם כן יסמא את עינו ויקטע את ידיו וישבר את רגליו על ידי שגדלו עמו בשטות, א"ל ולאלין מיליא אתינן, אתמהא, א"ל להוציאך חלק אי אפשר אלא כל מה שנברא בששת ימי בראשית צריכין עשייה, כגון החרדל צריך למתוק, התורמוסים צריך למתוק, החיטין צריכין להטחן, אפילו אדם צריך תיקון.

A certain philosopher once asked Rabbi Hoshaya, saying to him: 'If circumcision is so dear to Him [G-d], why was it not given to Adam the first man?' He said to him: 'Why does this man [the philosopher] shave the corner of [the hair on] his head but leave the corner of his beard?' He replied: 'It is because this [the head hair] grew with him in his period of foolishness.' He said to him: 'If so, he should put out his eye, sever his hands, and break his legs, ...

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11 המחדש בטובו

In the Siddur version this proof comes after the idea of the "offspring light," and it adds the question: what renewal is there in heaven and earth from one day to the next? This sharpens why the blessing speaks of daily renewal.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסידור מביא ראייה זה אחר הענין "אור של תולדה", ושם מוסיף "מה שאנו אומרים המחדש בטובו בכל יום מע"ב כו' דלכאורה מה זו חידוש יש בהשמים וארץ מיום לחבירו".

12 והבדילה הפרוכת

The Torah commands that the curtain in the Mishkan separate the Holy from the Holy of Holies. The Alter Rebbe takes this curtain as the model of the screen through which every world receives its light from the one above.

שמות כ"ו:ל"ג Exodus 26:33

וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת תַּחַת הַקְּרָסִים וְהַבָּאֶת שָׁמָּה מִבֵּית לַפָּרֹכֶת אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְהַבְדִּילָה הַפָּרֹכֶת לָכֶם בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ׃

And thou shalt hang up the veil under the clasps, and shalt bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony; and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כו, לג. בסה"מ תקס"ו ס"ע נה ואילך מבאר יותר באריכות בענין המסך. באוה"ת כאן תשטו, א מבאר שייכות פסוק זה לכאן "כי הנה איתא שכל מה שיש בעולם היה במשכן בעולם יהי רקיע ויהי מבדיל בין מים למים, ובמשכן והבדילה הפרוכת לכם" ע"ש.

13 ששם הי' גילוי השכינה

The Siddur's explanation of Tanya chapter 52 discusses the revelation of the Shechinah in the Holy of Holies.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע' בסידור בד"ה ביאור למ"ש בסש"ב פנ"ב.

14 מפסיק בין כל עולם כו'

Quoted in the note: by passing through a partition the flow changes into a newly made "something" that did not exist before, and the flow before the partition is called "nothing" relative to it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסה"מ תקס"ו מפרש "שע"י שעברה דרך פרסא נשתנה למהות יש מחודש מה שלא היה מקדם שבחי השפע שקודם הפרסא נק' לגבי בחי אין". ע"ש בארוכה.

PARAGRAPH 2

15 אור חדש אור של תולדה

There Beriah is called "something from nothing" because its light comes through the parda as an "offspring light," newly born like the insight a student gains from his teacher's parable.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן יד, ג. סידור קמה ב. סה"מ תקס"ט ע' ג. ביאור"י לאדהאמ"צ יז, א. סיום ר"ה תרס"ג. ביאור זה שנק' אור של תולדה מצויין ריבוי פעמים בדא"ח לכאן. וכן הלשון בסידור קמה, ב. אבל בסה"מ תקס"ו כתב המגיה הרה"ק ר' משה בן אדה"י שהמשכת השפע דזו השכינה ב"ה מהיכל ק"ק מצטרף להיות דרך מעביר הפרוכת" אבל לקמן בהביאור שם ע' סא מזכיר ענין "אור של תולדה".

16 ואין זה ממהות אור הראשון

The Tzemach Tzedek's glosses discuss why the light after the partition is not of the essence of the first light.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשי"א, א. ובספר הערכים-חב"ד כרך ג טור שפו הערה 6 שלכאורה הכוונה הוא שהטעם על מה שהאור הנמשך ע"י הפרסא נקרא "אור חדש" הוא לפי שע"י הפרסא משתנה האור מכמו שהי' קודם וממילא הוא חידוש לגבי האור שלפני הפרסא, ע"ש.

17 פרסא עד שנתהוה גשמיות ממש

The purpose of the partition is to let Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah receive the light at all.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ענין הפרסא הוא כדי שבי"ע יהי ביכולת לקבל האור. ראה סה"מ תרל"ט ח"א עי קעט בהנחת כ"ק מהורש"ב.

PARAGRAPH 3

18 אך יש כמה מיני מסכים המבדילין

It states that the partition is only a separation "between holy and holy," since after the partition it is still holy, which is why the text now turns to the separation between holy and mundane.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסידור קמה, ב ובאוה"ת כאן תשטו, ב מבאר מ"מ הוא רק הבדלה בין קודש לקודש שגם אחר הפרסא הוא קודש" וע"ז בא הביאור מענין המבדיל בין קודש לחול.

19 עוד בחינה שאומרים במוצאי שבת

A parallel discussion of the havdalah between holy and mundane, in the context of circumcision.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה דרך מצותיך מצות מילה ז, ב.

20 The prophet says the kohanim will teach the people "between holy and mundane." The Alter Rebbe uses the same pair, as said in havdalah, for the screen that separates holiness from the mundane.

יחזקאל מ"ד:כ"ג:ג

וְאֶת־עַמִּי יוֹרוּ בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל וּבֵין־טָמֵא לְטָהוֹר יוֹדְעִם:

And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the common, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

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21 כמו היכולות החיצוניים

It explains the outer chambers as the seventy heavenly ministers of the nations.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסידור קמה, ג מבאר הענין בעי שרים.

22 לי יאורי

Pharaoh, the great crocodile of the Nile, boasts "My river is mine, and I made myself." It is the classic image of a power that sees itself as independent of G-d.

יחזקאל כ"ט:ג:ג

דַּבֵּר וְאָמַרְתָּ כֹה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי ה' הִנְנִי עֲלֶיךָ פִּרְעָה מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם הַתִּנָּנִים הַגְּדוֹל הַרְבֵּב בְּתוֹךְ יַאֲרֵיו אֲשֶׁר אָמַר לִי יַאֲרִי וְאֲנִי עֲשִׂיתִנִּי:

speak, and say: Thus saith the L-rd GOD: Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh King of Egypt, The great dragon that lieth In the midst of his rivers, That hath said: My river is mine own, And I have made it for myself.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

יחזקאל כט, ג.

23 ואתה מחי את כולם

"You give life to them all": G-d sustains everything, even

...ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברם והיה שמך אברהם

the realms that deny their dependence on Him.

Nehemiah 9:6 ט:ו

אֶתְהִיְהוָה ה' לְבַדָּךְ אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־צָבָאָם הָאָרֶץ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ הַיָּמִים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם וְאֶתְהָאֵת־כָּל־כֶּלֶם וְצָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם לְךָ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיִּים:

Thou art the L-RD, even Thou alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נחמ"י ט, ו.

24 וקרו לי אלהא דאלהיא

The Talmud says that the nations call G-d "the G-d of gods": they acknowledge Him as supreme while serving intermediaries. Hence these realms are concealed, but not in outright denial.

מנחות ק"י א:ה'-ו' 110a:5-6

איתיביה רב שימי בר חייה לרב (מלאכי א, יא) ממזרח שמש ועד מבוא גדול שמי בגוים ובכל מקום מוקטר מוגש לשמי ומנחה טהורה אמר ליה שימי את דקרו ליה אלהא דאלהא בכל מקום מוקטר מוגש לשמי בכל מקום סלקא דעתך אמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר ר' יונתן אלו תלמידי חכמים העוסקים בתורה בכל מקום מעלה אני עליהן כאילו מקטירין ומגישין לשמי

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מנחות קי, א.

25 הודו לאלקי האלקי

"Give thanks to the G-d of the gods, for His kindness is forever." The Alter Rebbe reads "forever" (le'olam) as "to the worlds": His kindness reaches even the places where He is known only as the G-d of gods.

Psalms 136:2 ב'י:ב

הוֹדוּ לֵאלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹקִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ:

O give thanks unto the G-d of gods, For His mercy endureth for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קלו, ב.

26 אלביש שמים קדרות

"I clothe the heavens in blackness, and make sackcloth their covering." Here it describes the screen that fully conceals the light between holy and mundane.

ישעיהו נ:ג:ג

אֶלְבִּישׁ שָׁמַיִם קִדְרוֹת וְשָׂק אֲשִׁים כְּסוֹתָם:

I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י נ, ג. בסידור קמה, ג "שק הוא מרצופים של עור ולא של בגד . ע"כ יהיו העי שרים בבחי' נפרד כ"כ עד שמתכוונין למרוד בו". [בסה"מ תקס"ו ע' נז אינו מביא פסוק זה]. ועי' מזה בוח"א וישב דקפ"ה ע"א ובוח"מ שם ובמד"ר תחלת איכה וכי' היפ"ע שמחמת זה הלבוש נמשך אותותינו לא ראינו כו' (כ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ בבוכ ויקרא בשלימות דף יב, א).

PARAGRAPH 4

27

היכלות דנוגה

It discusses the chambers of Nogah in the name of a gloss by Rabbi Chaim Vital.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה מק"מ לזח"ב דף רכז, א בשם נ"ב מהר"ח.

28

Ezekiel speaks of the gate of the inner court that is shut "the six working days" and opened on Shabbos. The same phrase describes the weekdays, whose holiness stays veiled until Shabbos.

Ezekiel 46:1 א"ו: יחזקאל

כה־אמר אֲדֹנָי ה' שַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר הַפְּנִימִית הַפְּנֵה קָדִים יִהְיֶה סָגוּר שֵׁשֶׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יִפְתָּח וּבַיּוֹם הַחֲדָשׁ יִפְתָּח:

Thus saith the L-rd GOD: The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

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29

ברוך המבדיל . . שיהיו החולין נעשי עט"הק

It reads the havdalah blessing "Blessed are You... Who separates" as saying that the separation makes refinement (birur) possible.

KEHOT'S NOTE

להעיר מספר המאמרים ת"ש ד"ה ויקם עדות ביעקב ע' 57: ברוך אתה המבדיל . . כי אפשר לברר.

30

ששת ימים תעשה מעשיך

"Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest." The Alter Rebbe reads it as a charge to make the working days holy, within the concealment the week requires.

Exodus 23:12 ב"י: שמות

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבֹּת לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ שׁוֹרְךָ וַחֲמֹרְךָ וְיִנְפֹשׂ בֶּן־אִמְתֶּךָ וְהַגֵּר:

Six days thou shalt do thy work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest; that thine ox and thine ass may have rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כג, יב. בסידור קמה, ד ובדרך מצותיך ח, א במאר ענין הציווי בזה באמרו "תעשה מעשיך" מה זו מצוה לעבוד עבודה גשמית. ביאור זה ליתא גם בסה"מ תקס"ו.

31

ומאן דמחוי במחוג קמי מלכא

The Talmud uses the image of one who gestures with a finger before the king for improper conduct in the royal

...ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברם והיה שמך אברהם

presence. Here it shows that in full revelation of the King no action is possible.

Pesachim 57b נ"ו פסחים

חגיגה ה' ב:ד' Chagigah 5b:4

אָמרו לָקָה לָהּ הוּא מִיָּנָא: מַאי אַחֲוִיית לָקָה? עָמָא דְאַהֲדָרְיָהוּ מְרִיה מִיָּנִיה. וּמַאי אַחֲוִי לָהּ? לֹא יָדַעְנָא. אָמְרוּ: גִּבְרָא דְלֹא יָדַע מַאי מְחוּ לָקָה, בְּמַחֲוֵג יַחֲוִי קָמִי מְלָכָא! אָפְקוּהוּ וְקָטְלוּהוּ.

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים נו, ב. חגיגה ה, ב.

32

יגיע כפיד כי תאכל

"When you eat the toil of your hands, you will be happy and it will be well with you." The Alter Rebbe sees in human labor a new act of creation that completes G-d's work.

Psalms 128:2 ב"י: תהילים

יגיע כפיד כי תאכל אֲשֶׁרִיד וְטוֹב לִּי:

When thou eatest the labour of thy hands, Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קכח, ב.

33

מי שטרח בערב שבת

"One who toiled on the eve of Shabbos will eat on Shabbos": in the Talmud, a parable for this world and the World to Come. Here it teaches that the weekdays' work is what is raised up into Shabbos.

Avodah Zarah 3a:10 ג' א: עבודה זרה

אָמרו לְפָנָיו: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, תְּנֶה לָנוּ מְרָאשׁ וְנַעֲשֶׂנָה. אָמַר לָהֶן הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: שׁוּטִים שְׁבַעֲעוֹלָם! מִי שֶׁטָּרַח בְּעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת יֵאָכֵל בְּשַׁבָּת, מִי שֶׁלֹּא טָרַח בְּעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת מֵהֵיכָן יֵאָכֵל בְּשַׁבָּת? אֲלֹא אֵף עַל פִּי כֹן, מִצְוָה קִלְקָה יֵשׁ לִי וְסוּכָה שָׁמָּה, לָכוּ וַעֲשׂוּ אוֹתָהּ.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ע"ז ג, א.

PARAGRAPH 5

34

נקי בשם אב והי בבחי' רם

A further discussion of the name Avram as "father" and "exalted."

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת בראשית כרך ד פי' לך תרפט, ב.

PARAGRAPH 6

35

מילה אותיות מל י"ה

The passage there discusses how the "higher earth," Malchus, reveals the power of bringing things into being from nothing each day, and it cites this maamar for mal Yud-Hei.

KEHOT'S NOTE

טעמי המצות ס"פ לך לך, ע"ח שער לג פ"ג. מובא בלקו"ת פינחס עט, ג.

36

מילה אותיות מל י"ה

It gives this division of the word milah in the name of Tikkunei Zohar, tikkun 22.

Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 22 • 65b:4-5

שימני כחותם דא אות ברית מילה, ואות דימין טבין, דאיהו רשימו דשמא קדישא, כגוונא דא (שם ל יב), מ י י ע לה ל נו ה שממה, רשי אתון (נ"א תיבין) מילה, וסופי אתון יהו"ה, מאן דנטיר האי רשימו, כאלו נטיר שמא קדישא, ומאן דמשקר בהאי רשימו, כאלו משקר בשמא קדישא, דהאי אתקרי חותמא דגושפנקא דמלקא. דכל בר נש דנטיר האי רשימו לתתא, דאיהו אות ברית, אות שבת, אות תפלין, אות דימין טבין, איהו רשמי וחקיק לעילא, ונחיר ...

Tikkunei Zohar - Vocalized (Public Domain)

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסה"מ תרל"ג ח"ב ע' ת בשם ת"ז תי" כב. טעמי המצות להאריז"ל פ' לך לך סוד מצות מילה ופריעה. בלקו"ת פנחס עט, ג מציין לכאן.

37

מילה אותיות מל י"ה

The Kehot note cites the Arizal's Etz Chaim for dividing milah into mal and Yud-Hei. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that circumcision reveals Chochmah and Binah.

Sefer Etz Chaim 33:3

... ונחזור לענין כי הנה על ידי המילה שהוא כריתת ערלה עדיין העי אורות הנ"ל המגולין לא נתפשטו רק בכ"ש תחתונים דת"ת ובנ"ה אבל עדיין לא נתפשטו ביסוד עצמו דז"א וזהו ענין ד' אותיות מילה פירוש מ"ל י"ה. כי מ"ל הם ע' אורות המגולין וי"ה הם בחי' שליש עליון המכוסה ולמטה בסוד פריעה נבאר למה נקרא י"ה וצריך המוהל לכוין לזה בכריתת הערלה שעיי' יתגלו מ"ל אורות הנ"ל במקומם עד הוד ע"ד הנ"ל ויכוין באומרו על המילה שהוא מ"ל י"ה כמ"ש ענין י"ה למטה בענין הפריעה שהוא ג"כ פרע י"ה. ...

Sefer Etz Chaim (Public Domain)

38

ומל הוא לי התגלות

The same Likkutei Torah passage quotes this explanation of "mal" as revelation, in its discussion of the higher earth revealing its hidden power to bring things into being.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא בלקו"ת פינחס עט, ג.

39

אז אהפך אל עמים

"For then I will turn to the peoples a clear language, that they all call on the Name of G-d." It describes the future revelation that reaches even the nations.

Zephaniah 3:9

כי־אז אֶהפֶּךָ אֶל־עַמִּים שָׁפָה בְּרוּרָה לְקָרָא כָּלֶם בְּשֵׁם ה' לְעַבְדּוֹ שֶׁכֶּם אֶחָד:

For then will I turn to the peoples A pure language, That they may all call upon the name of the L-RD, To serve Him with one consent.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

צפני' ג, ט.

40

וראו כל בשר יחדיו

"The glory of G-d will be revealed, and all flesh together shall see that the mouth of G-d has spoken." In the Time to Come even physical flesh will perceive divine speech openly.

Isaiah 40:5

וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה' וְרָאוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִי ה' דִּבֶּר:

And the glory of the L-RD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the L-RD hath spoken it.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י מ, ה.

41

ולכן לע"ל . מחמת שיהי גילוי בחי' דבור התגלות אלקות

It quotes this passage and adds that now, by contrast, we are in the state of "I was mute with silence," as explained in Likkutei Torah, Tzav.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא באוה"ת נ"ך כרך א ע' ק ומוסיף ע"ז "וכמ"ש בלקו"ת פ' צו בדי"ה והיה אור הלבנה פ"א שעכשיו הוא בחי' נאלמתי דומיה כו".

PARAGRAPH 7

42

בבחי' חשמל עתים חשות

The Talmud explains chashmal as "at times silent, at times speaking." The Alter Rebbe uses it for revelation that alternates between concealment and speech.

Chagigah 13b:1-2

חיות אש ממקלות. כמתניתא תנא: עתים חשות, עתים ממקלות. בשעה שהדיבור יוצא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא — חשות, ובשעה שאין הדיבור יוצא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא — ממקלות. "והחיות רצוא ושוב כמראה הבזק". מאי "רצוא ושוב"? אמר רב יהודה: כאור היוצא מפי הכבשן. מאי "כמראה הבזק"? אמר רבי יוסי בר חנינא: כאור היוצא מפיין התרסים.

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יג, ב. בסה"מ תקס"ו ע' ס "ענין חשמל שראה יחזקאל הנביא ע"ה כדאמרי' בגמרא מאי חשמל תנא עתים חשות ועתים ממללות, פ"י שהחיות רצוא ושוב . . שלפעמים הם חשות בבחי' ביטול האמיתי". ענין זה ליתא בסידור.

43

סייג לחכמה שתיקה

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות ג, יג.

44

סייג לחכמה שתיקה

Rabbi Akiva: "A fence for wisdom is silence." Here it describes wisdom held back in concealment.

Pirkei Avot 3:13

רבי עקיבא אומר, שחוק וקלות ראש, מרגילין לערוה. מטרות, סגן לתורה. מעשרות, סגן לעשר. נדרים, סגן לפרישות. סגן לחכמה, שתיקה:

דברים כט, כח.

Rabbi Akiva said: Merriment and frivolity accustom one to sexual licentiousness; Tradition is a fence to the Torah; Tithes a fence to wealth, Vows a fence to abstinence; A fence to wisdom is silence.

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45

והוא ישב ממולי

Balak complains that the people of Israel “dwell opposite me.” The Alter Rebbe draws from “mimuli” the sense of “facing,” revelation before one’s eyes.

Numbers 22:5: במדבר כ"ב:ה

וַיִּשְׁלַח מִלְאָכִים אֶל־בִּלְעָם בֶּן־בְּעֹר פְּתוּרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַנָּהָר אֲרֶץ בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹ לְקַרְאֵלּוֹ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עִם יָצָא מִמִּצְרַיִם הִנֵּה כֹסֶה אֶת־עֵינֵי הָאָרֶץ וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב מִמּוֹלִי:

And he sent messengers unto Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the River, to the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying: ‘Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt; behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

במדבר כב, ה.

PARAGRAPH 8

46

נעשה אדם בצלמנו

“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Because man is made in G-d’s image, the screen and its removal above have a counterpart in the human body.

Genesis 1:26: בראשית א':כ"ו

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדֹמוֹתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

And G-d said: ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.’

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KEHOT’S NOTE

בראשית א, כו.

47

הנסתרות לה' אלקינו

“The hidden things belong to Havayah our G-d, and the revealed things are for us and for our children forever.” The Alter Rebbe reads the hidden things as Chochmah and Binah, which circumcision reveals “for our children.”

Deuteronomy 29:28: דברים כ"ט:כ"ח

הַנְּסֻתֹת לַהֲוַיָּהּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַגְלוֹת לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ עַד־עוֹלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת:

The secret things belong unto the L-RD our G-d; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

ופרע את ראש האשה

48

In the ritual of the sotah the kohen uncovers the woman’s head. The verb is the root of peri’ah, and it shows that peri’ah means uncovering, a fuller revelation.

Numbers 5:18: במדבר ה':י"ח

וְהָעֹמֵד הִכְהִין אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה לִפְנֵי ה' וּפָרַע אֶת־רֹאשׁ הָאִשָּׁה וְנָתַן עַל־כַּפֶּיהָ אֶת מִנְחַת הַזֶּכֶּרֶן מִנְחַת קְנָאת הוּא וּבִיד הִכְהִין יְהוָה מִי הַמָּרִים הַמֵּאָרִיִּם:

And the priest shall set the woman before the L-RD, and let the hair of the woman’s head go loose, and put the meal-offering of memorial in her hands, which is the meal-offering of jealousy; and the priest shall have in his hand the water of bitterness that causeth the curse.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

במדבר ה, יח.

49

שו"ה כי בשבעה

The Rebbe remarks on these words that “the wording needs some correction,” which explains why the last lines of the maamar read abruptly.

KEHOT’S NOTE

לעיל בהערות ותיקונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע מציין ע"ז "ה' צריך תיקון קצת". ולהעיר שבכל האוה"ת שנדפסו [לאחר שכתב כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע הערה זו] ליתא שני שורות אלו. ובאוה"ת כרך ד תשכ, ב הסיום קודם הקיצור: "אשר עונג העליון שנמשך ע"י העלאת מ"ן מבחי' החולין שנעשו על טה"ק. והנה אשר אותיות ראש שלמעלה מבחי' ראשית וזהו לעשות את השבת". בסידור מסיים בתי "ופרע . . שחיטה מפורעת".

והבדילה הפרוכת לכם

“And the curtain shall separate for you”



The partition between the worlds, the Chashmal, is rooted higher than what it conceals, like a parable that only a great mind can make; its concealment is what makes creation “something from nothing” possible.

The screen of kelipas nogah beneath it is the “foreskin” that man removes, through the refinement of the weekdays and through circumcision, so that G-d is revealed below as above.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar begins with the Temple’s gate-curtains, hung “for modesty” even when the gates stood open by day, and maps the Temple onto Malchus of Atzilus: at night the gates of Eden close and only an outer flow continues, as in sleep only the body’s lower functions work. Even by day the inner light passes through a partition, which the Alter Rebbe identifies, following Etz Chaim, with the Chashmal: the outer garment of Binah that wraps Z’eir Anpin and Nukva on their sides and forms a “shoe” beneath them, the screen between Atzilus and Beriah. Like a parable, it clothes and is lower than what it clothes, yet is rooted far higher; hence its name, chash (the silence of its root in Chochmah and Binah) and mal (speech, its outward expression). This explains the Talmud’s saying that the Chashmal-angels are silent when G-d’s speech goes forth. The shoe also limits the light reaching Beriah to a “derivative light,” so creation exists as “something from nothing.” On Shabbos one screen stands between Atzilus and the world, on weekdays more; below all the holy screens is kelipas nogah, the foreskin, which man refines through honest weekday work and removes through circumcision, making Avraham “father of a multitude of nations.”

OUTLINE

1 The curtain “for modesty”: day and night in Malchus

¶1

The Temple’s gate-curtains and the Temple’s parallel in Malchus of Atzilus; at night the gates of Eden close and only outer vitality flows, as in sleep.

2 The Chashmal: garment, shoe and parable

¶2

Inner light by day still passes a partition, the Chashmal of Binah, which guards the emotive Sefiros and becomes the screen between worlds; like a parable it is rooted above what it clothes, hence chash and mal.

3 The silent angels and “something from nothing”

¶3-4

Chashmal-angels fall silent when G-d’s speech is revealed and speak when it withdraws; the shoe beneath Z’eir Anpin and Nukva reduces the light to a derivative light, so Beriah exists as something from nothing.

4 Shabbos, weekdays and kelipas nogah

¶5

The number of screens by day and place; kelipas nogah as the foreskin between holy and profane; man’s task to refine the weekdays and make them holy; milah as mal Yud-Hei.

5 Circumcision: “My covenant with you”

¶6

Removing the foreskin gathers sparks (“father of a multitude of nations”) and draws the raised Malchus, “I” with zakef gadol, through Yesod to be revealed below.

KEY CONCEPTS

Partition (parsa) / screen (masach) פרסא / מסך

The divide between one world and the next, above all between Atzilus and Beriah. It lets light through only in reduced, “modest” form.

Chashmal חשמל

The outer garment of Binah that wraps Z’eir Anpin and Nukva to keep the external forces away; beneath them it becomes the “shoe,” the screen between worlds. Its name divides into chash (silence) and mal (speech).

Shoe (naal / minal) נעל / מנעל

The part of the Chashmal beneath the “feet” of the Sefiros, identified with the screen between Atzilus and Beriah; Metatron is called “the shoe of the Shechinah.”

Derivative light (or shel toldah) אור של תולדה

The light that passes through the screen into Beriah: an offshoot rather than the essence, and therefore the “nothing” from which created “something” comes.

Kelipas nogah קליפת נוגה

The “glowing husk” below Asiyah, between holiness and impurity; the “foreskin” that separates holy from profane and that man must refine and remove.

Profane things prepared in the purity of

holiness חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקדש

The goal of weekday life: ordinary activity, done faithfully and for the sake of Heaven, raised into holiness through the holiness of Shabbos.

SECTION 1 • 11

The curtain “for modesty”: day and night in Malchus

1 והבדילה הפרוכת¹ לכם.² הנה בעי"ח (שער מ"א)³ מבואר שיש פרסא (ועי בעי"ח שער ז' פ"ב)⁴

“And the curtain (paroches) shall separate for you.” Now, in Etz Chaim (Sha’ar 41) it is explained that there is a partition (parsa) (and see Etz Chaim, Sha’ar 7, chapter 2).

The maamar opens with the verse about the curtain (paroches) that divided the Holy from the Holy of Holies in the Mishkan. The Alter Rebbe immediately links it to a Kabbalistic idea from the Arizal’s Etz Chaim: that in the spiritual worlds too there is a “partition” (parsa), a dividing screen between one level and the next.

ובגמרא בכתובות (דק"ו ע"א) איתא י"ג פרוכת היו במקדש שני⁵ ז' כנגד ז' שערים כו' ופרש"י דלצניעותא עבידי.

And in the Gemara, in Kesubos (106a), it is stated: “There were thirteen curtains in the Second Temple: seven opposite the seven gates,” etc.; and Rashi explains that they were made for modesty.

The Talmud records that the Second Temple had thirteen curtains, seven of them hung at the seven gates of the Courtyard. Rashi explains that these gate-curtains were not structural but “for modesty”: to screen what was inside from direct view.

והיינו כי בלילה היו השערים ננעלים וכדאיתא במסכת תמיד רק ביום היו פתוחים שיהיו נכנסין ויוצאין דרך פתחי השערים והיו מוכרחים להיות פתוחים אעפ"כ היי פרוכת לכל שער לצניעות כו'.

That is: at night the gates were locked, as is stated in Tractate Tamid, and only by day were they open, so that people could go in and out through the gateways; and [though] they had to be open, nevertheless there was a curtain for each gate, for modesty, etc.

The point of the detail: the gates were locked at night anyway, so the curtains mattered only by day, when the gates stood open for people to pass through. Even when entry was open, the inside was still veiled, and the maamar will apply this to how Divine light passes from world to world.

וענין זה הוא כי הנה העזרה והלשכות הם מכוונים נגד מלכות דאצילות כי למעלה במלכות יש כל הכחי שבעזרה וגם הר הבית ת"ק אמה כמ"ש בזהר שלח לך (דקס"א ע"ב).⁶

The meaning of this is as follows. The Temple Courtyard (Azarah) and the chambers correspond to Malchus (sovereignty) of the World of Atzilus (Emanation), for above, in Malchus, there are all the aspects that are in the Courtyard, and also the Temple Mount of five hundred cubits, as stated in the Zohar, [Parshas] Shelach Lecha (161b).

The Temple on earth mirrors a structure above. Its Courtyard and chambers correspond to Malchus of Atzilus, the lowest Sefirah of the highest world, the one that faces outward to the worlds below; the Zohar even speaks of a supernal Temple Mount of five hundred cubits.

והנה בלילה תרעין דג"ע אסתימו⁷ וכמו שננעלים השערים שערי העזרה הגם דכתי' ותקם בעוד לילה⁸
ותתן טרף לביתה היינו בבחי' חיצוניות דוקא

Now, at night "the gates of the Garden of Eden are closed," just as the gates, the gates of the Courtyard, are locked. And although it is written, "She rises while it is still night and gives food to her household," that is specifically in the outer dimension (chitzoniyus).

The Zohar teaches that at night the gates of the Garden of Eden (the spiritual abode of souls) close, just as the Temple gates were locked. The verse about the "woman of valor" who rises at night to feed her household (read as Malchus sustaining the worlds) does not contradict this: what flows at night is only the outer dimension of G-d's influence, not its inner light.

וכמו באדם בשעת שינה שהוא הסתלקות וקבוץ החיות מן הדם הוא הנפש לתוך הלב ונסתם הכל
בתוכו שאין מתפשט ממנו פנימית החיות רק קיסטא דחיותא⁹ וחיצוניות שאז הוא דוקא גילוי
והתפשטות חיצוניות החיות

It is like a person during sleep, which is a withdrawal and gathering of the life-force from the blood, which is the soul, into the heart, and everything is closed up within it, so that the inner dimension (pnimiyus) of the life-force does not spread out from it, but only a kista de-chayusa (a small measure of life) and the outer dimension; for at that time there is specifically the revelation and spreading of the outer dimension of the life-force,

The Alter Rebbe illustrates this with human sleep. In sleep the soul's vitality withdraws into the heart and is closed up there; only a "small measure of life" remains active in the body, the outer, basic functions of life.

כמו כח הזן וכח המעכל שבנפש שהן בחי' חיצוניות לגבי כח השכל והמדות וראיה ושמיעה.^{10, 11, 12}
such as the nourishing power and the digestive power in the soul, which are the outer dimension compared with the power of the intellect, the emotive attributes (middos), sight and hearing.

During sleep the functions that keep working are the vegetative ones, nourishment and digestion. These are "outer" compared with the soul's higher powers of thought, feeling, sight and hearing, which fall silent in sleep.

SECTION 2 • 12

The Chashmal: garment, shoe and parable

2 והתפשטותן עיקרן בשעת שינה שבשעה שאינו ישן ומאיר השכל אז כח המעכל והזן אינן בהתפשטות כ"כ מצד התכללותן בכח השכל כנר בפני אבוקה ולכן מעכב התפשטותן

Their spreading takes place mainly during sleep. For when a person is not asleep and his intellect shines, the digestive and nourishing powers are not so spread out, because they are included in the power of the intellect, like a candle before a torch; and therefore [the intellect] holds back their spreading.

The nourishing and digestive powers work mainly in sleep. When a person is awake and thinking, these lower powers are absorbed in the dominant intellect, as a candle's flame is lost beside a torch, and so the intellect keeps them from spreading out fully.

אבל בשעת שינה שמסתלק ממשלת כח השכל אז הן מתפשטין ואז הקיבה מעכל ושולח אל הכבד כו'. וכח הזן והמעכל והדוחה וכה"ג הם כחות חיצוניות ותחתוניות שבנפש.

But during sleep, when the rule of the power of the intellect withdraws, they spread out, and then the stomach digests and sends [the food] on to the liver, etc. The nourishing, digestive and expelling powers and the like are the outer and lower powers of the soul.

In sleep, when the intellect's rule withdraws, the lower powers spread freely: the stomach digests and passes nourishment to the liver. Nourishing, digesting and expelling are the soul's "outer" and "lower" powers, the ones that operate even when the higher ones are withdrawn.

וכך למעלה במלכות דאצי' שבליילה תרעין דג"ע אסתימו שההארה שנמשך מבחי' מל' בג"ע זיו השכינה זהו עיקר הארת פנימיות המל'

So too above, in Malchus (sovereignty) of the World of Atzilus (Emanation): at night "the gates of the Garden of Eden are closed." For the illumination drawn from the level of Malchus into the Garden of Eden, the radiance of the Shechinah (Divine Presence), is the main illumination of the inner dimension (pnimiyus) of Malchus

Now the analogy is applied above. At "night" in Malchus of Atzilus, the gates of Eden close: the radiance of the Shechinah that souls enjoy in the Garden of Eden is the inner light of Malchus, and that is what withdraws.

(דהיינו שההמשכה מבחי ג"ר שבמלי וכמ"ש במ"א בביאור הזהר פ' אחרי) ¹³ ובלילה מסתלק הארה זו אלא שהשפע' חיצוניות נמשך אז והיינו ותתן טרף ¹⁴ בבי"ע (והמשכה זו מבחי ז"ת שבמלי)

(that is, the drawing down is from the level of the first three [Sefiros] within Malchus, as explained elsewhere in the explanation of the Zohar on Parshas Acharei). At night this illumination withdraws, and only an outer flow is drawn down then; this is [the meaning of] “and gives food” in [the worlds of] Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah (and this drawing down is from the level of the seven lower [Sefiros] of Malchus).

The inner light of Eden comes from the “first three,” the intellectual Sefiros within Malchus. At night that withdraws and only an outer flow continues to Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah (“she gives food to her household”), coming from the seven lower, emotive Sefiros within Malchus: the life-sustaining minimum, like digestion in sleep.

וביום נפתחים תרעי דג"ע לפי שיש התגברות החסדים חסד אל כל היום ¹⁵ ע"כ נמשך אז המשכה הפנימית ואעפ"כ יש בחי פרוכת פרסא ונמשך המשכה זו

By day the gates of the Garden of Eden are opened, because there is a strengthening of the Chasadim (kindnesses) — “the kindness of G-d is all day long” — therefore the inner flow is drawn down then. Nevertheless there is [still] the level of a curtain, a partition, and this flow is drawn down

By day the Chasadim (the kindnesses) prevail, as the verse says, “the kindness of G-d is all day long,” and so the inner flow opens. Yet even then, like the curtains hung in the open Temple gates, there is a partition through which the flow must pass.

ע"י אמצעות הפרסא והפרסא היא מבחי חשמל שהוא מחיצוניות הבינה שמלביש ומקיף את י"ס דז"א וי"ס דנוק' כתנו' עור ¹⁶ ומלבישם מצדיהם

by means of the partition. And the partition is from the level of the Chashmal, which is from the outer dimension (chitzoniyus) of Binah (understanding), which clothes and surrounds the ten Sefiros of Z'eir Anpin (the emotive attributes) and the ten Sefiros of Nukva (the feminine / Malchus) like a garment of skin, and clothes them on their sides.

The partition is identified with the Chashmal, the mysterious “electrum” of Ezekiel’s vision, which in Kabbalah is the outermost garment of Binah. It wraps the Sefiros of Z'eir Anpin and Nukva on their sides like the “garments of skin” G-d made for Adam and Chavah.

והוא בכדי שלא יהיה יניקת החיצונים ומתחת רגליהם הוא בחי' מנעל¹⁷ להיות הפסק בין אצילות לבריאה וליצירה כו'

This is so that there be no drawing of nourishment by the external forces. And beneath their feet it is the level of a shoe, to be a separation between Atzilus and Beriah and Yetzirah, etc.

The purpose of this wrapping is to keep the “external forces” (the forces of kelipah) from drawing nourishment from holiness. The part of it that lies beneath the “feet” of these Sefiros is called a “shoe,” and it forms the division between Atzilus and the lower worlds.

ונעל הזה¹⁸ הוא בחי' המסך והפרסא המפסיק בין אצילות לבריאה כמ"ש בע"ח שמ"א פ"א ופרק ו' ובשער מ' פ"א¹⁹ וכמו שפירש"י לצניעות דהיינו שלא יהיה

(This shoe is the level of the screen and partition that separates between Atzilus and Beriah, as stated in Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 41, chapter 1 and chapter 6, and in Sha'ar 40, chapter 1.) And [this is] as Rashi explained, “for modesty,” meaning that there should not be

The Alter Rebbe cites the Arizal's Etz Chaim: this “shoe” is the very screen (masach) and partition that separates Atzilus from Beriah. He returns to Rashi's word “modesty” to explain what the screen accomplishes.

כל גילוי האור של אצילות בבריאה כ"א בדרך מסך שהמלכות דאצילות בוקע המסך ונעשה עתק לבריאה (ע' בע"ח שמ"א פ"א ואגה"ק איהו וחיוהי) וכן בכל עולם.

the full revelation of the light of Atzilus in Beriah, but only by way of a screen: Malchus of Atzilus breaks through the screen and becomes Atik of Beriah (see Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 41, chapter 1, and Iggeres HaKodesh, [the letter] “He and His life-force”). And so it is in every world.

“Modesty” means that Atzilus is not openly revealed in Beriah. Its light passes only through the screen: Malchus of Atzilus “breaks through” the screen and becomes Atik, the hidden highest level, of Beriah. The same pattern repeats between every world and the one below it.

שבבריא נעשה ג"כ חשמל מחיצוניות הבינה²⁰ ומקיף לזו"נ עד שנעשה מנעל כו' (בע"ח שמ"א פ"א שהמסך שבין בריאה ליצירה אינו מבינה דבריא אלא מת"ת דבריא אלא שבת"ת יש ג"כ חשמל כמ"ש הרמ"ז ס"פ יתרו בשם²¹ א"י).

For in Beriah, too, a Chashmal is formed from the outer dimension of Binah, and it surrounds Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, until it becomes a shoe, etc. (In Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 41, chapter 1, [it is stated] that the screen between Beriah and Yetzirah is not from Binah of Beriah but from Tiferes of Beriah; but in Tiferes too there is a Chashmal, as the Ramaz writes at the end of Parshas Yisro in the name of [the book] Adam Yashar.

So in Beriah too, the outer garment of its own Binah wraps its Z'eir Anpin and Nukva and becomes the "shoe" below them. In a parenthetical note the Alter Rebbe weighs another opinion in Etz Chaim (that this lower screen comes from Tiferes of Beriah) and reconciles them: Tiferes also has a Chashmal, as Rabbi Moshe Zacuto (the Ramaz) writes, citing the Kabbalistic work Adam Yashar.

ואמנם בלקוטי הש"ס מהאריז"ל²² דט"ז ד"ה לכי ומעטי א"ע כמ"ש כאן ע"ש ועמ"ש בביאור ע"פ כי ביום הזה יכפר²³).²⁴

However, in Likkutei HaShas from the Arizal, page 16, in the passage beginning "Go and diminish yourself," [it is] as written here; see there. And see what is written in the explanation of the verse "For on this day He shall atone.")

He adds that the Arizal's comments on the Talmud, on the moon being told "Go and diminish yourself," agree with what is said here, and refers the reader to his own explanation of "For on this day He shall atone" (printed in Likkutei Torah, Acharei).

ולהבין ענין חשמל²⁵ זה מה ענינו הנה מבשרי אחזה²⁶ כי במדות אין שם התגלות כל השכל שאם כן היו המדות בטלים בהשכל ולא הי' מהם כלל התפשטות והמשכה

To understand what this Chashmal is: "from my flesh I behold" [it]. In the emotive attributes (middos) there is not the revelation of the whole intellect, for if there were, the attributes would be nullified in the intellect, and there would be no spreading forth and drawing out from them at all.

Now he explains the Chashmal from human experience ("from my flesh I behold G-d"). A person's emotions cannot contain his full intellect; if they did, they would dissolve in it and never come out as feelings at all.

אלא שאעפ"כ מקיף עליהם הארה מועטת מחיצוניות הבינה בחי' התבוננות שלמעלה מן המדות בכדי שלא יהי' יניקת החיצונים שמהמדות יכול להיות אחיזה לסט"א

Nevertheless, a small illumination from the outer dimension of Binah surrounds them — the level of contemplation that is above the emotive attributes — so that there be no drawing of nourishment by the external forces, for from the emotive attributes the sitra achra (the other side) can gain a hold,

Still, a small light from the outside of Binah, a kind of overarching contemplation that stays above the feelings, surrounds them. Its job is protective: emotions are where the sitra achra (the side opposed to holiness) can take hold.

וכמארז"ל לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל^{27,28} כו' וכן שבה"כ היה בהמדות לפיכך צ"ל בחי' חשמל מקיף שלא יהי' להם יניקה מהמדות אלא בדרך שערות וצפרנים כפי הצורך בלבד

as our Sages said, "Not like Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth," etc.; and likewise the breaking of the vessels was in the emotive attributes. Therefore there must be the level of an encompassing Chashmal, so that they draw no nourishment from the attributes except in the manner of hair and nails, only as much as is needed.

The Sages note that Avraham's great kindness still produced Yishmael, a sign that even holy emotion can yield something negative, and the Kabbalistic "breaking of the vessels" took place in the emotive attributes. So the Chashmal surrounds them, allowing the external forces only a minimal, "hair and nails" share: what is superfluous, and only what is necessary.

(כי חשמל זה הוא מהבינה וחז"ב הן תרין ריעין²⁹ כו' ומחכמה אין יניקה לחיצונים כנודע מענין הנגעים וכמ"ש ימותו ולא בחכמה³⁰ לפי שחכמה כח מה בחי' בטול לאור א"ס כו').

(For this Chashmal is from Binah, and Chochmah and Binah are "two companions," etc.; and from Chochmah (wisdom) the external forces draw no nourishment, as is known from the matter of the afflictions (nega'im), and as it is written, "They die, and not with wisdom," because Chochmah is koach mah ["the power of what"], the level of self-nullification (bittul) to the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), etc.)

This is why the guard comes from Binah: Binah is paired with Chochmah ("two companions"), and Chochmah gives the external forces no hold at all. Chochmah is "koach mah," the potential of "what?," pure self-nullification before the Infinite Light; the verse "they die, and not with wisdom" is read to mean the forces of death have no wisdom.

ופי ענין החשמל^{31,32} שמלביש לזו"נ והרי הוא חיצוניות אצלן ואעפ"כ שרשו גבוה מהן³³ שהרי הוא מהבינה.³⁴

The explanation of the Chashmal that clothes Z'eir Anpin and Nukva — it is the outer dimension in relation to them, and yet its root is higher than they, since it is from Binah:

A puzzle: the Chashmal is an outer garment of Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, lower than what it clothes, yet it comes from Binah, which is higher than they are. How can it be both?

הענין הוא כמו המשל שהוא לבוש להנמשל דהנה צירופי אותיות המשל הם גשמיות נגד הנמשל ולבוש לבד להנמשל

The matter is like a parable (mashal), which is a garment for the thing it illustrates (nimshal). For the letter-combinations of the parable are physical compared with the thing illustrated, and merely a garment for it.

The answer is the parable (mashal). A parable is a garment for its meaning: its words and images are coarse and physical compared with the idea they carry.

אך מ"מ שרש המשל הוא גבוה מאד³⁵ נעלה שאין כל אדם יכול לומר משלים אלא משלי שלמה³⁶ ובגמרא אמרו³⁷ על רבי מאיר תלתא שמעתא ותלתא מתלי ואמרו משמת רבי מאיר³⁸ בטלו מושלי משלים כו'

Yet the root of the parable is very high and exalted, for not every person can speak parables, but only [such as] "the parables of Shlomo"; and in the Gemara they said of Rabbi Meir: "a third law, and a third parables"; and they said, "When Rabbi Meir died, the tellers of parables ceased," etc.

Yet it takes the greatest minds to make parables. Shlomo HaMelech's "parables" are the model; Rabbi Meir divided his teaching into thirds, one of them parables; and when he died, the Mishnah says, "the tellers of parables ceased."

והיינו כי דוקא מי ששכלו שכל גבוה יכול לצמצם שכלו במשל שיהיה מכוון נגד הנמשל ממש

That is because specifically one whose intellect is a lofty intellect can contract his intellect into a parable that corresponds exactly to the thing it illustrates,

Only a very high intellect can compress its insight into an image that matches the idea exactly.

משא"כ מי שאין לו שכל גבוה כל כך די לו במה שיביין השכל כאשר הוא

whereas one whose intellect is not so lofty is satisfied with understanding the idea as it is,

A lesser mind is content to grasp the idea as it is.

אבל לא יוכל להסביר פנים במשל ואם יאמר משל לא יהי המכוון כו' ועד"ז הוא בחי' החשמל שהוא לבוש לזו"נ כהתלבשות השכל במשל³⁹

but he cannot bring it to light through a parable, and if he does tell a parable it will not correspond, etc. In the same way is the level of the Chashmal, which is a garment for Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, like the clothing of an idea in a parable.

Such a mind cannot bring the idea out through a fitting parable; if it tries, the parable will miss. The Chashmal is the same: a garment around the emotive attributes, just as a parable clothes an idea.

והיינו לפי שנמשך מהבינה שהיא למעלה מעלה מהמדות כו' רק אח"כ נעשה לבוש לזו"נ והוא למטה מהן כמו שהמשל הוא חיצוניות לגבי הנמשל ולבוש לכד

That is, because it is drawn from Binah, which is far above the emotive attributes, etc.; only afterwards does it become a garment for Z'eir Anpin and Nukva and is below them, just as the parable is the outer dimension relative to the thing illustrated, and merely a garment.

Because the Chashmal comes from Binah, it is rooted far above the emotions; only in its expression does it become their outer garment, lower than they, just as a parable is outward relative to its meaning.

והרי א"כ מוכן שיש בבחי' החשמל הזה כי⁴⁰ בחינות א' מצד שרשו שהוא גבוה מאד נעלה למעלה מן המדות

It is thus understood that in this level of the Chashmal there are two aspects. First, from the side of its root, it is very high and exalted, above the emotive attributes,

So the Chashmal has two aspects. The first is its root, which is high above the emotive attributes.

שהוא מבחי' הבינה והב' מצד התפשטותו בבחי' חיצוניות בבחי' צירופי אותיות שהאותיות הם מדרגה האחרונה שבכל הי"ס (ומה שמלביש החשמל לזו"נ היינו כמו אותיות שמלבישי' להמדות כו')

being from the level of Binah. And second, from the side of its spreading forth, it is in the outer dimension, in the form of letter-combinations, the letters being the last level in all the ten Sefiros (and the Chashmal's clothing Z'eir Anpin and Nukva is like the letters that clothe the attributes, etc.).

Its root is that high because it comes from Binah. The second is its expression: the outermost dimension, like "letters," which are the final level in every Sefirah. Its clothing of Z'eir Anpin and Nukva is like letters and words that clothe feelings.

וזהו פיי חשמל⁴¹ חש מל⁴² פיי חש לשון שתיקה⁴³ היינו מצד בחי' א' שבו שהוא שרשו מהבינה⁴⁴

This is the meaning of Chashmal: chash mal. Chash means silence; that is from the side of its first aspect, its root in Binah.

The word Chashmal itself divides into two: chash, “silence,” and mal, “speech.” Chash, silence, reflects its first aspect, its root in Binah.

כי סייג לחכמה שתיקה כי הוי"ה בחכמה ולכן החכמה היא בחי' ביטול וזהו השתיקה וע"ד שמושה רבע"ה הי' כבד פה⁴⁵ כו'.

For “a fence for wisdom is silence,” since Havayah is in Chochmah, and therefore Chochmah is the level of self-nullification, and that is the silence; and similarly Moshe our teacher, peace be upon him, was “heavy of mouth,” etc.

“A fence for wisdom is silence” (Avos): Chochmah is the seat of Havayah and is pure self-nullification, and silence is the expression of that nullification. Similarly Moshe, the greatest in wisdom, was “heavy of mouth.”

ומל לשון דיבור והתגלות זהו מצד בחי' הב' שבו כשנעשה לבוש לזו"נ כמו האותיות שמלבישי הנמשל ועי"ז יוכל להיות השפעה זהו פיי מל:

And mal means speech and revelation; that is from the side of its second aspect, when it becomes a garment for Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, like the letters that clothe the thing illustrated, and through this there can be a flow of influence. This is the meaning of mal.

Mal, “speech,” is the second aspect: the Chashmal as a garment for Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, like letters clothing meaning. Through this clothing, influence can flow to the levels below.

SECTION 3 • 13-4

The silent angels and “something from nothing”

3 והנה זהו בחשמל שבי"ס עצמן וכן במלאכים שיש כמה אלפים רבבות מדרגות כמ"ש היש מספר לגדודיו⁴⁶ ויש מהם שהם מבחי' החשמל עי" כלים דאצילות

Now, this is [so] of the Chashmal within the ten Sefiros themselves. And so also among the angels, who have many thousands of myriads of levels, as it is written, “Is there any number to His troops?” And some of them are from the level of the Chashmal, through the vessels of the World of Atzilus (Emanation).

Everything said so far concerns the Chashmal within the Sefiros themselves. But the same structure exists among the angels, who come in countless ranks (“Is there any number to His troops?”), and some of them are formed from the Chashmal, through the vessels of Atzilus.

(ור"ל שזה שנת"ל הוא ענין החשמל דבינה דאצילות המקיף לזו"נ דאצילות כנ"ל וכמו כן יש ג"כ בזו"נ דבי"ע ג"כ בחי' חשמל ומה נמשך המסך⁴⁷ שבין בריאה ליצירה ובין יצירה לעשיה.

(What is meant: what was explained above is the Chashmal of Binah (understanding) of Atzilus that surrounds Z'eir Anpin (the emotive attributes) and Nukva (the feminine / Malchus) of Atzilus, as above; and likewise in Z'eir Anpin and Nukva of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah there is also a level of Chashmal, and from it comes the screen between Beriah and Yetzirah and between Yetzirah and Asiyah.

A parenthetical clarification: the Chashmal described above belongs to Binah of Atzilus, surrounding Z'eir Anpin and Nukva of Atzilus. Each lower world has its own Chashmal around its own Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, and from these come the screens between Beriah and Yetzirah and between Yetzirah and Asiyah.

ושם יש ג"כ מלאכים שהם מבחי' חשמל וכידוע שמט"ט נקי נעל דשכינתא^{48,49} והרי נתבאר שהנעל זהו בחי' חשמל (כו') וע"ז ארז"ל בשעה שהדבור יוצא מפ"ה הקב"ה חשות.⁵⁰

And there too there are angels from the level of the Chashmal; and as is known, Metatron is called "the shoe of the Shechinah (Divine Presence)," and it has been explained that the shoe is the level of the Chashmal, etc.) And about this our Sages said: "When the speech goes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, they are silent (chashos)."

In those lower worlds too there are angels formed from the Chashmal. Metatron, the chief angel, is called "the shoe of the Shechinah," and since the "shoe" has been shown to be the Chashmal, this fits. This is also the setting of the Talmud's teaching that "when the speech goes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, they (the Chashmal-angels) are silent."

פ"ה הקב"ה הוא ז"א כמו פ"ה קוב"ה ושכינתיה שכינת"ה היינו מה ששוכן ומתלבש בתחתונים וקדוש הוא מובדל כך בחי' מלכות אין מלך בלא עם⁵¹ הוא בחי' השוכן ומתלבש בעם

The explanation: "the Holy One, blessed be He" is Z'eir Anpin, as in the explanation of "the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shechinah." "His Shechinah" is that which dwells and is clothed in the lower beings, while "Holy" means set apart. So the level of Malchus (sovereignty) — "there is no king without a people" — is the level that dwells and is clothed in the people,

To explain this teaching the Alter Rebbe defines its terms. "The Holy One, blessed be He" refers to Z'eir Anpin and "His Shechinah" to Malchus, as in the familiar formula of the two joined together. Shechinah means "dwelling": the level that rests within and is clothed in the created beings, just as a king needs a people to rule; "Holy" means set apart and beyond them.

משא"כ מדותיו ית' לך ה' הגדולה כו' אין להם ערך ויחס לעם וזהו בחי' קדוש.⁵²

whereas His attributes, may He be blessed — “Yours, Havayah, is the greatness,” etc. — have no relation or proportion to the people, and that is the level of “Holy.”

G-d's emotive attributes as they are in themselves, “Yours, Havayah, is the greatness” and so on, have no relation or proportion to created beings. That transcendence is what “Holy” means, and so “the Holy One, blessed be He” is Z'eir Anpin.

4 והדבור שיוצא מפי הקב"ה הוא בחי' התגלות היינו מל מחשמל והוא כשו"נ בוקעי' המסך ויורדי' ומתגלי' בעולם שלמטה

And the speech that goes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, is the level of revelation, that is, the mal of Chashmal. That is when Z'eir Anpin (the emotive attributes) and Nukva (the feminine / Malchus) break through the screen and descend and are revealed in the world below.

G-d's “speech going forth” is revelation, the mal (“speech”) side of the Chashmal. It happens when Z'eir Anpin and Nukva break through the screen and descend to be revealed in the world below.

ואזי הם המלאכים חשות⁵³ שהם נכללים בביטול שנמשך מבחי' חכמה כנ"ל בענין סייג לחכמה שתיקה

Then the angels are silent (chashos), for they are included in the self-nullification (bittul) that is drawn from the level of Chochmah (wisdom), as explained above regarding “a fence for wisdom is silence.”

At that moment the Chashmal-angels fall silent: they are absorbed in the self-nullification that comes from Chochmah, the “silence” described above in “a fence for wisdom is silence.” Overwhelmed by the revealed light, they cannot say anything.

משא"כ כשאין הדבור יוצא כו' שהוא בחי' הסתלקות אז הם ממללות שהם ברעש גדול ואומרי' ברוך כבוד⁵⁴ כו'.

Whereas when the speech does not go forth, etc., which is a state of withdrawal, then they speak (memallelos), for they are “with a great noise” and say, “Blessed be the glory,” etc.

When the speech does not go forth, when the Divine light is withdrawn, the angels speak. That is when they are “with a great noise” and cry out “Blessed be the glory of Havayah from His place”: their loud praise belongs to the state in which the light is withdrawn.

זהו ענין החשמל שמקיף ומלביש לזו"נ מצדיהן שהוא בכדי שלא⁵⁵ יהי יניקת החיצונים. אך מתחת רגליהם הוא בחי' מה יפו פעמיו⁵⁶ בנעלים בת נדיב הוא בחי' מלכות.

This is the Chashmal that surrounds and clothes Z'eir Anpin and Nukva on their sides, which is so that there be no drawing of nourishment by the external forces. But beneath their feet it is the level of "How beautiful are your steps in shoes, O daughter of the noble," which is the level of Malchus (sovereignty).

This is the Chashmal around the sides of Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, which keeps the external forces away. Beneath their "feet" is the shoe, alluded to in "How beautiful are your steps in shoes, O daughter of the noble," which the Alter Rebbe identifies with Malchus.

נעל זה אינו לבד בשביל שלא יהי יניקת החיצונים אלא הוא מפסיק⁵⁷ שלא יהי גילוי כל האור שבאצילות דאיהו וגרמוהי חד להיות כך בבריא

This shoe is not only so that there be no drawing of nourishment by the external forces; rather, it separates, so that the full revelation of the light that is in the World of Atzilus (Emanation), where "He and His causes are one," should not be so in Beriah,

The shoe has a second purpose besides protection. It keeps the full light of Atzilus, where G-d and His Sefiros ("His causes") are completely one, from being revealed in Beriah in the same way.

אלא שיהי בחי' בריאה יש והיינו ע"י שהמסך מפסיק בין אצ"י לבריא והאור שנמשך מאצ"י ע"י המסך להחיות בריאה הוא אור של תולדה^{58,59}

but that Beriah should be at the level of something (yesh). That is, through the screen separating between Atzilus and Beriah, the light that is drawn from Atzilus through the screen to give life to Beriah is a derivative light (or shel toldah).

Instead, Beriah is meant to exist as "something" (yesh), a being that feels itself separate. Because the screen stands between Atzilus and Beriah, the light that reaches Beriah to give it life is only a "derivative light," an offshoot of the light and not its essence.

ולכן נק' הבריא יש מאין והגם דממך הכל^{60,61} כתיב⁶² וכולא קמיה כלא חשיבי עכ"ז נק' יש מאין מפני שהתהוות היש הוא מבחי' האור שנמשך ע"י הפרסא שהוא בחי' אין

Therefore Beriah is called "something from nothing" (yesh me-ayin). And although it is written, "For all is from You," and "all before Him are considered as nothing," nevertheless it is called something from nothing, because the coming into being of the something is from the level of the light drawn through the partition, which is the level of "nothing" (ayin),

That is why creation is called "something from nothing." One might object: everything comes from G-d ("all is from You"), and everything is as nothing before Him, so why call the source "nothing"? The answer: created being comes from the light that passes through the partition, and that light counts as "nothing."

שהרי אין זה מהות ועצמות האור שלפני הפרסא אלא אור של תולדה שהוא בחי' אין לגבי עצם האור שלמעלה מהפרסא.

for it is not the essence and being of the light that is before the partition, but a derivative light, which is the level of “nothing” compared with the essence of the light above the partition.

It counts as “nothing” because it is not the essence of the light on the far side of the partition; compared with that essence, the derivative light is as nothing. So “from nothing” describes the source of creation relative to the true light, not relative to G-d Himself.

(ועיין בזוהר ח”ב דע”ה ב' רזא דחשמל⁶³ כו' ובזהר הרקיע⁶⁴ שם ובהרמ”ז⁶⁵ ובספר הדרת מלך⁶⁶ סי' ל' וסי' נ”ה):

(And see the Zohar, volume 2, page 78b, “the secret of the Chashmal,” etc., and Zohar HaRakia there, and the Ramaz, and the book Hadras Melech, sections 30 and 55.)

The Alter Rebbe closes with references for further study: the Zohar’s “secret of the Chashmal,” the Arizal’s commentary Zohar HaRakia on that passage, Rabbi Moshe Zacuto (the Ramaz), and the Zohar commentary Hadras Melech.

SECTION 4 • 15

Shabbos, weekdays and kelipas nogah

5 והנה בשבת מאיר אור האצילות⁶⁷ למטה על ידי התלבשות הבריאה לבד ואינו אלא מסך אחד

Now, on Shabbos the light of the World of Atzilus (Emanation) shines below through being clothed in the World of Beriah (Creation) alone, and there is only one screen.

Now the structure of screens is applied to time. On Shabbos the light of Atzilus reaches below clothed only in Beriah, so it passes through just one screen, the one between Atzilus and Beriah.

משא”כ בימות החול יש הפרש בין א”י לח”ל שבא”י ההנהגה ע”י יצירה ובח”ל ע”י עשייה.⁶⁸ והנה כל זה עדיין בבחי' קדושה וצבא השמים לך משתחווים⁶⁹ שגם היש בטל

Whereas on the weekdays there is a difference between the Land of Israel and outside the Land: in the Land of Israel the [Divine] conduct is through the World of Yetzirah (Formation), and outside the Land through the World of Asiyah (Action). Now, all this is still in the realm of holiness, and “the host of heaven bows to You,” for even the something (yesh) is nullified.

On weekdays it passes through more screens, and place matters too: in the Land of Israel G-d’s conduct of the world comes through Yetzirah, outside it through Asiyah, a lower world. Yet all these worlds are still holy; even their sense of being “something” is surrendered to G-d, as “the host of heaven bows to You.”

(ולכן פרכת ופרסות הנ"ל הם בחי' פרכת המבדילות בין קדש לקדש שהרי הפרסא המבדיל בין ע"ס דיצירה לע"ס דעשייה הרי גם ע"ס דעשייה הוא קודש)

(Therefore the curtains and partitions mentioned above are the level of curtains that separate between holy and holy; for as to the partition that separates between the ten Sefiros of Yetzirah and the ten Sefiros of Asiyah, the ten Sefiros of Asiyah too are holy.)

So the curtains and partitions discussed until now separate holy from holy, like the Temple curtain between the Holy and the Holy of Holies. Even the ten Sefiros of Asiyah, the lowest world, are holy.

אך מעשייה ולמטה יש עוד מסך ופרסא הוא ק"נ והוא בחי' ערלה החופפת על הברית

But from Asiyah downward there is another screen and partition, which is kelipas nogah (the "glowing" husk), and it is the level of the foreskin (orlah) that covers the covenant.

Below Asiyah, however, there is another kind of screen: kelipas nogah, the "glowing husk," a realm that is neither holy nor impure and can be turned either way. It is compared to the foreskin (orlah) that covers the covenant.

(כמ"ש בע"ח ש"מ פ"א ונקי' ק"נ כו' והיא הערלה המכסה על היסוד) והוא הבדלה בין קדש לחול

(As written in Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 40, chapter 1: it is called kelipas nogah, etc., and it is the foreskin that covers Yesod (foundation).) And it is the separation between holy and profane (chol).

The Arizal's Etz Chaim calls it kelipas nogah and describes it as the foreskin covering Yesod. This screen separates not holy from holy but holy from profane (chol), the ordinary and mundane.

(ואפשר שהפרסא⁷⁰ הוא בין ע"ס דעשייה לק"נ וא"כ אפשר הוא ג"כ בחי' חשמל המפסיק בין ע"ס דעשייה לנוגה.)

(And it may be that the partition is between the ten Sefiros of Asiyah and kelipas nogah; if so, it may also be the level of a Chashmal that separates between the ten Sefiros of Asiyah and nogah.)

The Alter Rebbe suggests that the partition between the Sefiros of Asiyah and kelipas nogah may itself be a kind of Chashmal, dividing holiness from nogah. (One manuscript introduces this remark with "and in another manuscript I found.")

גם במ"א בפי' ואתחנן ע"פ שמע^{71,72} כו' נתב' ג"כ שההבדלה הוא ע"י בחי' חשמל וגם במ"א נת' ענין בחי' עטופים שהוא ממוצע בין קדושה לק"נ כו' (

Also, elsewhere, in Parshas Va'eschanan, on the verse "Hear [O Israel]," etc., it is likewise explained that the separation is through the level of the Chashmal; and also elsewhere the matter of the level of the atufim is explained, which is intermediate between holiness and kelipas nogah, etc.)

He supports this with his discourse on the Shema in Parshas Va'eschanan, which also explains that the separation comes through the Chashmal, and with another discussion of the atufim (the "feeble" flock of Genesis 30), a level between holiness and kelipas nogah.

וזהו ענין אשר ברא⁷³ אלהים לעשות⁷⁴ לתקן ותורמסין צריכין תקון כו' כי האדם נברא בצלמנו כדמותנו⁷⁵ ויש לו מסך זה

This is the meaning of "which G-d created to make" — to rectify; and "lupines need rectifying," etc. For man was created "in Our image, after Our likeness," and he has this screen,

This explains the verse "which G-d created to make": creation was left for man to "make," to complete and repair, just as the Midrash says lupines must be sweetened before they are edible. Man, created "in Our image," contains this screen of nogah within himself.

וצריך לתקן להיות החול בחי' חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקדש⁷⁶ והיינו ע"י שנכללים בקדושת השבת and he must rectify [it], so that the profane become the level of "profane things prepared in the purity of holiness"; and that is through their being included in the holiness of Shabbos.

His task is to repair it, so that the mundane becomes "profane things prepared in the purity of holiness," like ordinary food handled with the strictness of sacred food. This happens by bringing the weekdays into the holiness of Shabbos.

כי שבת הוא קודש שאז מאיר אור האצילות ע"י הבריאה בלי מסך שבין בריאה ליצירה ובין יצירה לעשייה וכ"ש שק"נ אינו מפסיק אז⁷⁷ שמאיר שלא על ידו כו'

For Shabbos is holy: then the light of Atzilus shines through Beriah without the screen between Beriah and Yetzirah and between Yetzirah and Asiyah, and all the more so kelipas nogah does not separate then, for [the light] shines not through it, etc.

Shabbos is holy because on it Atzilus shines through Beriah alone, without the screens between Beriah and Yetzirah and between Yetzirah and Asiyah. All the more so kelipas nogah does not intervene, for the light does not pass through it at all.

ולכן האדם הוא מובדל ממלאכת החול שאינו עוסק בדברים גשמיים אלא שבת להוי"ה אלהיך⁷⁸
בכחינת ביטול הגם שהוא ביטול דכריאה בחינת יש מי שבטל כו'

Therefore a person is set apart from weekday work, for he does not occupy himself with physical things; rather, "a Shabbos to Havayah your G-d," in a state of self-nullification (bittul) — although it is the self-nullification of Beriah, the level of a something that is nullified, etc.

That is why a Jew stops weekday work on Shabbos and does not deal with physical matters: the day is "a Shabbos to Havayah your G-d," a state of self-nullification. It is still only the nullification of Beriah, a created "something" that yields itself, not the complete oneness of Atzilus.

משא"כ בימות החול שהתהוותו⁷⁹ ע"י יצירה ועשייה שם יש קליפת נוגה החופפת אך ע"י שמכרר
בששת ימי החול בירורי נוגה יגיע כפ"ך⁸⁰

Whereas on the weekdays, whose coming into being is through Yetzirah and Asiyah, there kelipas nogah hovers over them. But by refining, during the six weekdays, the refinements of nogah — "the labor of your hands,

On weekdays, whose existence comes through Yetzirah and Asiyah, kelipas nogah hovers over life. But a person refines ("clarifies," birurim) the nogah during the six days through "the labor of your hands."

כי תאכל שעוסק באמונה לשם שמים ומתפלל ולומד בכח זה ע"י נעשי החולין עטה"ק וע"י אומרים
במו"ש ברוך המבדיל בין קודש לחול כי להיות⁸¹ הבדלה ופרסא הוא ממקום גבוה ונעלה כנ"ל בענין
חשמל כו'

when you eat [it]: he deals faithfully, for the sake of Heaven, and prays and studies with this strength — through this the profane things become prepared in the purity of holiness. And about this we say at the departure of Shabbos, "Blessed [is He] who separates between holy and profane": for the existence of a separation and partition is from a high and exalted place, as explained above regarding the Chashmal, etc.,

He works honestly and for the sake of Heaven, and then prays and studies with the strength that work gives him. In this way the mundane is lifted into holiness. That is why at the close of Shabbos we bless "Who separates between holy and profane": the separation itself comes from a very high place, like the Chashmal.

וברוך ונמשך משם להיות מאיר דרך הפרסא כ"א לא היה הפרסא לא היה שום התהוות חדוש יש מאין ולא היה תקון חולין שנעשו עטה"ק

and [it is] "blessed" and drawn from there so as to shine through the partition. For if there were no partition, there would be no coming into being of something new from nothing, and no rectification of profane things prepared in the purity of holiness

The word "Blessed" (baruch) is read as "drawn down": light is drawn from that high source to shine through the partition. Without the partition there could be no new creation of something from nothing, and no rectification of the mundane.

(רק קדש לבד וכוונת הבריאה דירה בתחתונים הוא שיהי' יש ונפרד בחי' חול רק שיהי' אח"כ ביטול היש טהרת הקודש)

(only holiness alone; and the intent of creation, a dwelling place among the lower realms, is that there be a separate something (yesh), the level of the profane, only that afterwards there be the nullification of the something, the purity of holiness).

Without the partition there would be only holiness. But the purpose of creation, that G-d have "a dwelling place among the lower realms," requires a separate "something," the profane, which is afterwards nullified and becomes the purity of holiness.

והנה בהתגלות האור דרך הפרסא עדיין הוא קדושה עד סוף העשייה ששם מקום הנוגה וזהו מצות מילה מל י"ה שהוא מל מחשמל דבינה שהוא מבחי' י"ה

Now, in the revelation of the light through the partition, it is still holiness, until the end of Asiyah, where the place of nogah is. And this is the mitzvah of circumcision (milah): mal Yud-Hei, which is the mal of the Chashmal of Binah (understanding), which is from the level of Yud-Hei,

As long as the light passes through the partitions it remains holy, down to the end of Asiyah, where nogah begins. Circumcision (milah) addresses exactly this point: the word milah is read as mal plus Yud-Hei, the mal (the "speech" side) of the Chashmal of Binah, which belongs to the Divine Name made of Yud (Chochmah) and Hei (Binah).

כי חוי"ב הן תרין ריעין דהיינו שכשמסירים הערלה שהיא ק"נ אז נשאר רק חשמל דבינה שהוא הלבוש שצ"ל כמבואר למעלה בכדי שיהי' התהוות ביי"ע כו' אבל הערלה שהיא ק"נ צריך להסיר.

for Chochmah (wisdom) and Binah are "two companions." That is, when the foreskin, which is kelipas nogah, is removed, then there remains only the Chashmal of Binah, which is the garment that must exist, as explained above, so that Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah can come into being, etc.; but the foreskin, which is kelipas nogah, must be removed.

Chochmah and Binah are inseparable "companions," so the Chashmal of Binah is holy. When the foreskin, kelipas nogah, is removed, only the Chashmal of Binah remains: the necessary garment that makes the existence of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah possible. The foreskin, however, must be removed.

ומתחילה הוצרך להיות כך כדי שיהי' יניקה לק"נ וממנה לקליפות הטמאות שק"נ היא המפרדת בין הקדושה ובין כל קליפות טמאות ממש אבל אח"כ העבודה לברר ק"נ ולהפכה לקדושה כו' :

At first it had to be so, so that kelipas nogah could draw nourishment, and from it the impure kelipos, for kelipas nogah is what separates between holiness and all the truly impure kelipos; but afterwards the service is to refine kelipas nogah and turn it into holiness, etc.

At first the foreskin had to exist, so that kelipas nogah, and through it the impure kelipos, could receive their minimal life-force; nogah is the buffer between holiness and outright impurity. But the purpose of man's service is to refine nogah and turn it into holiness.

SECTION 5 • 16

Circumcision: "My covenant with you"

6 והנה בהסיר הערלה אז נעשה אב המון גוים שיתוספו ניצוצות להתכלל באלקות מחמת שלא יהי' מסך הנוגה וע"ז נאמר אני הנה בריתי אתך⁸² והיית לאב המון גוים.

Now, when the foreskin is removed, then he becomes "father of a multitude of nations," for sparks are added to be included in G-dliness, since there is no screen of nogah. And about this it is said: "I — behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations."

When the foreskin (the screen of nogah) is removed, Avraham becomes "father of a multitude of nations": sparks of holiness from the wider world can now be added and absorbed into G-dliness, because nogah no longer screens them off. The verse about the covenant of circumcision says exactly this.

אני זקף גדול כי אני אותיות אין⁸³ שמלכות הוא הכתר וזקף גדול דהיינו כשהיא מתעלית למעלה⁸⁴ כו'.

“I” [bears the cantillation] zakef gadol: for ani (“I”) has the letters of ayin (“nothing”), since Malchus (sovereignty) is Keser (the Crown); and zakef gadol [means] when it is raised upward, etc.

The word “I” (ani) in that verse carries the cantillation zakef gadol, meaning “great upright.” Ani has the same letters as ayin, “nothing,” which stands for Keser, and Malchus, which says “I,” has its root in Keser; the zakef gadol signals Malchus being raised up to that source.

ופי' שע"י המילה הרי בריתי ממש אתך והיינו התגלות היסוד כי כל הפרסא הכל הוא בבחי' היסוד בכל עולם יסוד אבא כו'

The explanation: through circumcision, “My covenant” itself is “with you,” that is, the revelation of Yesod (foundation). For the whole partition is entirely in the level of Yesod, in every world: Yesod of Abba, etc.,

Through circumcision “My covenant” itself becomes “with you”: Yesod, the Sefirah of the covenant, is revealed. Every partition in every world has the character of Yesod, from Yesod of Abba (Chochmah) downward.

עד סוף העשייה שנעשה ערלה ממש ובכריתת הערלה נעשה התגלות בריתי ממש אני זקף גדול כו' להיות אתך ממש שורה ומתגלה למטה כמו למעלה.

down to the end of Asiyah, where it becomes an actual foreskin; and with the cutting of the foreskin there comes the revelation of “My covenant” itself — “I” with zakef gadol, etc. — to be truly “with you,” dwelling and revealed below as above.

At the end of Asiyah the partition becomes the actual foreskin. When it is cut away, “My covenant” is revealed, drawing down the “I” of the raised Malchus, so that G-d is truly “with you,” dwelling and revealed below as He is above.

(ור"ל שע"י כריתת הערלה יורד ונמשך מבחי, אני בבחי יסוד כמ"ש בע"ח שכ"ז שהערלה דבוקה לא נמשכו גלוי אורות עליונים ביסוד אלא הם סתומים למעלה כו' ובכריתת הערלה נמשך בחי אני אותיות אין בבחי בריתי וכ"ז נמשך אתך ממש כו') :

(What is meant: through the cutting of the foreskin, [light] descends and is drawn from the level of "I" into the level of Yesod, as written in Etz Chaim that as long as the foreskin is attached, the revelation of the supernal lights is not drawn into Yesod, but they are closed off above, etc.; and with the cutting of the foreskin the level of ani, the letters of ayin, is drawn into the level of "My covenant," and all this is drawn truly "with you," etc.)

The closing note explains: as the Arizal writes in Etz Chaim, while the foreskin remains attached the supernal lights are not revealed in Yesod but stay closed off above. Cutting it draws the "I," which is ayin, into "My covenant," and so down to "with you," the person himself.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

A person carries within himself the screen of nogah that covers the world. His service is to refine it: during the six weekdays, to work honestly and for the sake of Heaven and to pray and study with the strength that work gives him, so that the mundane becomes "profane things prepared in the purity of holiness"; on Shabbos, to set weekday work aside in self-nullification. Circumcision expresses the same task: removing the unholy covering so that the Divine light is revealed below.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why were curtains needed at the Temple gates by day, when they were open, and what does this teach about how light passes from one world to the next?
2. How can the Chashmal be both lower than Z'eir Anpin and Nukva and rooted higher than they are? How does the parable of the parable resolve this?
3. Why are the Chashmal-angels silent when G-d's speech is revealed, and loud when it is withdrawn?
4. If "all is from You," in what sense is creation "something from nothing"?
5. What is the difference between the partitions that separate holy from holy and kelipas nogah, which separates holy from profane, and what does each mean for a person's weekday life?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 והבדילה הפרוכת

The note records that another transcript of this maamar, by the Mittlerer Rebbe, is printed in the Siddur, opening “To understand the roots of the above matters.” It is a parallel version of the same discourse.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי בסידור קמו, א. הנחת ר' משה בן אדה"ו בשה"מ תקס"ו ע' סא. ובשניהם מתחיל: להבין שרשי הדברים הנ"ל. דרך מצותיך ו, ב. הנחת מהר"א מסטראשליע בסי עבודת הלוי טז, ד. ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר ז"ע.

2 והבדילה הפרוכת לכם

The verse commands that the curtain be hung to separate between the Holy and the Holy of Holies. It is the maamar's opening verse and its theme.

Exodus 26:33 שמות כ"ו:ל"ג

וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־הַפֶּרֶכֶת תַּחַת הַקְּרָסִים וְהַבָּאֵת שָׁמָּה מִבֵּית לַפֶּרֶכֶת אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְהַבְּדִילָה הַפֶּרֶכֶת לָכֶם בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשִׁים:

And thou shalt hang up the veil under the clasps, and shalt bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony; and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כו, לג.

3 בע"ח שער מ"א

The parallel transcript in the Siddur treats the same reference to Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 41, on the partition.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה סידור כאן קמו, א. סה"מ תקס"ו ע' סא. ראה חקירה נו, א "שיש מסך ופרגוד המפסיק בין אצילות לבי"ע. . ושורש המסך הנ"ל הוא מבחי' חשמל דבינה".

4 וע' בע"ח שער ז' פ"ב

The note gives the content of Etz Chaim 7:2 (the verse “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters,” and the need for contraction so that Atzilus could receive light) and points to Or HaTorah for further discussion of that passage.

KEHOT'S NOTE

שעז"נ יהי רקיע בתוך המים. . ומבואר שם כי הצמצום בא"ק הוצרך להיות כדי שהי' יכולת בעולם האצ"י לקבל האור ממנו" — וראה באוה"ת ואתחנן ובספר החקירה נו, א "ופי' שבלא המסך הנ"ל לא היה אפשר להתהוות עולמות ב"ע". אוה"ת פ' בלק ע' תתקסח.

5 The Talmud states that the Second Temple had thirteen curtains, seven of them opposite the seven gates; Rashi there explains that these were for modesty. The Alter

Rebbe uses the gate-curtains as the image of a partition that veils even when the way is open.

Ketubot 106a:12 כ"ו א:י"ב

התם בדבכי. דאמר רבי זירא אמר רב: שלש עשרה פרוכות היו במקדש שני, שבע כנגד שבעה שערים, אחת לפתחו של היכל, ואחת לפתחו של אולם. שתיים בדביר, שתיים כנגדו בעליה.

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6 כמ"ש זוהר שלח לך (דקס"א ע"ב)

The Zohar on Shelach speaks of the supernal counterpart of the Temple and its courtyards. The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that everything in the earthly Courtyard, even the Temple Mount of five hundred cubits, exists above in Malchus.

Sf. Zohar, Sh'lach 45:309-314 ש"ט-ש"י

7 תרעין דג"ע אסתיו

One of the Zohar passages the Kehot notes give for the idea that the gates of the Garden of Eden are closed at night and open by day. The Alter Rebbe applies it to Malchus of Atzilus.

Zohar I, 92a זכ"א צב, א

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זכ"א צב, א. קעב, א. רמב, ב. ספר המצות להצ"צ מצות מילה פ"ד. ד"ה תקעו בחדש תרצ"ד (קונטרס פב).

8 ותקם בעוד לילה

The “woman of valor” rises while it is still night and gives food to her household. Read as Malchus providing for the worlds, it shows that some influence flows even at night, which the Alter Rebbe identifies as the outer flow only.

Proverbs 31:15 משלי ל"א:ט"ו

וְתָקָם בְּעוֹד לַיְלָה וְתָתַן טֶרֶף לִבְתֵּיהָ וְחָק לִנְעֻרֶיהָ:

She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth food to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי לא, טו.

9 קיסטא דחיותא

The Kehot note gives this Zohar passage for the phrase “kista de-chayusa,” the small measure of life that remains in the body during sleep. The Alter Rebbe uses it to illustrate the outer vitality that remains when the inner life-force withdraws.

Zohar I, 83a זכ"א פג, א

KEHOT'S NOTE

מדה קטנה דחיותא (ראה זכ"א פג, א).

10

וכדאיתא במס' תמיד

In the version of this passage there, the words “and in [Tractate] Middos” are added: the locking of the gates is also described in Tractate Middos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

פ"ג. ובדרך מצותיך ו, ב נוסף: ובמדות.

11

Kehot's note points to Zohar, Sh'lach 11:84-92 for these words.

ספר זוהר, שלח לך י"א:פ"ד-צ"ב 11:84-92 Zohar, Sh'lach

12

The opening Mishnah of Tamid describes the night watch in the Temple, when the elders of the priestly family slept in the Beis HaMoked holding the keys of the Courtyard. It supports the statement that the gates were locked at night (the Kehot note also points to chapter 3 of the tractate).

Mishnah Tamid 1:1 א'א:משה

בשלושה מקומות הנהנים שומרים בבית המקדש. בבית אבטינס, בבית הניצוץ ובבית המוקד. בית אבטינס ובית הניצוץ היו עליוות, והרוכים שומרים שם. בית המוקד, כפה, ובית גדול היה, מקוה רוכדים של אבן, וזקני בית אב ישנים שם, ומפתחות העזרה בידם. ופרחי קהנה איש כסותו בארץ. לא היו ישנים בבגדי קדש, אלא פושטין ומקפלין ומניחים אותן תחת ראשיהן, ומתכסין בכסות עצמן. ארע קרי לאחד מהן, יוצא והולך לו במסכה ההולכת תחת ...

In three places the priests keep watch in the Temple: in the chamber of Avtinah, in the chamber of the spark, and in the fire chamber. In the chamber of Avtinah and in the chamber of the spark there were upper chambers where the youths kept watch. The fire chamber was vaulted and it was a large room surrounded with stone projections, and the elders of the clan [serving in the Temple] used to sleep there, with the keys of the Temple courtyard in their hands. The priestly initiates used ...

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PARAGRAPH 2

13

בביאור זוהר פי' אחרי

This is the “explanation of the Zohar on Parshas Acharei” the text refers to, where the drawing of the inner light of Eden from the first three Sefiros of Malchus is explained.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לכ"ק אדה"א עז, ב תאנא אתעברת, וראה גם ביאורי זוהר לכ"ק אדמו"ר הצמח צדק פי' אחרי ע' שנג ואילך.

14

ותתן טרף

“She gives food to her household” is read as Malchus sustaining Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah at night with its outer flow only.

Proverbs 31:15 וי"ט:משלי

ותקם בעוד לילה ותתן טרף לביתה וחק לנערותיה:

She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth food to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

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15

חסד אל כל היום

“The kindness of G-d is all day long.” The Alter Rebbe uses it to link day with the prevailing of the Chasadim, which opens the gates of Eden to the inner flow.

Psalms 52:3 ג"כ:תהילים

מה־תתהלל בְּרָעָה הַגְּבוּר חֶסֶד אֶל כָּל־הַיּוֹם:

Why boastest thou thyself of evil, O mighty man? The mercy of G-d endureth continually.

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16

כתנוי עור

G-d made garments of skin for Adam and Chavah. The Chashmal wraps the Sefiros of Z'eir Anpin and Nukva in the same way, as an outer protective garment.

בראשית ג'כ"א Genesis 3:21

וַיַּעַשׂ ה' אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כְּתָנוּת עוֹר וַיַּלְבִּשֵׁם:

And the L-RD G-d made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.

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17

ומלבישם מצדיהם . . הוא כחי' מנעל

A later maamar that discusses the Chashmal clothing Z'eir Anpin and Nukva on their sides and becoming the “shoe” beneath them.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע"ן בד"ה פתח אלי' תרנ"ח ע' סט.

18

ונעל הזה

The note sends the reader to Or HaTorah for the subject of this partition, the “shoe” identified with the screen between Atzilus and Beriah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ענין הפרסא זה ראה אור"ת תצוה ע' א'תשי.

19

ובשער מ' פ"א

Also cited by the Alter Rebbe for the screen between Atzilus and Beriah; in paragraph 5 he cites the same chapter for kelipas nogah as the “foreskin” covering Yesod.

Sefer Etz Chaim 40:1 א'א:עץ חיים

20

חשמל מחיצוניות הבינה

There the Alter Rebbe explains that the garment of the Chashmal of Binah clothes Z'eir Anpin and Nukva so that the external forces cannot draw from them, and that only Binah can descend among the kelipos to refine the emotions.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן צו, ג.

21

בשם א"י

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

=ספר "אדם ישר". אחד מספרי מהר"ו בומן אדה"ו והצ"צ היה בכתב יד. נדפס בשנת תרמ"ה בקראקא.

סנהדרין לח, ב.

Nukva.

עץ חיים מ"א:ג'3: Sefer Etz Chaim

והנה ענין עור שהוא לבוש דו"א עצמו אפשר שגם בו יש בחי' גי' לבושין דמיון הכלים אך נלע"ד כי הנה הם ב' לבושים לבד אי' הוא העור ואי' הוא השערות בסוד אדרת שער. ובוה תבין איך הקליפות יונקים משערות ונקרא סערה על שמם וכנגדן יש ב' לבושים אחרים של מצות אי' של תפלין בסוד עור ואי' ציצית בסוד החוטין דמיון לשערות. אמנם אלו הם הלבושים של האדם בעוה"ב בסוד כי היא כסותה זה ציצית היא שמלתו לעורו חלק הפנימי של העור והם התפלין והענין כי ציצית ביצירה ותפלין הם יותר ...

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33 שו"ה שמלביש — שרשו גבוה מהו

As quoted in the note, that maamar adds that although the Chashmal's root is higher, it itself is below Z'eir Anpin and Nukva and diminishes the light, so that the light passing through the screen bears no comparison to the light above it, like a "derivative light."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה והי' ברכה תרל"ט מציין על זה: והנה אם היות שרשו גבוה יותר עכ"ז הוא עצמו למטה מזו"נ וגורם המעטת האור, עד שהאור שעובר ונמשך דרך המסך אינו ערוך כלל לגבי האור שלמעלה מהמסך ע"ד כי שמש ומגן כו', וכנודע מענין אור של תולדה כו'.

34 שהרי הוא מהבינה

The note refers to this reference work of Kabbalistic terms for the Chashmal as coming from Binah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה מאו"א ח, יב.

35 מ"מ שרש המשל הוא גבוה מאד

The Tzemach Tzedek there cites this passage on the lofty root of the parable.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת פי' יתרו ע' תתכ מציין לכאן.

36 משלי שלמה

"The parables of Shlomo son of David." Shlomo is the paradigm of the wise man who can clothe wisdom in parables.

Proverbs 1:1:א' משלי

משלי שלמה בן־דוד מלך ישראל:

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

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37 ובגמרא אמרו

The Talmud reports that Rabbi Meir's lectures were a third law, a third aggadah and a third parables. It illustrates that parable-making belongs to great minds.

Sanhedrin 38b:22כ"ב סנהדרין ל"ח ב

דאמר רבי יוחנן: כי הוה דריש רבי מאיר בפירקיה, הוה דריש תילתא שמיעתא, תילתא אגדתא, תילתא מתלי. ואמר רבי יוחנן: שלש מאות משלות שועלים היו לו לרבי מאיר, ואנו אין לנו אלא שלש.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

38

ואמרו משמת רבי מאיר

"When Rabbi Meir died, the tellers of parables ceased."
Making true parables is a rare, lofty gift.

סוטה מ"ט א:ט"ו-ט"ז Sotah 49a:15-16

משמת רבי מאיר בטלו מושלי משלים. משמת בן עזאי בטלו השקדנים. משמת בן זומא בטלו הדרשנים. משמת רבי עקיבא בטל כבוד התורה. משמת רבי חנינא בן דוסא בטלו אנשי מעשה. משמת רבי יוסי קטנתא פסקו חסידים. ולמה נקרא שמו "קטנתא" — שהיה קטנתא של חסידים. משמת רבן יוחנן בן זכאי בטל זיו החכמה. משמת רבן גמליאל הוזקו בטל כבוד התורה, ומתה טהרה ופרישות. משמת רבי ישמעאל בן פאבי בטלה זיו ...

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KEHOT'S NOTE

סוטה מט, א.

39

כהתלבשות השכל במשל

Quoted in the note: the Chashmal is like a parable, and elsewhere it is explained as like the letters of thought, from which the partition is made, which is like a parable, citing the Torah Ohr discourse "Patach Eliyahu." It shows that later discourses read the Chashmal both as a parable and as the letters of thought.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בסה"מ תרס"ט ע' פא כי "שהחשמל הוא כמו משל ובמ"א מבואר שהחשמל הוא כמו אותיות המח' וזוהי נעשה הפרסא שזהו כמו משל כו' כמ"ש בתו"א ד"ה פתח אליהו" ע"ש.

40

שיש בכח"י החשמל הזה ב' בחי'

A parallel discussion of the two aspects of the Chashmal, its lofty root and its outer expression.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם דרך מצותיך ז, א.

41

פי' חשמל

The Kabbalistic lexicon section of the Pardes defines the term Chashmal; the note lists it with the Zohar and Etz Chaim as background to chash and mal.

Zohar III, 223בג, רכג, זח"ג

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ג רכג, ב. וראה ע"ה שער מ"א פ"א. פרדס שער ערכי הכינויים ערך חשמל.

42

חשמל חש מל

The Kehot notes give this Zohar passage for the meaning of the word Chashmal. The Alter Rebbe interprets its two halves as the Chashmal's two aspects.

ספר הזוהר, פנחס מ"ב:רל"ז-ג"ז:שמי"ח Zohar, Pinchas 42:237-57:348

43

פי' חש לשון שתיקה

The note points there for a question the Tzemach Tzedek raises from Etz Chaim (Sha'ar Kelipas Nogah, ch. 2) on this reading of chash as silence.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת למגילת אסתר ד"ה ויהי בימי אחשורוש ע' א, מה שהקשה בפע"ח [ע"ח] שער מ"ט שער ק"נ פ"ב ע"ש.

44

שרשו מהבינה

Or HaTorah quotes Etz Chaim 41:1 at length: the Chashmal is Binah's outer garment guarding Z'eir Anpin and Nukva on all sides, its part at their sides called garments and its part beneath their feet called shoes, the shoe being the screen between Atzilus and Beriah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

אוה"ת בראשית קט, א בשם הע"ח שער מ"א פ"א "כי ענין החשמל שהוא לבוש החיצון של בינה, והבינה מלבשת את ז'ו"נ במלבוש זה לשומר מניקת החיצונים. והנה החשמל הזה מלביש לזו"נ מכל צדיהם אפילו מתחת רגליהם ומה שהוא מצדם נק' מלבושי ומה שהוא מתחת רגליהם נק' מנעלים. והנה נעל הזה הנז' הוא עצמו המסך המפסיק בין אצ"י לבריאה עכ"ד, עכ"ל שם וע"ש בארוכה. וראה גם באוה"ת פ' שמיני ע' נט.

45

כבד פה

Moshe tells G-d that he is "heavy of mouth." The Alter Rebbe presents this as the silence that goes with Chochmah and bittul.

Exodus 4:10: שמות ד':

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲלֹהֵי בְּי אֲדֹנָי לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנִי גַם מִתְמַלֵּג גַּם מִשְׁלֵשׁ גַּם מֵאֵז דְּבָרֶךָ אֲלֵי־עַבְדְּךָ כִּי כְבֹּד־פִּי וּכְבֹּד לְשׁוֹן אֲנִי:

And Moses said unto the L-RD: 'Oh L-rd, I am not a man of words, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.'

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

PARAGRAPH 3

46

היש מספר לגדודיו

"Is there any number to His troops?" The verse attests to the countless ranks of angels, some of which, the Alter Rebbe says, derive from the Chashmal.

Job 25:3: איוב כ"ה:

הֲיֵשׁ מִסְפָּר לְגִדּוּדָיו וְעֲלִימֵי לְאִי־קוֹם אוֹרָהוּ:

Is there any number of His armies? And upon whom doth not His light arise?

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KEHOT'S NOTE

איוב כה, ג.

47

בחי חשמל ומוזה נמשך המסך

The same statement appears there: the curtain and screen between Atzilus and Beriah derives from the Chashmal of Binah, citing Etz Chaim 41 and the Ramaz, who places the Chashmal in Tiferes of Imma.

KEHOT'S NOTE

וכ"ה בלקו"ת ש"ש נא, א. דרך מצותיך ז, ב. וראה בד"ה הגהות לפתח אלי תרנ"ח קרוב לסופו שצ"ע למ"ש בפרדס בשעה"כ ערך פרוכת ובכמה דרושי דא"ח שהפרסא שבין אצילות לבריאה הוא בחי מלכות, ע"ש. וראה ג"כ ביאורי הוזהר לכ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ פ' חיי שרה ע' עה-עו.

48

שמט"ט נק' נעל דשכינתא

The note lists the Pardes for Metatron being called the "shoe" of the Shechinah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ת"ז תיקון כא (סא, א). פרדס שער אבי"ע פ"ד. קהלת יעקב ערך מט"ט. לקו"ת ש"ש מג, ב ואילך. וראה שם מד, ב למה נק' נעל.

49

שמט"ט נק' נעל דשכינתא

Tikkunei Zohar (Tikkun 21) calls Metatron the "shoe" of the Shechinah. Since the shoe is the Chashmal beneath Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, Metatron belongs to the Chashmal-angels.

תקוני זוהר ס"א א:ד-ה' 4-5: Tikkunei Zohar 61a

ועוד שלף איש נעלו דא גופא דאיהי אתתא. כלי דיליה ודא מטטרו"ן. ונתן לרעהו דלומנין אשתכח ביה עמודא דאמצעי' ולומנין צדיק ולומנין שכינתא עלאה. איהי תעודה ביה ולומנין שכינתא תתאה היא תמורה ביה. ודא איהו גן נעול. וביה מעין חתום דאיהי שכינתא י' כלילא מעשר ספירן. י' מן *מיטטרו"ן

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)

50

בשעה שהדבור יוצא מפי הקב"ה חשות

The Talmud interprets Chashmal as beings who are "at times silent, at times speaking": silent when the speech goes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, and speaking when it does not. The Alter Rebbe explains this in the next paragraph.

חגיגה י"ג ב: Chagigah 13b

חיות אש ממללות. כמתניתא תנא: עתים חשות, עתים ממללות. בשעה שהדיבור יוצא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא — חשות, ובשעה שאין הדיבור יוצא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא — ממללות.

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

Zohar III, 225a: זח"ג רכה, א

KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יג, ב. זח"ג רכה, א. לקמן צח, ד מציינ לכאן.

51

אין מלך בלא עם

The saying is sourced and developed there: the Name Elokim means rulership, "for there is no king without a people," and this level is called Shechinah because through it G-d dwells and is clothed in created beings.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לעיל ה, א. לקמן עג, ד.

52

לך ה' הגדולה

"Yours, Havayah, are the greatness, the might..." The verse lists G-d's attributes (the Sefiros of Z'eir Anpin), which in themselves are beyond relation to created beings.

I Chronicles 29:11: דברי הימים א כ"ט: I Chronicles 29:11

לך ה' הגדולה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד כ"ל בשמים ובארץ לך ה' הממלכה והמתנשא לכל לראש:

Thine, O L-RD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the

heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O L-RD, and Thou art exalted as head above all.

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PARAGRAPH 4

53 ואזי הם המלאכים חשות

The note marks that this later discourse explains the matter the other way around, so the reader should compare the two treatments of when the angels are silent and when they speak.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ד"ה בשעה שהקדימו תרס"ו (בהמשך תרס"ו ע' תנו) בהיפך.

54 ברעש גדול ואומרי ברוך כבוד

Ezekiel heard behind him "a great noise: Blessed be the glory of Havayah from His place." The angels' loud praise belongs to the state of withdrawal, when the light is not revealed.

Ezekiel 3:12בג: יחזקאל

וַתִּשָּׂאֵנִי רוּחַ וְאֶשְׁמַע אַחֲרַי קוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל כְּבוֹד־ה' מִמְּקוֹמוֹ:

Then a spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great rushing: 'Blessed be the glory of the L-RD from His place';

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55 בכדי שלא יהי יניקת החיצונים

The note says there is a gloss there on this passage about the Chashmal protecting from the external forces.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בביאה"ז להצ"צ כרך ב ע' תשעב יש הערה לכאן.

56 מה יפו פעמיך

"How beautiful are your steps in shoes, O daughter of the noble." The "shoes" allude to the Chashmal beneath the feet of Z'eir Anpin and Nukva, and the "daughter" to Malchus.

Song of Songs 7:2בז: שיר השירים

מִהֲיָפוּ פַעְמִיךָ בְּנָעָלִים בְּתַנְדִּיב חֲמוּקֵי יָרְכִיךָ כִּמּוֹ חֲלָאִים מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי אֲפִן:

How beautiful are thy steps in sandals, O prince's daughter! The roundings of thy thighs are like the links of a chain, The work of the hands of a skilled workman.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש ז, ב.

57 נעל . . אלא הוא מפסיק

Kehot's note points to where this is explained further: Pri Etz Chaim.

KEHOT'S NOTE

פע"ח שער א' פ"ג.

58 אור של תולדה

The note lists this later work for further discussion of "de-

ivative light."

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע"ח שער מ"א שער דרושי אבי"ע פא. וראה המשך תער"ב כרך ג ע' א'שצג.

59

אור של תולדה

The Kehot notes point to Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 41 (Drushei ABYA) for the term "derivative light," the light that passes through the screen to Beriah.

עין חיים מ"א:ב'2: Sefer Etz Chaim

... כנודע ואז החיצונית מבחי' הפנים חשמ"ל הנ"ל אינם יכולים לינק כי הם אור גדול ונכחים עיניהם בסוד לא יתיצבו הוללים לנגד עיניך אמנם מן האחוריים דחשמ"ל יכולין לינק לכן המוחין הנמשכים אל הנוקבא הם נמשכין ע"י ז"א עצמו אל האחור כדי שעי"ז תלך אל הנקבה לאחור ויהיה אב"א בכותל העור הנקרא גויל כנוצר וז"ס שנה ראשונה ב"ב השותפין שבנו את הכותל בגויל בגזית ובכפיסין ואז הקל"י מן הפנים אינם יכולין לינק גם מהאחוריים אע"פ שהיו יכולין לינק מהם עכ"ז כיון שהם דבוקים אי באי יגשו ורוח לא יבא ביניהם ...

Sefer Etz Chaim (Public Domain)

60

ממך הכל

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

דברי-הימים-א כט, יד.

61

דמך הכל

"For all is from You." David's words raise the question why creation is called "something from nothing" when everything comes from G-d.

I Chronicles 29:14ד"ט: דברי הימים א

וְכִי מִי אֲנִי וּמִי עַמִּי כִּי־נִעְצָר כָּח לְהַתְנַדֵּב קְדָאֵת כִּי־מִמֶּךָ הַכֹּל וּמִיָּדָךְ נִתְּנוּ לָךְ:

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.

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62

ולכן נק' הבריאה יש מאין והגם דמך הכל כתיב

There the same question is asked: why is creation called "something from nothing" when "all is from You"? The answer given is that G-d's essence is not related to creation as a source to its effect ("He commanded and they were created"), so the created is not drawn from His essence.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת פ' ראה כו, ד. שם יט, ג. ובאגה"ק סי' כ ובליקוט פ"י שם בארוכה.

63

בוזר ח"ב דע"ח ב' רוא דחשמל

The Zohar's passage on "the secret of the Chashmal," to which the Alter Rebbe refers for further study.

ספר הזוהר, יתרו י"ג:רל"ה-י"ד:רמ"ו13:235-14:246 Zohar, Yitro

IN THE THIRD MONTH, WHEN THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE GONE FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT.... The third month is the one in which the celestial chief Uriel has

sway. He has three hundred and sixty-five myriads of camps with him, corresponding to all the days of the year. All have three hundred and sixty-five keys of light issuing from the inner supernal sphere called "Hashmal" (v. Ezek. 1, 4), which is hidden and veiled, in which the mysteries of the holy celestial letters of the Holy Name ...

The Zohar; London, Soncino Press, 1933 (Public Domain)

64 ובוהר הרקיע

KeHOT's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

להאריז"ל.

65 ובהרמ"ז

As the note quotes, it cites the Ramaz at the end of Yisro (78b) that the secret of the Chashmal is in Tiferes, whether of Imma or of Z'eir Anpin.

KEHOT'S NOTE

פי יתרו. ראה לקו"ת שה"ש נא, א "ומבואר בהרמ"ז ס"פ יתרו (בדף ע"ח) שסוד החשמל הוא בת"ת בין דאימא בין דז"א. וכ"ה באוה"ת בראשית כרך ג תעט, א. וראה שם בפי וישלח כרך ב רמג, א.

66 ובספר הדרת מלך

The note identifies the book as Rabbi Shalom Buzaglo's explanations on the Zohar and the Idras (Amsterdam, 5526), where the Chashmal passage of the Zohar is discussed.

KEHOT'S NOTE

להרב שלום בוזאגלו, באורים על הזוהר והאדרות, אמסטרדם תקכ"ו.

PARAGRAPH 5

67 בשבת מאיר אור האצילות

The note lists the Siddur for the idea that on Shabbos the light of Atzilus shines below through Beriah alone.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה פע"ח שער מקראי קודש פ"ג. ראה גם סידור קמט, א. מאמרי אדה"א — קונטרסים ד"ה להבין מ"ש בפע"ח עי תקלג ואילך.

68 ובח"ל ע"י עשייה

the page is on Sefaria, but its text shares nothing with the note (unconfirmed)

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת פי מסעי פט, ב. ספר המאמרים תש"ג בד"ה טוב טעם עי לח.

69 וצבא השמים לך משתחוים

"And the host of heaven bows to You." Even the created "something" of the holy worlds bows in self-nullification before G-d.

Nehemiah 9:6 ט:ו

אתה־הוא ה' לְבָדָךְ אֶתְּה עֲשִׂית אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־צָבָאם הָאָרֶץ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ הַיָּמִים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם וְאֶתְּה מְחִיָּה אֶת־כָּל־שָׂא הַשָּׁמַיִם לְךָ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיִּים:

Thou art the L-RD, even Thou alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them,

and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee.

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70 ואפשר שהפרסא

In this manuscript the remark is introduced with "and in another manuscript I found that the partition...", showing that the suggestion about a Chashmal between Asiyah and nogah came from a second manuscript source.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בכרך באבי 17 קכט, א: ובכתב אחר מצאתי שהפרסא.

71 במ"א בפי ואתחנן ע"פ שמע ישראל

This is the discourse on "Hear O Israel" the text refers to.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת ואתחנן יא, ב והנחת כ"ק אדה"א בסה"מ תקס"ב עי רמד ובהביאור שם עי רנב ואילך. ובאוה"ת ויקרא עי נב.

72 ע"פ שמע

The Shema. The Alter Rebbe refers to his discourse on this verse in Parshas Va'eschanan, where the separation through the Chashmal is also explained.

דברים ו:4 ד:ד

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֵלֵינוּ הָאֵלֵינוּ אֶחָד:

HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE L-RD OUR GOD, THE L-RD IS ONE.

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73 אשר ברא אלקים לעשות

In the previous maamar the verse is explained as the reason for circumcision: "which G-d created to make," to rectify, because man was not created complete and must perfect himself.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לעיל יב, א.

74 אשר ברא אלהים לעשות

"Which G-d created to make": creation was left to be completed. The Alter Rebbe reads "to make" as "to rectify," the work given to man, as he explained in the previous maamar.

בראשית ב:3

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְקַלְמֶלְאָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָא אֱלֹקִים לַעֲשׂוֹת:

And G-d blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it He rested from all His work which G-d in creating had made.

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75 בצלמנו כדמותנו

Man was made "in Our image, after Our likeness," as a microcosm; so he too carries the screen of nogah and is charged with repairing it.

בראשית א: כ"ו

וַיֵּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדִמוּתֵנוּ וַיִּרְדּוּ בְּדָגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

And G-d said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

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76 וצריך — חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקודש

The Talmud speaks of those who ate ordinary food “prepared in the purity of holiness.” The Alter Rebbe uses the phrase for mundane life elevated to holiness.

חגיגה י”ט ב”ד: 6-4b Chagigah 19b

אָתאַן לָרַבִּי מַאִיר, דָּאָמַר: חוֹלִין וּמַעֲשֵׂר כְּהֶדְדִּי נִינְהוּ, רִישָׁא רַבְנָן וְסִיפָא רַבִּי מַאִיר? אִין, רִישָׁא רַבְנָן וְסִיפָא רַבִּי מַאִיר. רַב אֲחָא בַר אֲדָא מְתַנֵּי לֵה בְּסִיפָא חֲמֵשׁ מַעֲלֹת, וּמוֹקִי לֵה כּוֹלָה כְּרַבְנָן. אָמַר רַב מְרִי: שְׁמַע מִינָהּ חוֹלִין שְׁנַעֲשׂוּ עַל טְהוּרַת הַקּוֹדֶשׁ — כְּקוֹדֶשׁ דְּמוּ. מִמַּאי —

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יט, ב. ראה סידור קמה, ד ואילך. דרך מצותיך מצות מילה ה, א.

77 שו"ה לעשייה — וכ"ש שק"נ אינו מפסיק א

The manuscript reads “and all the more so the screen between Asiyah and kelipas nogah does not separate then,” specifying that it is the screen between Asiyah and nogah that does not intervene on Shabbos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ באבי 17 שם: ומכ"ש שהמסך שבין עשי לק"נ אינו מפסיק א.

78 שבת להוי"ה אלהיך

“The seventh day is a Shabbos to Havayah your G-d.” Shabbos is devoted to G-d in self-nullification, set apart from weekday work.

Exodus 20:10 שמות כ': 10

וַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה כְלִי-מְלָאכָה אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ-וּבִתֶּךָ עֶבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְגִרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the L-RD thy G-d, in it thou shalt not do any manner of work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates;

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79 שהתהוותו

The manuscript reads “whose coming into being” in the plural (she-hishtahavusan), referring to the weekdays; the meaning is the same.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 17 שם: שהתהוותו.

80 יגיע כפידך

“When you eat the labor of your hands, you are fortunate.” Honest work, done for the sake of Heaven, is the way nogah is refined during the six weekdays.

Psalms 128:2 תהילים קכ"ח: 2

יגיע כפידך כי תאכל אשריך וטוב לך:

When thou eatest the labour of thy hands, Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

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81 שו"ה להיות — כ"א

The glosses read the abbreviation as ki im (“for if”), which is how the translation takes it: “For if there were no partition...”

KEHOT'S NOTE

= כי אם, כן הוא בהגהות הרה"ר ר' אשר.

PARAGRAPH 6

82 אני הנה בריתי אתך

“As for Me, behold My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.” G-d's covenant of circumcision with Avraham; the Alter Rebbe reads each phrase in terms of removing the screen of nogah.

Genesis 17:4: ו'ז' בראשית

אֲנִי הִנֵּה כְּרִיתִי אִתְּךָ וְהָיִיתָ לְאָב הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם:

'As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יז, ד.

83 אני אותיות אין

The note refers to this reference work of Kabbalistic terms for the equivalence of ani (“I”) and ayin (“nothing”).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה מאו"א אות א' ס"ד.

84 וזקף גדול דהיינו כשהיא מתעלית למעלה

Or HaTorah there cites the Zohar (3:191b) that the zakef accent, standing upward, indicates the ascent of Malchus, which is how the text reads “I” with zakef gadol.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת מטות ע' אישכו מציין לזח"ג קצא, ב זקיף טעמא לעילא, מורה על עליית המלך.

שרי אשתך לא תקרא שמה

שרי כי שרה שמה וגו'

Sarai your wife: you shall not call her name Sarai



How a new existence comes into being depends on the level: above, at the level of the higher Chochmah (Abraham), birth comes through contraction, the yud; below, at the level of the lower Chochmah (Sarah), it comes through expansion, the hei. That is why Sarah could bear Isaac only once her yud became a hei.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The Midrash teaches that Sarai could not give birth, but Sarah could. This is puzzling: the yud of Sarai stands for Chochmah, the level of ayin (nothing), which is the source of new existence, while the hei of Sarah stands for Binah, called yesh (something). Why would exchanging the higher letter for the lower one give her the power to bear a child? The Alter Rebbe answers that Abraham and Sarah are the higher and the lower Chochmah. Above, a new existence comes about only through tzimtzum: were the Infinite Light to spread forth as it is, nothing finite could ever arise. Below, the reverse is true: contraction would leave only darkness and concealment, and existence comes about through spreading out and expansion, which the broad letter hei expresses. The three tips of the yud and the shape of the two hei's illustrate this. Abraham too received a hei, but only to become 'the father of a multitude of nations', elevating what lies outside holiness; for Isaac, who belongs to holiness, whose nature is self-nullification, he did not need it. Sarah, however, needed the hei for Isaac's birth.

OUTLINE

- 1 **The question: why a hei for Sarah?** ¶1
The name change gave Sarah the power to give birth; yet the yud (Chochmah, 'nothing') is the source of new existence and is higher than the hei (Binah, 'something'). The key: Abraham and Sarah are the higher and the lower Chochmah.
- 2 **Contraction above, expansion below** ¶2
Above, new existence comes only through tzimtzum; below, at Sarah's level, it comes through expansion. Abraham's hei served his role as father of many nations, not Isaac's birth; Sarah needed the hei for Isaac.

KEY CONCEPTS

Yud and hei יו"ד וה"א

In Kabbalah the yud, a single point, stands for Chochmah and for contraction; the hei, which spreads out in width and length, stands for Binah and for expansion.

Ayin and yesh אין ויש

Chochmah is called ayin ('nothing'), the undefined source from which new existence comes; Binah is called yesh ('something'), where things have taken definite shape.

The higher Chochmah and the lower

Chochmah חכמה עילאה וחכמה תתאה

Two levels of Chochmah. Abraham corresponds to the higher, rooted in the Chochmah of Atzilus; Sarah to the lower. Each brings new existence into being in the opposite way.

tzimtzum (contraction) צמצום

The self-concealment of the Infinite Light; at the higher level it is the only way a finite, new existence can come about.

Spreading forth and expansion התפשטות והרחבה

At the lower level, where the light is already limited, new existence comes through expansion rather than further contraction, which would leave only darkness.

self-nullification (bittul) ביטול

The nature of the side of holiness; because of it, Isaac's birth did not require Abraham's hei of expansion.

SECTION 1 • 11

The question: why a hei for Sarah?

1 שרי אשתך¹ לא תקרא שמה שרי² כי שרה שמה וגו'. הנה שינוי השם של שרה הוא להיות לה בחי'

הולדה

“Sarai your wife: you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name,” etc. Now, the change of Sarah’s name was so that she would have [the capacity of] giving birth,

The maamar opens with G-d’s instruction to Abraham to change his wife’s name from Sarai (spelled with a final yud) to Sarah (spelled with a final hei). The Alter Rebbe states the premise: the purpose of this change was to give her the ability to bear a child.

כמארוז"ל שרי לא תלד³ כו' וא"כ צ"ל הלא מעלת היו"ד גבוה מן הה' כי יו"ד חכמה ה' בינה.

as our Sages, of blessed memory, said: “Sarai does not give birth,” etc. If so, [the question] must be asked: is not the level of the yud higher than the hei? For yud is Chochmah (wisdom) and hei is Binah (understanding).

The Midrash says that as Sarai she could not give birth, but as Sarah she could. This raises a difficulty: in Kabbalah the letter yud stands for Chochmah and the letter hei for Binah, and Chochmah is the higher faculty. Why would exchanging a higher letter for a lower one bring about the ability to give birth?

ונודע כי עיקר הולדה מבחינת חכמה לפי שחכמה בחי' אין והחכמה מאין⁴ כו'. משא"כ בינה נק' יש כו'.

And it is known that giving birth comes chiefly from the level of Chochmah, because Chochmah is the level of ayin (nothing), [as it is written,] “and Chochmah comes from ayin,” etc.; whereas Binah is called yesh (something), etc.

The question is sharpened. Chochmah is called ayin, ‘nothing’, because it is the first flash of insight before anything is defined; bringing something new into being, ‘something from nothing’, is rooted there. Binah, where the idea is developed and takes on definite shape, is called yesh, ‘something’, an existence already there.

ואיך נהפוך הוא שלהיות לה כח ההולדה לוקח מאתה כח היו"ד וניתן לה כח הה' במקומו⁵ כו'.

So how is it turned around, that for her to have the power of giving birth, the power of the yud is taken from her and the power of the hei is given to her in its place, etc.?

So the change seems backwards: to give Sarah the power to give birth, the yud, the letter of Chochmah and the source of new existence, was taken away, and the hei of Binah was put in its place.

והענין כי אברהם ושרה הם בחי' ח"ע וח"ת כו' ששרש אברהם הוא בבחי' חכמה דאצי'.

And the explanation is that Abraham and Sarah are the levels of the higher Chochmah and the lower Chochmah, etc., for Abraham's root is in the level of the Chochmah of Atzilus.

The answer begins. Abraham and Sarah correspond to two levels of Chochmah: Abraham to the higher Chochmah, rooted in the Chochmah of Atzilus, and Sarah to the lower Chochmah. What is true of how birth works at the higher level is not true of the lower one, as the next paragraph explains.

SECTION 2 • 12

Contraction above, expansion below

2 והנה למעלה כך הוא המדה⁶ עיקר ההולדה להיות מציאות הולדה חדשה הוא ע"י צמצום דוקא⁷ כי אם

הי' אא"ס ב"ה מתפשט

Now above, this is the rule: the essence of giving birth, so that a new existence is born, comes specifically through tzimtzum (contraction). For if the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, were to spread forth

Here the answer is given. At the higher level (Abraham's), a genuinely new existence comes about only through tzimtzum, the self-concealment of the Infinite Light. Without such contraction, nothing separate could arise.

כמו שהוא בבחי' א"ס לא הי' אפשר להיות שום התהוות מציאות כלל אפי' ע"י רבוא רבבות השתלשלות כי כשמו כן הוא אין סוף להתפשטותו וכו'.

as it is, in the level of the Infinite, it would not be possible for any existence at all to come into being, even through myriads upon myriads [of stages] of the chain of descending worlds (hishtalshelus); for as its name is, so it is: there is no end to its spreading forth, etc.

If the Infinite Light spread forth as it truly is, no finite existence could come into being, however many stages of descent it passed through, since its nature is to have no end. That is why, at the higher level, the yud, a single contracted point, is the letter of birth.

משא"כ למטה בבחי' שרה כו' הוא להיפך ממש שאם הי' האור מתצמצם הי' חשך והעלם והסתר גמור ועיקר התהוות המציאות הוא ע"י בחי' התפשטות והרחבה דוקא וכו'

Whereas below, in the level of Sarah, etc., it is the very opposite: if the light were contracted, there would be darkness, concealment and total hiddenness; and existence comes into being chiefly through the level of spreading forth and expansion specifically, etc.

At the lower level, Sarah's, it is the reverse. There the light is already limited, so further contraction would leave only darkness and concealment; new existence comes about precisely through spreading out and expansion. The hei, a letter with breadth and length, expresses that expansion.

(וכנודע בענין ג' קוצין של⁸ היו"ד שהקוץ התחתון מקור וכח הבינה תלוי בקוץ העליון כו').

(As is known concerning the three tips of the yud: the lower tip, the source and power of Binah, depends on the upper tip, etc.)

The text's own parenthetical support: the yud is drawn with three tips, an upper, a middle and a lower one. The lower tip is the source of Binah, and it depends on the upper tip, which shows that the spreading out associated with Binah draws its power from what is above it.

וכנודע בענין תמונת ב' ההי"ן. ומה שנתוסף לאברהם ה' אברם אינו מוליד^{9,10} כו' אברהם הוא בחי' ח"ע כו'

And as is known concerning the shape of the two hei's. And as for the hei being added to Abraham: "Abram does not beget," etc.; Abraham is the level of the higher Chochmah, etc.

A further support is the shape of the two hei's in the Name Havayah, a letter that spreads out in width and length. The text then raises an objection: Abraham too received a hei, since the Midrash says 'Abram does not beget' but Abraham does; yet Abraham is the higher Chochmah, for whom birth should come through contraction, not expansion.

היינו כמו שמפורש במקרא כי אב המון גוים¹¹ כו' ע"ד בחי' הנפש אשר עשו בחרן¹² בחי' העלאות מזלעז"ז כו'.

That is, as is stated explicitly in the verse, "for [I have made you] the father of a multitude of nations," etc., in the manner of the level of "the souls they had made in Charan," the level of elevations from the opposing side (zeh le'umas zeh), etc.

The answer: Abraham's hei was for what the verse states explicitly, that he would be 'the father of a multitude of nations', like 'the souls they had made in Charan', which our tradition understands as the people Abraham and Sarah drew to the service of G-d. That is elevation from the side opposed to holiness, which requires expansion outward.

אבל להולדת יצחק¹³ ס"י דקדושה לא היה צריך כי אדרבה כל סטרא דקדושה בחי' ביטול ולא התפשטות כו'

But for the birth of Isaac, [who is of] the side of holiness, it was not needed; for on the contrary, the whole side of holiness is the level of self-nullification (bittul) and not of spreading forth, etc.

For the birth of Isaac, who belongs wholly to the side of holiness, Abraham did not need the hei, because holiness is by nature self-nullification (bittul), not spreading forth. So at Abraham's level the birth of a holy child still comes through the contraction of the yud.

משא"כ לשרה נתוסף הה' ללידת יצחק כו' (וע' לקמן פ' חיי שרה בד"ה יגלה לן טעמי) :

Whereas to Sarah the hei was added for the birth of Isaac, etc. (And see below, in Parshas Chayei Sarah, in the maamar beginning “Yegaleh lan ta’amei.”)

Sarah, however, being the lower Chochmah, did need the hei for Isaac’s birth, since at her level new existence comes through expansion. The text refers the reader to a maamar in Parshas Chayei Sarah, ‘Yegaleh lan ta’amei’, for more on this.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the Alter Rebbe call Chochmah ayin (‘nothing’), and why should ‘nothing’ be the source of new existence?
2. According to the maamar, why can nothing finite come into being unless the Infinite Light is contracted?
3. Why would contraction at Sarah’s level lead to darkness and concealment rather than to birth?
4. What did Abraham’s added hei accomplish, and why was it not needed for the birth of Isaac?
5. How do the three tips of the yud illustrate that the lower level depends on the higher?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 שרי אשתך

In this manuscript, a copyist's text of the maamar, the Tzemach Tzedek added in his own handwriting the word 'mugah', marking the text as proofread.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 1101 הוסיף כ"ק הצ"צ בגוכתי"ק על כתי"י מעתיק: מוגה. הנחת מהר"א הלוי בספרו עבודת הלוי פ' לך לך טז, ד כותרת "כ"י"ק בעת ששמע מאדמו"ר הזקן". ראה לעיל בציונים מכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע.

2 שרי אשתך לא תקרא שמה שרי

G-d tells Abraham that his wife is no longer to be called Sarai but Sarah. The verse opens the maamar, whose subject is why the change of one letter gave her the power to bear Isaac.

בראשית 17:15 וי"ט

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שְׂרֵי אִשְׁתְּךָ לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ שְׂרֵי כִּי שָׂרָה שְׁמָהּ:

And G-d said unto Abraham: 'As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יז, טו.

3 שרי לא תלד

The Midrash says that Sarai does not give birth but Sarah does, linking her ability to have a child to the change of her name. The Alter Rebbe takes this as the premise that the new letter brought the power of birth.

בראשית רבה מ"ד:י"ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר מוד, יב. תנחומא משפטים יא. ועיי' בלקו"ת פ' בשלח א, ב.

4 והחכמה מאין

The verse asks, 'And wisdom, where [me'ayin] shall it be found?' Chassidus reads me'ayin as 'from nothing': Chochmah comes from, and is, the level of ayin. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that Chochmah is the source of new existence.

איוב כ"ח:י"ב

וְהַחֲכֵמָה מֵאֵינָן תִּמְצָא וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה:

But wisdom, where shall it be found? And where is the place of understanding?

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KEHOT'S NOTE

איוב כח, יב.

5 ואיך נהפוך . . וניתן לה כח הה' במקומו

The Likkutei Torah maamar on Beshalach refers back to this passage, so its treatment of the yud and the hei can be

read alongside this question of why the yud was exchanged for a hei.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בלקו"ת בשלח א, ב מציין לכאן.

PARAGRAPH 2

6 והנה למעלה כך הוא המדה

That passage explains that the worlds can receive only through narrow channels ('hairs'), and it quotes this maamar: above, birth comes specifically through tzimtzum, while below, at the level of Sarah, it is the very opposite.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא בלקו"ת פ' כי תצא לו, ג.

7 שו"ה ההולדה — הוא ע"י צמצום דוקא

As the note quotes it, Likkutei Torah clarifies that this tzimtzum is not concealment and total hiddenness, but like the teaching that a person should always teach a student in a concise way.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בלקו"ת בשלח א, א: "ואין זה הצמצום העלם והסתגר גמור, אלא ע"ד לעולם ישנה אדם לתלמידו בדרך קצרה" ע"ש. וראה באוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשכג, ב.

8 וכנודע בענין ג' קוצין של יו"ד

the passage shares nothing with the note

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לעיל יא, ב. ובמ"מ לשם.

9 אברם אינו מוליד

The Midrash says that Abram does not beget but Abraham does, just as Sarai does not give birth but Sarah does. The Alter Rebbe uses it to raise the question why Abraham, the higher Chochmah, also needed a hei.

בראשית רבה מ"ד:י"ב

... ר' הונא בר רב יוסף אמר: אף שנוי שם ומעשה טוב. שנוי השם מאברהם, ולא יקרא עוד שמך אברהם. מעשה טוב מאנשי גינה, שנאמר (יונה ג) וירא אלקים את מעשיהם כי שבו וגו'. ויש אומרים: אף שנוי מקום שנאמר (בראשית יב): ויאמר ה' אל אברהם לך לך. ר' מונא אמר: אף התענית שנאמר (תהלים כ): יענך ה' ביום צרה וגו'. רבא בר מחסאי ורבי חמא בן גוריון בשם רב אמר: יפה תענית לחלום, כאש בנעורת. אמר רבי יוסף: וכו' ביום, ואפילו בשבת:

"He took him outside, and said: Look now to the heavens, and count the stars, if you can count them, and He said to him: So will your offspring be" (Genesis 15:5). "He took him outside" - Rabbi Yehoshua of Sikhnin in the name of Rabbi Levi: Did He take him outside the world, that the verse should say: "He took him outside [ha'utzta]"? Rather, he showed him the streets of the heavens, can also mean

streets. just as it says: "While He had not yet made earth and the ...

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Zohar I, 90b ז, ז, ז

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר מד, יב. זח"א ז, ב.

10

אברם אינו מוליד

The Kehot notes give this Zohar passage, alongside the Midrash, as a source for the saying that Abram does not beget. The Alter Rebbe uses the saying to ask why Abraham needed the added hei.

ספר הזהר, לך לך ל"א:שמ"ב-31:342-32:354 Zohar, Lech Lecha
ל"ב:שנ"ד

Till Abram was circumcised, he was addressed only by that degree which we have mentioned; after he was circumcised, then THE L-RD APPEARED UNTO ABRAM, i.e. all the other grades appeared over this grade, and this grade addressed him without reserve. After he was circumcised, then THE L-RD APPEARED UNTO ABRAM, Thus when Abram was circumcised he emerged from the unripe state and entered into the holy covenant, and was crowned with the sacred crown, and entered into the covenant on which the world is based, and thus the world ...

The Zohar; London, Soncino Press, 1933 (Public Domain)

11

כי אב המון גוים

The verse explains Abraham's new name: 'for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.' The Alter Rebbe reads this as the explicit purpose of Abraham's added hei.

בראשית י"ז:5 ז"ו:17 Genesis

וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שְׁמִי אֲבְרָם וְהָיָה שְׁמִי אֲבִרְהָם כִּי אֲבִי־הַמּוֹן גוֹיִם
נִתְּתִיךָ:

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee.

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12

הנפש אשר עשו בחרן

When Abram left Charan he took with him 'the souls they had made in Charan'. The Alter Rebbe cites it as an example of elevating what lies outside holiness, the work for which Abraham needed expansion.

בראשית י"ב:5 ז"ב:12 Genesis

וַיִּקַּח אֲבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרִי אֵשֶׁתוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־אָחִיו וְאֶת־כָּל־רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר
רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת־הַנַּפְשׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בַּחֲרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶץ
כְּנָעַן:

And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יב, ה.

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להולדת יצחק . . לא הי צריך

As the note reports, Biurei HaZohar explains that the hei was added to Abraham's name for the sake of Isaac's birth, which differs from this maamar's statement that for Isaac it was not needed.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ביאורי הזהר לכ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי יג, ב דשם מבוואר שהוספת ההי הי בשביל לידת יצחק. באוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשכד, א: "ומ"ש אברם אינו מוליד היינו להיות אב המון גוים אבל לא בשביל יצחק זה דחוק, וההכרח שהביא לפרש כן היינו משום דהא באצי הגילוי ע"י יו"ד, נ"ל דיש ליישב ולומר דהא אברם הוצרך להוולד שיומשך הנשמה בעשיי ולא די בלידה דאצי א"כ לצורך הלידה בבי"ע צ"ל הי" ע"ש. ראה גם בספר הערכים-חב"ד ח"א ערך אברהם בהערה 7-116. ראה בסה"מ תרכ"ז ע"ש.

בעצם היום הזה נימול אברהם וגו'

On that very day Avraham was circumcised



There are two circumcisions of the heart: one we do ourselves through teshuvah and the Torah, and a greater one that G-d performs from above, drawn from the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, beyond reason and beyond the Torah itself. Avraham kept the whole Torah on his own but waited for circumcision because he sought the higher circumcision that only G-d can give.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar asks why Avraham, who kept the entire Torah before it was given, did not circumcise himself until commanded. It answers by explaining the nature of circumcision. The verse “Who will go up for us to heaven?” hides milah in its initial letters and Havayah in its final letters, so circumcision stands above the Name Havayah and above the Torah, which is “not in heaven” but brought down to earth. The Torah speaks of two circumcisions of the heart: “you shall circumcise,” our own teshuvah and service, an arousal from below; and “Havayah will circumcise,” the revelation from above that will come after the ingathering of the exiles, G-d’s stored-away goodness. This higher circumcision is the “great circumcision” of the thirteen covenants: like a covenant between friends, it is above reason, drawn from the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, which transcend wisdom and the Torah. Avraham therefore kept all of the Torah below it himself and waited to receive this circumcision from above. Hence the Torah says “Avraham was circumcised,” in the passive, and “in the essence of that day,” the entirely good day of the time to come, revealed to him then.

OUTLINE

- 1 **The question and the key verse** ¶11
Why did Avraham, who kept the whole Torah, not circumcise himself earlier? “Who will go up for us to heaven” hides milah and Havayah.
- 2 **Two circumcisions, and the great one above the Torah** ¶12
Circumcision from below (teshuvah, Torah and mitzvos) and from above (G-d’s revelation, from the Thirteen Attributes, above reason, Havayah and Torah); so Avraham waited for the higher one.

3 “Was circumcised” in the essence of the day

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The passive verb and the phrase “in the essence of that day” show that Avraham received the circumcision from above, from the revelation of the day that is entirely good.

KEY CONCEPTS

Circumcision from below מילה שמלמטה למעלה

“You shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart”: a person’s own teshuvah and service through Torah and mitzvos, an arousal from below.

Circumcision from above (the great circumcision) מילה גדולה שמלמעלה למטה

“Havayah will circumcise your heart”: G-d’s own revelation, the “great goodness” He has stored away, which no human effort reaches.

Initial letters and final letters ריית מילה וסיית הוי”ה

In “Mi ya’aleh lanu hashamaymah” the initials spell milah and the finals spell Havayah, showing circumcision to be above the Name Havayah.

Torah not in heaven לא בשמים היא

The Torah has been brought down to earth through the Name Havayah (contraction, expansion, drawing down), so its law is decided here below.

Thirteen Attributes of Mercy י”ג מדות הרחמים

Divine mercy above wisdom and the Torah, the source of forgiveness and of the great circumcision, alluded to in the “thirteen covenants.”

Covenant ברית

A bond above reason, like two friends who commit to love each other even when reason would no longer produce that love.

The day that is entirely good יום שכולו טוב

The time to come, whose “essence” is the revelation of G-d’s great goodness; it was revealed to Avraham at his circumcision.

SECTION 1 • 11

The question and the key verse

1 בעצם היום הזה¹ נימול אברהם² וגו'. להבין הקושיא שנזכר בספרים מפני מה לא מל אברהם³ א"ע קודם מאחר שקיים כל התורה כולה עד שלא ניתנה⁴ ואפילו עירובי תבשילין.⁵

“On that very day Avraham was circumcised,” etc. [We need] to understand the question that is raised in the books: why did Avraham not circumcise himself earlier, since he kept the entire Torah before it was given, even eiruvei tavshilin?

The maamar opens with the verse about Avraham’s circumcision at ninety-nine and raises a known question: Avraham kept the whole Torah before Sinai, down to the Rabbinic enactment of eiruvei tavshilin (which allows cooking on Yom Tov for Shabbos). Why, then, did he wait until he was commanded to circumcise himself?

ולהבין זה צ"ל תחלה ענין המילה דהנה כתיב לא בשמים היא⁶ לאמר מי יעלה לנו השמימה ר"ת מילה⁷ וס"ת הוי"ה.⁸

To understand this, we must first [explain] the matter of circumcision. For it is written, “It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up for us to heaven?’ (mi ya’aleh lanu hashamaymah)” — whose initial letters [spell] milah (circumcision) and whose final letters [spell] Havayah.

Before answering, the Alter Rebbe explains what circumcision is. In the verse “Who will go up for us to heaven?” the first letters of the four Hebrew words spell milah, circumcision, and the last letters spell the Name Havayah; he will show that this places circumcision above the level of Havayah and of the Torah.

SECTION 2 • 12

Two circumcisions, and the great one above the Torah

2 והענין דהנה תחלה כתיב ומלתם את ערלת לבבכם⁹ וכתיב ומל ה' אלקיך את לבבך ופ"י שיש ב' בחי' מילה¹⁰ האחת היא מלמטה למעלה שצריכים אנו למול את ערלת הלב והוא ענין התשובה

The explanation: first it is written, “You shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart,” and it is [also] written, “And Havayah your G-d will circumcise your heart.” The meaning is that there are two levels of circumcision. The first is from below upward: we must circumcise the foreskin of the heart, and this is the matter of teshuvah (return),

The Torah speaks of circumcising the heart in two ways: once as a command to us, and once as a promise that G-d will do it. The first is circumcision “from below upward”: our own effort to remove the “foreskin” that blocks the heart from feeling G-dliness, which is teshuvah, returning to G-d.

כמ"ש ושבת עד¹¹ הוי"ה אלקיך בקיום התורה ומצות וארז"ל אם ישראל עושין תשובה¹² נגאלין ואם לאו אין נגאלין.¹³

as it is written, "And you shall return unto Havayah your G-d," through fulfilling the Torah and mitzvos. And our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "If Israel do teshuvah, they are redeemed; and if not, they are not redeemed."

The verse about returning to G-d is read as referring to keeping the Torah and mitzvos. The Talmud's teaching ties the redemption to this teshuvah: our own work of return is the condition for being redeemed.

ואחר קבוץ גלויות כתיב והביאך אל הארץ והטיבך¹⁴ כו'. והוא המילה שמלמעלה למטה ומל ה' את לבבך

And after the ingathering of the exiles it is written, "And He will bring you into the land... and He will do you good," etc. And this is the circumcision that is from above downward: "And Havayah will circumcise your heart."

Only after the exiles are gathered in does the Torah promise that G-d will bring Israel to the land and do them good, and only then does it say that G-d will circumcise their hearts. That is the second circumcision, which comes "from above downward," as G-d's own act.

(וזהו והטיבך מאבותיך בחי' מה רב טובך אשר צפנת¹⁵ כו' כי במשה שנולד מהול¹⁶ כתיב ותרא אותו כי טוב הוא¹⁷ כו')¹⁸

(And this is [the meaning of] "And He will do you good more than your fathers": the level of "How great is Your goodness that You have hidden away," etc.; for regarding Moshe, who was born circumcised, it is written, "And she saw him, that he was good," etc.)

In a parenthesis the Alter Rebbe links "He will do you good" to the "great goodness" that G-d has stored away. The Sages learn from the word "good" said of the newborn Moshe that he was born already circumcised: the "good" describes a circumcision given from above, not achieved by human effort.

והיינו שבחי' מילה ראשונה שמלמטה למעלה¹⁹ היא אתעדל"ת והאתעדל"ע הוא הגלוי בחי' ומל ה' את לבבך כו'.

That is to say: the level of the first circumcision, which is from below upward, is an arousal from below; and the arousal from above is the revelation, the level of "And Havayah will circumcise your heart," etc.

He restates the two circumcisions in Chassidic terms. Our own circumcision of the heart is an arousal from below, human initiative; G-d's circumcision of the heart is an arousal from above, a revelation that comes from Him.

והנה על מילה שניה הזאת שיהיה לאחר קבוץ גליות ולאחר קיום התורה כולה כתיב מי יעלה לנו השמימה ר"ת מילה שהיא למעלה מבחי' התורה

Now, about this second circumcision, which will be after the ingathering of the exiles and after the fulfillment of the entire Torah, it is written, "Who will go up for us to heaven?" — the initial letters [spelling] milah — which is above the level of the Torah.

The verse "Who will go up for us to heaven?", whose initial letters spell milah, speaks of this second circumcision that will come after the ingathering of the exiles and after the whole Torah has been kept. Its place in the verse shows that it is higher than the Torah.

כי על התורה נאמר לא בשמים היא²⁰ שהיא נשפלת למטה דוקא וכנז' בגמ' שא"ר יהושע אין משגיחין בבת קול²¹ מפני שאין התורה בשמים כ"א למטה הימנה ונק' תורת הוי"ה

For about the Torah it is said, "It is not in heaven," for it is brought low, below, specifically. And [this is] as mentioned in the Gemara, that Rabbi Yehoshua said, "We pay no heed to a heavenly voice," because the Torah is not in heaven but only below it. And it is called "the Torah of Havayah,"

"It is not in heaven" teaches that the Torah has been brought down to this world, so its law is decided here by human reasoning; the Talmud tells that Rabbi Yehoshua overruled a heavenly voice on these grounds. Because the Torah came down through the Name Havayah, it is called "the Torah of Havayah."

כי שם הוי"ה יו"ד צמצום²² ה' התפשטות ו' המשכה כו' שעיי' נמשכה למטה²³ אבל מילה הנ"ל היא למעלה משם הוי"ה עד שהיא בר"ת ושם הוי"ה הוא בס"ת וע"כ היא מבחי' ומדרגת השמימה.

for the Name Havayah [is]: the yud, tzimtzum (contraction); the hei, expansion; the vav, drawing down, etc. — through which it was drawn down below. But the circumcision mentioned above is above the Name Havayah, to the point that it is in the initial letters while the Name Havayah is in the final letters; and therefore it is of the level and rank of "to heaven" (hashamaymah).

The letters of Havayah describe how G-dliness descends: the yud, a single point, is contraction; the hei is expansion; the vav, a vertical line, is drawing down. Circumcision stands at the beginning of the words of the verse while Havayah stands at their end, which shows that circumcision belongs to the higher level of "heaven," above Havayah.

ולמעלה מבחי' התורה שנשפלה למטה מבחי' שמים אלו.²⁴ ועי' ארז"ל גדולה מילה²⁵ שנכרתו עליה שלש עשרה בריתות.

And [it is] above the level of the Torah, which was brought low, below, from the level of these heavens. And about this our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "Great is circumcision, for thirteen covenants were made over it."

So circumcision is above the Torah, which came down from that "heaven." The Mishnah's praise, "Great is circumcision," with its thirteen covenants, is brought as support: the word "covenant" occurs thirteen times in the chapter of Avraham's circumcision.

פי' גדולה מילה היא בחי' המילה הגדולה שמלמעלה למטה (ע' במק"מ על הזוהר ח"ג דרל"ג ע"ב^{26, 27} ובלק"ת פ' קדושים²⁸ בטעמי מצות מענין גדולה מילה) שימול ה' את לבבך

The meaning of "Great is circumcision" is: the level of the great circumcision, which is from above downward (see the Mikdash Melech on the Zohar, part 3, page 233b, and in Likkutei Torah, Parshas Kedoshim, in Taamei HaMitzvos, on the matter of "Great is circumcision") — that Havayah will circumcise your heart.

"Great circumcision" is read as the great, higher circumcision that G-d performs from above. The Alter Rebbe refers the reader, in a parenthesis, to the Mikdash Melech's commentary on the Zohar and to the Kabbalistic writings on the reasons for the mitzvos, which explain the phrase in this way.

ולכן נכרתה ביי"ג בריתות פי' כידוע שענין הכריתת ברית הוא למעלה מן השכל והדעת²⁹ ע"ד ב' אוהבים שעושים כריתת ברית להיות אוהבים זע"ז

And therefore it was made with thirteen covenants. The explanation, as is known, is that the matter of making a covenant is above reason and knowledge, like two who love each other, who make a covenant to be loving to one another;

Why thirteen covenants? A covenant, by its nature, is above reason: two friends make a covenant so that their love will stand whatever their minds may later decide.

דהיינו שיוכרח להיות אוהבו אף אם לא היה נמשך אצלו אהבה זו אליו אח"כ מצד השכל והדעת מ"מ מכריח א"ע לאהבה בבחינה שלמעלה מהשכל והדעת.

that is, that he will be bound to love him: even if afterward this love for him would not arise in him on account of reason and knowledge, nevertheless he compels himself to love, on a level that is above reason and knowledge.

The covenant binds a person to go on loving his friend even if at some later time his reason and understanding would no longer produce that love. The love then comes from a place above reason, and that is what a covenant creates.

וכך כדי להיות גילוי והמשכה בחיי מילה הגדולה הנ"ל (שהוא בחיי מה רב טובך כו')

And so too, in order that there be a revelation and drawing down of the level of the great circumcision mentioned above (which is the level of "How great is Your goodness," etc.),

In the same way the great circumcision, which is the "great goodness" G-d has stored away, must be drawn down from a level above reason.

הוא עיי' י"ג מדה"ר³⁰ שהן למעלה מהחכמה והשכל ולכך היא למעלה מבחיי שם הוי"ה ולמעלה מבחיי תורה

it is through the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, which are above Chochmah (wisdom) and intellect; and therefore it is above the level of the Name Havayah and above the level of Torah

That level is the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, which are above Chochmah and intellect. Since the Torah is G-d's wisdom brought down through Havayah, a circumcision drawn from the Thirteen Attributes is above both Havayah and the Torah.

(כמו שיי"ג מדה"ר הן בחיי שלמעלה מהתורה ולכן שם הוא סליחת עון) ועי' נאמר עד יעבור עמך³¹ הוי"ה פי' עד יעבור בבחיי שלמעלה משם הוי"ה (וגם ביי"ג מדה"ר כתי' ויעבור³² כו').

(just as the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are a level that is above the Torah, and therefore it is there that sin is forgiven). And about this it is said, "Until Your people pass over, Havayah"; meaning, "until [they] pass over" into the level that is above the Name Havayah. (And regarding the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, too, it is written, "And [He] passed," etc.)

This is why forgiveness of sin comes through the Thirteen Attributes: forgiveness goes beyond what Torah law, which is wisdom, would decide. The verse "until Your people pass over, Havayah" is read as passing beyond Havayah, and the same verb, "He passed," begins the Thirteen Attributes at Sinai.

והנה בזה יובן ענין שאברהם קיים כל התורה כולה עד שלא ניתנה ולא קיים מצות מילה מפני שרצה להגיע לאותה מילה גדולה שמלמעלה למטה.

Now with this can be understood the matter that Avraham kept the entire Torah before it was given, yet did not keep the mitzvah of circumcision: because he wanted to attain that great circumcision which is from above downward.

Now the opening question is answered. Avraham did not circumcise himself on his own initiative because a circumcision he did himself would have been only the lower one, from below; he wanted the great circumcision that comes from above.

ולכך קיים כל התורה כולה שלמטה מאותה מילה ואח"כ זכה לאותה מילה גדולה שמלמעלה.³³

Therefore he kept the entire Torah, which is below that circumcision, and afterward he merited that great circumcision which is from above.

So he kept all the rest of the Torah, which is below that circumcision, as his own service from below, and afterward G-d gave him the higher circumcision.

SECTION 3 • 13

“Was circumcised” in the essence of the day

3 וז"ש נמול אברהם³⁴ ולא כתיב וימל א"ע כמ"ש תחלה גבי מילת ישמעאל ומקנת כספו דכתיב וימל³⁵ כו'

And this is why it says, “Avraham was circumcised,” and it is not written, “And he circumcised himself,” as it is written earlier regarding the circumcision of Yishmael and those purchased with his money, where it is written, “And he circumcised,” etc.

The wording of the verse confirms this. Of Yishmael and the servants the Torah says actively that Avraham “circumcised” them, while of Avraham himself it says passively that he “was circumcised,” not that he circumcised himself.

לפי שהיא המילה שמלמטה כדכתיב ומלתם את ערלת לבבכם אבל אברהם זכה לגילוי בחי' ומל ה' את לבבך ע"כ נאמר נמול אברהם כו'.

For that is the circumcision from below, as it is written, “You shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart.” But Avraham merited the revelation of the level of “And Havayah will circumcise your heart”; therefore it says, “Avraham was circumcised,” etc.

The active form fits the circumcision from below, which a person does himself. The passive form shows that Avraham received the circumcision from above, the one G-d performs.

וזהו בעצם היום הזה נמול פ"י בעצמיות של היום³⁶ הזה ויום הזה הוא היום שכולו ארוך שכולו טוב³⁷ כו'.

And this is [the meaning of] “On that very day (be'etzem hayom hazeh) he was circumcised”: that is, in the very essence of this day. And “this day” is the day that is entirely long, that is entirely good, etc.

The word be'etzem, “on that very day,” also means “in the essence.” “This day” is the day the Sages call “entirely long” and “entirely good,” the World to Come.

והעצמיות של היום הזה היינו אותו הגילוי הגדול שיהי' לע"ל גילוי בחי' רב טובך³⁸ וזהו שכולו טוב וכשנתגלה לו בחי' העצם של היום הזה אז נמול אברהם כו':

And the essence of this day is that great revelation which will be in the time to come: the revelation of the level of "Your great goodness." And this is [the meaning of] "entirely good." And when the level of the essence of this day was revealed to him, then Avraham was circumcised, etc.

The "essence" of that day is the great revelation of G-d's stored-away goodness that will come in the time to come. That revelation was shown to Avraham at his circumcision, and so his circumcision came from above.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

A person must first do his own part, circumcising the "foreskin" of his heart through teshuvah and keeping the Torah and mitzvos, as Avraham kept the whole Torah. That service from below prepares him for the higher circumcision, which comes as a gift from above, beyond anything his own reason and effort can reach.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why would a circumcision Avraham performed himself have been only the "lower" circumcision, and what did he gain by waiting to be commanded?
2. How does the letter reading of "Who will go up for us to heaven" show that circumcision is above the Torah, when the same verse says the Torah is "not in heaven"?
3. In what sense is a covenant between friends "above reason," and how does this illuminate the thirteen covenants of circumcision?
4. Why must the circumcision from below (teshuvah and Torah) come before the circumcision from above, and why is the second tied to the time after the ingathering of the exiles?
5. What is the difference in meaning between "And he circumcised" and "Avraham was circumcised"?

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 בעצם היום הזה

Another transcript of this same maamar, opening “to understand the question (mentioned in the books)”; its wording is close to Torah Ohr with small differences, and it gives two explanations.

בראשית מ"ב:א'

וַיֹּאֲרָא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֵשׁ-שָׁבֶר בַּמִּצָּרִים וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לִבְנוֹי לֵמָּה תִּתְּרֹאוּ:

Now Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, and Jacob said unto his sons: ‘Why do ye look one upon another?’

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KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחה אחרת נדפס בסה"מ תקס"ג ע' י שם מתחיל "להבין הקושי" (שנו
ספרים)". הלשון קרוב לכאן בשינוים קלים. ושם ב' ביאורים — וראה שם
כרך ב ע' תתא הגהות מהצ"צ. באוה"ת לך לך תשכה, א רשום: "בד"ה
בעצם היום הזה בתא" ס"פ לך לך והוא דרוש תקס"ג ולא שמעתי בעצמי
כ"א מפי כתבים". ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע. המאמר (כמו
בסה"מ תקס"ג) עם הגהות באוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תשכה, א (מלקות לג"פ
צג, ג). חלק מהמאמר מובא בסה"מ תרל"ג כרך ב ע' שצט. לד"ה זה ראה
בפלה הרמון בראשית מב, א. ד"ה זה נזכר בלקו"ת ר"ה סג, ד. שמע"צ פה,
צ.

2 בעצם היום הזה נמול אברהם

The verse records that Avraham and Yishmael were circumcised on the same day. The maamar opens with it and at the end explains why it says “was circumcised” and “in the essence of that day.”

Genesis 17:26 בראשית י"ז:כ"ו

בַּעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִמּוֹל אֲבִרְהָם וַיִּשְׁמְעָל בָּנוּ:

In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יז. כו.

3 מפני מה לא מל אברהם

the page is on Sefaria, but its text shares nothing with the note (unconfirmed)

KEHOT'S NOTE

בפי ריביא על התורה כי שמכיון שקיום מצות מילה שייך רק פעם אחת, לכן לא מל א"ע עד שנצטווה על זה – וכן יש עוד תירוצים במפרשים. ראה לקמן מא, ב. הביאור ע"פ דרך הפשט ראה בלקוטי שיחות ח"ה ע' 146. ובפנימיות הענינים ראה לקו"ש שם ע' 79 הערה 25.

4 שקיים כל התורה כולה עד שלא ניתנה

The closing Mishnah of Kiddushin says that Avraham kept the whole Torah before it was given; the Kehot note points here as well.

Mishnah Kiddushin 4:14 ד'י"ד

... וכן הוא אומר באברהם אבינו עליו השלום, (בראשית כד) וְאַבְרָהָם יָמָן, וְה' בָּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל מַצֵּינֵה שְׁעֵשָׂה אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ אֶת כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כֻּלָּה עַד שֶׁלֹּא נִתְּנָה, שְׁנֵאמָר, (שם כו) עָקֹב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע אַבְרָהָם בְּקֹלִי וַיִּשְׁמַר מִשְׁמַרְתִּי מִצֻּוֹתַי חֲקוֹתַי וְתוֹרוֹתַי:

Rabbi Judah said: an unmarried man must not tend cattle, nor may two unmarried men sleep together under the same cover. But the sages permit it. One whose business is with women must not be alone with women. And one should not teach his son a woman's trade. Rabbi Meir says: one should always teach his son a clean and easy profession, and pray to Him to whom wealth and property belong. For a profession does not contain [the potential for] poverty and wealth, for poverty is not due to ...

Torat Emet 357 (Public Domain) • Mishnah Yomit by Dr. Joshua Kulp (CC-BY)

5 שקיים... ואפי' עירובי תבשילין

The Talmud says that Avraham kept the whole Torah, even eiruvei tavshilin. This is the basis of the question why he waited to be circumcised.

Yoma 28b:10-11 יומא כ"ח ב' י"ז-י"א

אמר (רב), ואיתימא רב אשי: קז"ס אברהם אבינו אפילו עירובי תבשילין, שנאמר: "תורותי", אחת תורה שבכתב ואחת תורה שבעל פה. מתיא כן שמואל אומר וכו' והוא אומר הן. מאן אמר "הן"? אילימא הך דקאי אאיגרא — הוא חלים והוא מפשר? אלא הך דקאי אארעא, מנא ידע?

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

יומא כח, ב. וראה במשנה סוף קידושין. ובספר דברי דוד להט"ז פ' לך לך כ' בשם הב"ח שצ"ל עירובי תחומין.

6 לא בשמים היא

Moshe tells Israel that the Torah is not in heaven, out of reach. The maamar reads the verse's letters as a sign that circumcision is above the Torah.

דברים ל':י"ב Deuteronomy 30:12

לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה-לָנוּ הַשְּׁמַיְמָה וְיִקְחֶהָ לָנוּ וְיִשְׁמְעֵנוּ אֶתְּהָ וּנְעֲשֶׂנָּה:

It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say: 'Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ל. יב.

that take their refuge in Thee, in the sight of the sons of men!

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים לא, כ.

16 במשה שנולד מהול

The Sages learn from "she saw him, that he was good" that Moshe was born circumcised.

סוטה י"ב א:י"ז Sotah 12a:17

"וַתֵּרָא אוֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא". תַּנְיָא, רַבִּי מֵאִיר אָמַר: "טוֹב" שְׁמוֹ. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר: "טוֹבִיָּה" שְׁמוֹ. רַבִּי נַחֲמִיָּה אָמַר: הֵגוֹן לְנִבְיָאוֹת. אַחֲרֵים אָמְרִים: נִוְלַד כְּשֶׁהוּא מְהוּל. וְחַכְמִים אָמְרִים: כְּשֶׁעָה שְׁנוּלֵד מִשָּׁה, נִתְמַלֵּא הַבֵּית כּוֹלּוֹ אוֹר. כְּתִיב הָכָא: "וַתֵּרָא אוֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא", וְכִתִּיב הָתָם: "וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאֹר כִּי טוֹב".

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)
KEHOT'S NOTE

סוטה יב, א.

17 ותרא אותו כי טוב הוא

Said of Moshe's mother at his birth; the Sages read "good" as meaning he was born circumcised, which links "good" to circumcision given from above.

שמות ב' כ"ב Exodus 2:22

וַתֵּהָרֵא הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֵּרָא אוֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא וַתַּצְפִּנְהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרֵחִים:

And the woman conceived, and bore a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות ב, א.

18 (וזהו והטיבך . . טוב הוא כו')

The parenthesis linking "He will do you good" to the hidden goodness and to Moshe born circumcised is not in the other transcript.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הענין ליתא בסה"מ תקס"ג.

19 שבחי מילה ראשונה שמלמטה למעלה

That discourse explains Avraham's circumcision the other way, as a refining from below upward, and itself adds: "see what is written in Torah Ohr and the additions, on 'On that very day,' and this requires study." The note flags the tension with this maamar, where Avraham's circumcision is from above.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בסה"מ עטרת ע' פה דשם מבאר דענין המילה דאברהם הוא "ע"ד הבירור מלמטלמ"ע (ועמ"ש בתוי"א והוספות בד"ה בעצם היום, וצ"ע).

20 לא בשמים היא

The Torah is "not in heaven," and in the same verse "Who will go up for us to heaven?" hides the word milah; the

maamar sets the two parts of the verse against each other.

דברים ל':י"ב Deuteronomy 30:12

לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה-לָנוּ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְיִקְחֶהָ לָנוּ וְיִשְׁמַעְנוּ אֹתָהּ וְנַעֲשֶׂהָ:

It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say: 'Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ל, ב.

21 וכןז' בגמ' שא"ר יהושע אין משגיחין בבת קול

In the dispute over the oven of Achnai Rabbi Yehoshua rejected a heavenly voice, citing "it is not in heaven." The maamar uses it to show that the Torah has been brought down to earth.

בבא מציעא נ"ט ב:ה'59b:5

עָמַד רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל רִגְלֵיו וְאָמַר: "לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הִיא!" מֵאִי "לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הִיא"? אָמַר רַבִּי יְרֵמְיָה: שֶׁכָּבַד נִתְּנָה תוֹרָה מִהֶרֶם סִינִי, אֵין אָנוּ מְשִׁיחִין בְּבֵת קוֹל, שֶׁכָּבַד כְּתִבְתָּ בְּהֶרֶם סִינִי בַתּוֹרָה "אַחֲרֵי רַבִּים לְהִשְׁתָּ". אֲשֶׁכְּחִיהָ רַבִּי נֶתַן לְאַלְהֵיו, אָמַר לָקַח: מֵאִי עֶבֶד קוֹדֵשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא כְּהֵיָא שְׁעִתָּא? אָמַר לָקַח: קָא חֲיִיד וְאָמַר, "נִצְחֹנִי כְּנִי! נִצְחֹנִי כְּנִי!"

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)
KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"מ נט, ב.

22 כי שם הוי"ה יו"ד צמצום . . .

the passage shares nothing with the note

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אגה"ת פ"ד.

23 שו"ה בבת קול — ונק' תורת הוי" . . נמשכה למטה

The words from "And it is called 'the Torah of Havayah'" to "it was drawn down below" are not in the other transcript.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ליתא בסה"מ תקס"ג.

24 ושם הוי"ה הוא בס"ת . . מבחי שמים אלו

The words from "while the Name Havayah is in the final letters" to "from the level of these heavens" are not in the other transcript.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ליתא בסה"מ תקס"ג.

25 גדולה מילה

The Mishnah praises circumcision because thirteen covenants were made over it; the maamar reads "great" as the great circumcision from above.

נדרים ל"א ב:ח'-ט'31b:8-9

רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה אָמַר: מֵאוֹסָה הִיא הָעֶרְלָה, שְׁנִתְּגַנוּ בָּהּ רִשְׁעִים שְׁנֵאמָר: "כִּי כָל הַגּוֹיִם עֶרְלִים". רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל אָמַר: גְּדוּלָּה מִלָּה, שְׁנִכְרָתוֹ עֲלֶיהָ שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה בְרִיתוֹת. רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר: גְּדוּלָּה מִלָּה שְׁדוּחָה אֶת הַשְּׂבֵת חֲמוּרָה.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נדירים לא, ב.

26 ע' במק"מ על הוזהר ח"ג דר"ג ע"ב

Likkutei Torah quotes the Mikdash Melech: the great circumcision is drawn from Yesod of Arich Anpin, which holds the thirteen tikkunim of the beard, the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא בלקו"ת פ' תזריע כא, ב. "מארו"ל . . גדולה מילה . . ופי' במק"מ . . דהיינו שנמשך מיסוד דא"א שיש בו י"ג ת"ד שהם י"ג מדות הרחמים."

27 ע' במק"מ על הוזהר ח"ג דר"ג ע"ב

The text itself refers to the Mikdash Melech's commentary on this Zohar passage (Pinchas). As Likkutei Torah quotes it, the commentary explains "great is circumcision" as drawn from Yesod of Arich Anpin, which holds the thirteen tikkunim that are the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

ספר הוזהר, פנחס פ"ד:תקל"ז-תקמ"ה 84:537-545 Zohar, Pinchas

28 ובלק"ת פ' קדושים

As the note quotes it, Likkutei Torah there says that circumcision is great because thirteen covenants were made over it: just as there are thirteen tikkunim in the upper beard of Arich Anpin, so too in the lower "beard," in Yesod.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם לק"ת עקב טו, ב "גדולה מילה שנכרתו עליה י"ג כריתות שכמו שיש י"ג ת"ד בדיקנא עילאה דא"א כך הוא ג"כ בדיקנא תתאה בבחינת יסוד כו' כמ"ש בלק"ת פ' קדושים".

29 שענין הכריתות ברית הוא למעלה מן השכל והדעת

the passage shares nothing with the note

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת נצבים מד, ב.

30 הוא ע"י י"ג מדה"ר

A gloss in the margin of Torah Ohr points here: a covenant has been made with the Thirteen Attributes that they do not return empty. It links "covenant" with the Thirteen Attributes, as the maamar does.

ראש השנה י"ז ב:ז'ח' 8-7 Rosh Hashanah 17b

אמר רב יהודה: ברית כרותה לשלש עשרה מדות שאין חזרות ריקם, שנאמר: "הנה אנכי כורת ברית". אמר רבי יוחנן: גדולה תשובה שמקדשת גזר דינו של אדם, שנאמר: "השמן לב העם הזה ואנני הכבד ועיניו השע פן יראה בעיניו ובאנניו ישמע ולכבו יכיו ושב ורפא לו".

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KEHOT'S NOTE

על הגליון בתו"א נרשם: "ע' ר"ה יז, ב ברית כרותה ל"ג מדות כו' (ממורי נ"ע)". [הרה = ר' איזיק האמיל?].

31 עד יעבור עמך ה'

From the Song at the Sea. The maamar reads "pass over"

as passing beyond the level of Havayah.

שמות ט"ו:ט"ז Exodus 15:16

תפל עליהם אימתה ופחד בגדל זרועך ידמו כאבן עדי-עבר עמך Havayah עדי-עבר עס"ו קנ"ת:

Terror and dread falleth upon them; By the greatness of Thine arm they are as still as a stone; Till Thy people pass over, O L-RD, Till the people pass over that Thou hast gotten.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות טו, טז. על הגליון בתו"א נרשם: שבוכות מילה נבקע הים וע' במדרש תהילים הים ראה וינס ארוננו של יוסף ראה וינס ובמדרש רבה השירה הזאת כו' מילה זאת בריתי כו' (ממורי נ"ע).

32 וגם ב"ג מדה"ר כתי' ויעבור

The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy open with "And Havayah passed before him," the same verb as in "until Your people pass over."

שמות ל"ד:6 Exodus 34:6

ויעבר ה' על-פניו ויקרא ה' ה' אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורחי-חסד ואמת:

And the L-RD passed by before him, and proclaimed: 'The L-RD, the L-RD, G-d, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;

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33 ומל ה' אלקיך

The promise that G-d will circumcise Israel's heart; the maamar calls this the circumcision from above, done by G-d.

דברים ל"ו:6 Deuteronomy 30:6

ומל ה' אלקיך את-לִבְּךָ ואת-לִבְּךָ וְרָעָה לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ לַמַּעַן חַיֶּה:

And the L-RD thy G-d will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the L-RD thy G-d with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ל, ו.

PARAGRAPH 3

34 נמול אברהם

"Avraham was circumcised": the passive form, which the maamar reads as a circumcision given from above.

בראשית י"ז:כ"ו Genesis 17:26

בעצם היום הזה נמול אברהם וישמעאל בנו:

In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

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35 גבי מילת ישמעאל ומקנת כספו דכתיב וימל

Avraham took Yishmael and all those purchased with his money "and circumcised" them: the active form, which

the maamar reads as the circumcision from below.

בראשית י"ז:כ"ג

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־מִקְנֵת כֶּסֶףוֹ כָּל־זָכָר בְּאֵנְשֵׁי בֵית אַבְרָהָם וַיְמַל אֶת־בָּשָׂר עֲרֻלָּתָם בַּעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהִים:

And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as G-d had said unto him.

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36 בעצם היום — פ"י בעצמיות של היום

Or HaTorah explains that "this day" is Z'eir Anpin of Atzilus, called "day," and "this" (zeh) as in the clear vision of Moshe's prophecy; its essence is the Infinite Light clothed within it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באור"ת פ' פינחס ע' א"ר: ור"ל כי היום הזה היינו ז"א דאצ"י שנק' יום ונק' זה ע"ד משה רבינו ע"ה נתנבא בזה היינו בחי' אספקלריא המאירה, אמנם העצמי של בחי' ז"א היינו אוא"ס המלוכש בו ע"ד שנת"ל בפ"י בי נשבעתי כו' וכן בגשמיות ביום מאיר השמש אשר שמש הוא בחי' יסוד אבא המאיר בו"א כדפי' הרמ"ז ר"פ בהעלותך ור"פ אמור בענין שמש צדקה.

37 היום שכולו ארוך שכולו טוב

The Talmud interprets "that it may be well with you" as referring to the world that is entirely good, and "that your days may be long" to the world that is entirely long.

Kiddushin 39b:8 ח"ב: ל"ט ב

הרי שאמר לו אביו: עלה לבירה והבא לי גוזלות, ועלה לבירה ושלח את האם ונטל את הבנים ובחזרתו נפל ומת – היכן טובת ימיו של זה, והיכן אריכות ימיו של זה? אלא: "למען ייטב לה" – לעולם שכולו טוב, "ולמען יאריך ימיו" – לעולם שכולו ארוך.

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Chullin 142a:4-5 ח"ד: א' ד' ח"א: 4-5

הרי שאמר לו אביו עלה לבירה והבא לי גוזלות ועלה ושלח את האם ולקח את הבנים ובחזרתו נפל ומת היכן אריכות ימיו של זה והיכן טובתו של זה אלא למען יאריך ימיו בעולם שכולו ארוך ולמען ייטב לך לעולם שכולו טוב ודלמא לא הוה הכי ר' יעקב מעשה חזא ודלמא מהרהר בעבירה הוה מחשבה רעה אין הקב"ה מצרפה למעשה

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה קידושין לט, ב וחולין קמב, א (ושם: עולם). נוסח הרחמן (בברכת המזון) "ליום שכולו טוב".

38 רב טובך

G-d's "great goodness" stored away, which the maamar identifies with the revelation of the time to come and with the great circumcision.

Psalms 31:20 כ"א: כ"י

מִה רַב־טוֹבָךָ אֲשֶׁר־צָפַנְתָּ לִירֵאֶיךָ פְּעֻלָּתְךָ לַחֲסִים כִּי נִגַּד בְּנֵי אָדָם:

Oh how abundant is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; Which Thou hast wrought for them

that take their refuge in Thee, in the sight of the sons of men!

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Likkutei Torah

THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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The Rebbe asked that the maamarim of the week’s parsha, the “Chassidishe Parsha,” be learned during that week, spread over its seven days (Sichah of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel 5725 · Toras Menachem vol. 42, pp. 306-309). Why learn it, and the Rebbe’s brachos: likuteitorah.com/about/the-chassidishe-parsha/

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DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ״ל

Dedicated in honor of the Rebbe’s father, Reb Levi Yitzchok