



TORAH OHR • PARSHAS MISHPATIM • MAAMAR 5

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'

“And they saw the G-d of
Israel, and under His feet”



G-d, who has no body, is “like the appearance of a man” only as
He clothes Himself in the souls of Israel, and through the
Throne, the garment that conceals Him, only His “feet” reach
down into the separate worlds. There, the letters of the world’s
languages, refined through self-sacrifice in prayer and Torah,
become “the brick of sapphire” under His feet, while the
revelation of His “hands,” above the Throne, belongs to Moshe
and the Patriarchs.

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



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THE BIG IDEA

G-d, who has no body, is “like the appearance of a man” only as He clothes Himself in the souls of Israel, and through the Throne, the garment that conceals Him, only His “feet” reach down into the separate worlds. There, the letters of the world’s languages, refined through self-sacrifice in prayer and Torah, become “the brick of sapphire” under His feet, while the revelation of His “hands,” above the Throne, belongs to Moshe and the Patriarchs.

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

At Sinai the elders “saw the G-d of Israel, and under His feet” a brick of sapphire, yet “He did not send forth His hand” to them. How can feet and hands be said of G-d? Creation changes nothing in Him, for it comes only from His Malchus, a mere radiance. For that infinite radiance to produce finite, divided worlds, it is clothed in “like the appearance of a man,” lights in vessels, and that “man” is the souls of Israel. The Throne is the garment that hides the light so that worlds can feel separate, and as with a seated man, only the feet reach below it. The souls, descended into bodies, are those feet; in their root, “it is pure,” they are above the Throne. The Patriarchs and Moshe, constantly nullified like hands that follow the mind without command, were a chariot for the supernal arms. The soul rises again through letters: the Torah’s letters are “stones” from Heaven, while the letters of the nations’ languages, fired by self-sacrifice in the Shema, become bricks, “the brick of sapphire.” The elders saw only from beneath the Throne, so the “hand” was not revealed to them.

OUTLINE

- 1 The question** ¶11
The verses speak of G-d’s feet and of His hand, and Ezekiel sees “like the appearance of a man” upon the Throne. How can this be said of G-d, who has no body?
- 2 A radiance clothed in man** ¶12–10
Creation comes from His Malchus, a radiance that changes nothing in Him. Finite worlds come from it only through “like the appearance of a man,” lights in vessels, which is the souls of Israel, the dwelling of the Shechinah, as different as the limbs of a body. Hence the kaf of comparison: G-d is “like” a man only as He clothes Himself in them.

3 The Throne and the feet

¶11-17

The Throne (kas alef) is a garment that conceals the light so that Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah can exist as separate things, and only the “feet” reach below it. The souls, as created and clothed in bodies, are those feet; in their root, “it is pure,” the supernal brightness, they are above the Throne. In Kabbalistic terms the Throne is the screen between Atzilus and Beriah, and the two levels of the soul are Yisrael and Yaakov.

4 Hands and feet

¶18-24

Moshe, “in whose midst I am,” was above the foot, and the Patriarchs were a chariot for the supernal arms. Hands follow the mind by themselves, as one claps for joy, while feet dance only on command: so the constant self-nullification of the Patriarchs and Moshe differs from the aroused love of other tzaddikim. Within each soul, natural love is a foot and love born of understanding a hand, reached in the Shema.

5 Letters: horses, stones and a house

¶25-27

The soul descends for the sake of an ascent through the letters of the Torah, which are “horses” that raise it and “stones” that, though lowest, raise intellect and feeling higher still. Spoken aloud, they are a house in which the encompassing Infinite Light dwells; when a person reads, G-d reads the same words opposite him.

6 Stones and bricks

¶28-30

Natural stones are made by Heaven, bricks by human hands and fired in a kiln. The Torah’s letters are stones; the letters of the seventy languages, spoken by Jews in business, become holy bricks when burned in the fiery love of the Shema, provided business was done coolly and Torah kept fixed.

7 The brick of sapphire

¶31-33

“Under His feet,” below the Throne, the refined letters of the world’s languages shine as “the brick of sapphire.” This is possible because every language uses the same twenty-two letters, though only in the Holy Tongue are the words G-d’s own creative speech. The two kinds of letters raise the descended souls.

8 What the elders saw

¶34-37

Moshe, rooted in Atzilus, approached Havayah and drew the Torah down; the elders saw “Elokei,” the concealment of the Throne, and there the two kinds of letters. The “hand,” Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes above the Throne, was not sent forth to them, but only to Moshe and the Patriarchs, as in “My beloved sent forth his hand.”

KEY CONCEPTS

“Like the appearance of a man” כמראה אדם

Ezekiel’s figure upon the Throne: the divine light clothed in the Sefiros, lights in vessels, ordered like a human body. It is identified with the souls of Israel, and the kaf (“like”) shows that G-d Himself is not a man.

The Throne כסא

Read as kas alef, “a covering of the alef”: the garment that conceals the light of the Master of the world so that the lower worlds can exist as things separate from G-d. G-d’s “sitting” upon it is a lowering of His sovereignty into the worlds.

The foot רגל

The lowest level of the supernal “man,” the only one that reaches below the Throne. The souls of Israel, as they descend into bodies, are called feet, nullified to G-d as a foot obeys the head, but only on command.

“It is pure” טהורה היא

From the morning blessing over the soul. “Pure” means bright, as in “like the very heavens in purity”: the soul’s root in the supernal brightness, where it is not yet a separate being and is above the Throne.

Chariot מרכבה

One wholly given over to G-d, like a chariot to its rider. The Patriarchs and Moshe, constantly nullified, were a chariot for the supernal arms, the “hands” above the Throne.

The brick of sapphire לבנת הספיר

The letters of the world’s languages, spoken in daily business, which are “bricks” made by human hands; burned in the fiery love of the Shema, they become holy stones that shine like sapphire, “under His feet.”

Letters אותיות

Called horses, because they carry the soul upward, and stones, because they are the lowest level that nevertheless raises intellect and feeling. The Torah’s letters are stones from Heaven; those of other languages are bricks.

SECTION 1 • 11

The question

1 ויראו את אלקי ישראל^{1,2} ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'. הנה ענין תחת רגליו הוא כמ"ש ועל דמות³ הכסא דמות כמראה אדם כו' ובבחי' כמראה אדם שייך יד ורגל.

"And they saw the G-d of Israel, and under His feet was like the work of the brick of sapphire," etc. Now, the matter of "under His feet" is as it is written, "And upon the likeness of the Throne was a likeness like the appearance of a man," etc.; and at the level of "like the appearance of a man," hand and foot are applicable.

The maamar opens with Exodus 24:10: after the covenant at Sinai, Moshe, Aharon, Nadav, Avihu and seventy elders "saw the G-d of Israel," and beneath His feet was something like a brick of sapphire. The Alter Rebbe links "under His feet" to Ezekiel's vision of a figure "like the appearance of a man" seated upon the Throne (Ezekiel 1:26): once G-d is described in the image of a man, it becomes possible to speak of His hands and feet.

והוא מ"ש אח"כ ואל אצילי בני ישראל⁴ לא שלח ידו. אך צ"ל איך שייך לומר כן באלקות והלא אין לו גוף⁵ ולא דמות הגוף.

This is what is written afterward: "And to the nobles of the Children of Israel He did not send forth His hand." But this must be understood: how can one say this of G-dliness? Surely He has no body and no likeness of a body!

The next verse (Exodus 24:11) says that G-d "did not send forth His hand" to the nobles of Israel, so the passage speaks both of His feet and of His hand. The Alter Rebbe asks how such words can be said of G-d at all, since, as the hymn Yigdal puts it, He has no body and no bodily form; the whole maamar answers this question.

SECTION 2 • 12-10

A radiance clothed in man

2 והענין דהנה כתיב אני הוי"ה לא שנית. ⁶ פ"י שאין שום שינוי אצלו ית' בין קודם בריאת העולם והשתלשלות עולמות עליונים ובין לאחר בריאת העולם וכמאמר אתה הוא קודם שנברא ⁷ כו'.

The explanation is as follows. It is written, "I, Havayah, have not changed." This means that there is no change whatsoever with Him, may He be blessed, between before the creation of the world and the chain of descent (hishtalshelus) of the higher worlds, and after the creation of the world; as in the saying, "You are He before [the world] was created," etc.

The Alter Rebbe begins his answer with Malachi 3:6, "I, Havayah, have not changed": creating the world and the chain of higher worlds brought about no change at all in G-d. The prayer book says the same: it is "You" before the world was created, and the same "You" after.

והיינו לפי שמקור התהוות כל העולמות הוא רק מבחי' מלכותו ית' שהוא רק בחי' הארה בעלמא דהיינו מה שמלך שמו נקרא עליהם. ⁸

That is because the source from which all the worlds come into being is only from the level of His Malchus (sovereignty), may He be blessed, which is merely the level of a radiance, namely, that His Name "King" is called upon them.

The reason is that the worlds come only from G-d's Malchus (sovereignty), which is a mere radiance of Him. A king is king only over subjects, as the hymn Adon Olam says that only when all was made "was His name called King"; the name "King" applies to Him only in relation to the worlds and does not touch His essence.

3 ולכן אין זה פועל שום שנוי ח"ו במהותו ועצמותו. וכמו שאין אור וזיו השמש המאיר לארץ ולדרים עליה פועל שינוי בעצם מאור השמש ע"י המשכת האור להיותו רק הארה כו'.

Therefore this effects no change at all, G-d forbid, in His Being and Essence; just as the light and brilliance of the sun, which shines upon the earth and those who dwell on it, effects no change in the luminary of the sun itself through the drawing forth of the light, since it is only a radiance, etc.

Since the worlds come only from a radiance, their creation changes nothing in G-d's Being and Essence. The analogy is sunlight: the light that shines on the earth makes no change in the sun itself, because what spreads out is only a radiance of the sun.

ונק' ג"כ הארה זו שמו הגדול שעדי"מ שמו של האדם אינו נוגע למהותו ועצמותו כו'. אך מ"מ הארה זו היא בחי' א"ס ופשוט בתכלית הפשיטות.

This radiance is also called “His great Name”; for, by way of analogy, a person’s name does not touch his being and essence, etc. Nevertheless, this radiance is of the level of the infinite (Ein Sof), and simple with the utmost simplicity.

This radiance is also called G-d’s “great Name”: a person’s name is how others call him, and it does not touch who he is. Yet even this radiance is infinite and utterly simple, without parts or divisions, which raises the next question: how can limited, divided worlds come from it?

4 ולכן כדי שיתהוו ממנה בחי' עולמות בגבול ומדה וגם בבחי' התחלקות המדרגות הוא ע"י התלבשות בבחי' כמראה אדם

Therefore, for worlds to come into being from it that are in limit and measure, and also in a state of division into levels, [this] is through [its] enclothing in the level of “like the appearance of a man,”

Because the radiance is infinite and simple, worlds that are finite and divided into levels cannot come from it directly. It must first be clothed in the level of “like the appearance of a man,” a structure with distinct parts, like a human body.

דהיינו בחינת התלבשות האורות בכלים. ובחי' כמראה אדם הוא בחי' נש"י כמ"ש אדם אתם⁹ כי ישראל עלו במחשבה.^{10, 11}

that is, the level of the enclothing of the lights in vessels. And the level of “like the appearance of a man” is the level of the souls of Israel, as it is written, “You are adam (man),” for “Israel arose in [the divine] thought.”

This is the clothing of lights in vessels: the divine light invests itself in the vessels of the Sefiros, which are ordered like the limbs of a man. And the souls of Israel are this “man,” as Ezekiel says, “You are adam (man),” because “Israel arose in [the divine] thought” (Bereshit Rabbah 1:4): the souls came first in G-d’s plan of creation.

5 וכתוב ושכנתי בתוכם בתוכו לא נאמר¹² כו' שהם כלים להשראת שכינתו ית' וכידוע שתכלית הבריאה היה בשביל להיות לו ית' דירה בתחתונים. והיינו לשכון שכינתו בישראל שזהו פי' ישראל עלו במחשבה.

And it is written, “And I will dwell within them”; it does not say “within it,” etc., for they are vessels for the resting of His Shechinah (Divine Presence), may He be blessed. As is known, the purpose of creation was in order that He, may He be blessed, have a dwelling place among the lower realms; that is, to make His Shechinah dwell in Israel. And this is the meaning of “Israel arose in [the di-vine] thought.”

Exodus 25:8 says “I will dwell within them,” not “within it,” the Sanctuary: G-d dwells within each Jew, whose soul is a vessel for the Shechinah. This fulfils the purpose of creation, that G-d have “a dwelling place among the lower realms,” and that dwelling is Israel, which is why Israel came first in G-d’s thought.

6 וזהו מכוון לשבתך¹³ פעלת ה' ועכשיו השראה זו רק בנשמות ישראל ולא בגופים שלהם מפני שבא נחש על חוה¹⁴ והטיל זוהמא.

This is [the meaning of] “the place of Your dwelling, which You, G-d, have made.” Now, at present, this resting [of the Shechinah] is only in the souls of Israel and not in their bodies, because the serpent came upon Chavah and cast filth [into her].

Exodus 15:17, “the place of Your dwelling which You have made,” refers to this dwelling in Israel. At present G-d rests only in their souls and not in their bodies, because of the filth that, as the Talmud says, the serpent cast into Chavah.

ואף שבמתן תורה פסקה זוהמתן.¹⁵ אך ע”י חטא העגל ושאר העונות חזרה הזוהמא¹⁶ בהגופים שלהם. And although at the Giving of the Torah their filth ceased, through the sin of the [Golden] Calf and the other sins the filth returned to their bodies.

The Talmud says that when Israel stood at Sinai their filth ceased. But, as the Zohar says, after the sin of the Golden Calf and later sins it returned, and it clings to their bodies.

שהגוף נק' משכא דחויא.¹⁷ אבל לא בנשמתם כי חלק ה' ממש עמו¹⁸ וכנודע שהנשמה א”צ תקון לעצמה.^{19,20}

For the body is called “the skin of the serpent.” But [it did] not [return] to their souls, for “G-d’s portion is,” literally, “His people”; and as is known, the soul does not need rectification for itself.

The body is called “the serpent’s skin,” an expression that recalls Targum Yonasan on Genesis 3:21, where the garments G-d made for Adam and Chavah come from the skin the serpent shed. The soul was never touched, for Israel is “G-d’s portion” (Deuteronomy 32:9); as Tanya (chapter 37) says, citing Etz Chaim, the soul itself needs no rectification and descends only to draw down light to rectify the body and the world.

אבל לעתיד שיזדככו גם הגופים וכמ"ש ועצמותיך יחליץ²¹ וכתוב ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר²² כו'. אז
כתוב ונגלה כבוד²³ הוי"ה וראו כל בשר

But in the time to come, when the bodies too will be refined, as it is written, "And He will invigorate your bones," and it is written, "And I will remove the spirit of impurity," etc., then it is written, "And the glory of Havayah will be revealed, and all flesh will see,"

In the time to come the bodies too will be refined: Isaiah promises "He will invigorate your bones," and Zechariah "I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land." Then Isaiah's prophecy will be fulfilled: "The glory of Havayah will be revealed, and all flesh will see."

כי יזדכך החומר עד שיהי בחי גילוי אלקות גם בגופים משא"כ עכשיו אין הגלוי רק בנשמות בלבד.

for the physical matter will be refined until there is a revelation of G-dliness in the bodies too; whereas now the revelation is only in the souls alone.

"All flesh will see" because physical matter itself will become so refined that G-dliness will be revealed in the body too. Now, by contrast, the revelation is in the souls alone.

7 והנה בחי גלוי אלקות בנש"י הנה הוא נמשך בציר אדם. וזהו אדם אתם²⁴ פי' עדי"מ משכן הנשמה
פרטית באיברי הגוף שהוא ג"כ בציר אדם כמו אור השכל שורה במוח דוקא והמדות בלב כו'.

Now, the revelation of G-dliness in the souls of Israel is drawn forth in the form of a man. This is [the meaning of] "You are adam (man)." This means: [it is] like the dwelling place of the individual soul in the limbs of the body, which is also in the form of a man; just as the light of the intellect rests specifically in the brain, and the emotive attributes (middos) in the heart, etc.

The revelation of G-dliness in the souls of Israel takes the form of a man, which is the meaning of "You are adam." It is like the individual soul dwelling in the limbs of the body: the intellect rests in the brain, the emotions in the heart, each faculty in its own organ.

8 וחיצוניות המדות בידי חסד דרועא ימינא כו'. ודרך פרט הן הנה רמ"ח אברים פרטיים שמתחלקת
הארת הנשמה בהן ודרך כלל נחלקין לגי קווין דרועא ימינא ושמאלא והגוף באמצע.

And the outer dimension (chitzoniyus) of the emotive attributes is in the hands: "Chesed (kindness) is the right arm," etc. In detail, they are the 248 individual limbs among which the radiance of the soul is divided; and in general they are divided into three lines: the right arm, the left, and the body in the middle.

The emotions also have an outer expression in the hands; in the Kabbalistic image, "Chesed (kindness) is the right arm." In detail the soul's radiance is divided among the body's 248 limbs; in general the body has three lines: the right arm, the left arm and the torso between them.

כמו"כ יובן למעלה בבחי' גלוי אלקות בנש"י דכתיב נודע בשערים בעלה²⁵ בכל חד לפום מאי דמשער בלביה.²⁶

So too is it to be understood above, regarding the revelation of G-dliness in the souls of Israel, as it is written, "Her husband is known in the gates (she'arim)": in each one according to what he measures (meshaer) in his heart.

The same is true above, in the revelation of G-dliness in the souls of Israel. The Zohar reads "Her husband is known in the gates (she'arim)" as "in each one according to what he measures (meshaer) in his heart": G-d is known to each soul according to its own capacity.

9 ויש נשמות שהן מבחי' מוחין שהן כלי לבחי' התורה והן ראשי אלפי ישראל²⁷. ויש נשמות שהן כלי לבחי' המדות.²⁸ ויש נשמות שהן בחי' רגל. אך מ"מ כולם נאמר נודע בשערים.²⁹

There are souls that are from the level of the intellect (mochin), which are vessels for the level of the Torah, and they are "the heads of the thousands of Israel." And there are souls that are vessels for the level of the emotive attributes. And there are souls that are the level of the foot. Nevertheless, of all of them it is said, "known in the gates."

Souls differ: some come from the level of intellect and are vessels for Torah, "the heads of the thousands of Israel" (Numbers 1:16); some are vessels for the emotions; some are the level of the foot. Yet of all of them it says "known in the gates": G-d is revealed in each one.

פ"י נודע לשון חבור והתקשרות כדמיון חבור והתקשרות הנשמה בגוף שעם היות שהנשמה היא רוחנית ולמעלה מגדר גוף גשמי אעפ"כ היא מתקשרת ומתלבשת בגוף גשמי.

This means that "known" (noda) is an expression of joining and binding, like the joining and binding of the soul with the body: although the soul is spiritual and above the bounds of a physical body, nevertheless it binds itself to and is enclothed in a physical body.

The word noda ("known") is read as joining and binding. It is like the soul, which is spiritual and far above a physical body, yet binds itself to the body and is clothed within it.

כמו"כ נמשך גלוי אוא"ס ב"ה שלמעלה מבחי חכמה ומדות להיות שורה ומתלבש בנשמות ישראל שכללותן היא בחינת קומת אדם ואפי' בחינת רגל ובחינת עקביים יש בהן מעלה יתירה שמעמידין את הראש כו'

So too, the revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, which is above the level of Chochmah (wisdom) and emotive attributes, is drawn down to rest and be encloded in the souls of Israel, whose totality is the level of the full stature of a man. And even the level of the foot and the level of the heels have a special virtue, for they hold up the head, etc.,

In the same way the revelation of the Infinite Light, which is above wisdom and emotion, comes to rest in the souls of Israel, which together form the full figure of a man. Even the "feet" and "heels," the simplest souls, have a special virtue: they hold up the head.

ומוליכים אותו ממקום למקום משא"כ בכח הראש לבדו בלתי הרגל ולכן ארז"ל והוי שפל רוח בפני כל אדם^{30,31} כו'.

and carry it from place to place, which is not within the power of the head alone, without the foot. Therefore our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Be of lowly spirit before every man," etc.

The feet also carry the head from place to place, which the head cannot do on its own. That is why the Mishnah (Avos 4:10) teaches, "Be of lowly spirit before every person": every Jew, even one who is a "foot," has a quality that the "head" lacks.

10 וזהו שנאמר בו ית' כמראה אדם³² בכ"ף הדמיון.³³ כי באמת לאו מכל אינון מדות איהו כלל וכמ"ש כי לא אדם הוא³⁴ כו'.

This is why it is said of Him, may He be blessed, "like the appearance of a man," with the kaf of comparison. For in truth "He is not of any of these attributes at all," as it is written, "For He is not a man," etc.

This is why Ezekiel says "like the appearance of a man," with the kaf ("like") of comparison: G-d Himself is not of these attributes at all, as the verse in Samuel says, "For He is not a man."

אך שיורד ומתלבש כנש"י שהן בחי' ציור אדם א"כ מצד התלכשות זו נאמר בו ית' כמראה אדם כו'.
וזהו מ"ש ועשיתם אתם וארז"ל כאלו עשאוני:³⁵

But [since] He descends and is enclothed in the souls of Israel, which are the level of the form of a man, it follows that by virtue of this enclothing it is said of Him, may He be blessed, "like the appearance of a man," etc. And this is what is written, "And you shall make them," and our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "as though they had made Me."

Only because He descends and clothes Himself in the souls of Israel, which have the form of a man, can it be said that He is "like the appearance of a man." This explains the Sages' reading of "And you shall make them" as though Israel "made" G-d, for through them He takes on this form.

SECTION 3 • 111-17

The Throne and the feet

11 והנה פי' וענין ועל דמות הכסא דמות כמראה אדם³⁶ מהו ענין הכסא. הענין הוא שכדי שיהיה התהוות הנבראים דבי"ע שמלבד שהן בבחי' גבול ומדה עוד זאת הן בחי' יש ודבר נפרד בפ"ע

Now, [as for] the meaning and matter of "And upon the likeness of the Throne was a likeness like the appearance of a man," what is the matter of the Throne? The matter is this: in order for there to be the coming into being of the created beings of [the worlds of] Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah (Creation, Formation and Action), which, besides being in limit and measure, are furthermore something existent (yesh) and a thing separate unto itself,

Now the Throne: why is the figure seated on a throne? Because the creatures of the lower worlds, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, are not only finite but also feel themselves to be something existent (yesh), separate from G-d.

לכן א"א להיות התהוות זו ע"י המשכת האור והחיות מבחי' כמראה אדם עצמו שהוא בבחי' בטול בתכלית דבאצ"י איהו וגרמוהי חד ממש אלא הוא ע"י בחי' ישיבת האדם העליון על הכסא.

therefore this coming into being cannot take place through the drawing down of the light and life-force (chayus) from the level of "like the appearance of a man" itself, which is in a state of utter self-nullification (bittul), for in Atzilus (Emanation) "He and His causations are" truly "one." Rather, it is through the level of the sitting of the supernal man upon the Throne.

Such separate existence cannot come directly from "like the appearance of a man" itself, the World of Atzilus, where all is utterly nullified and G-d and the Sefiros through which He acts are one. It comes through the supernal man "sitting" upon the Throne.

כי הנה עד"מ הכסא שאדם יושב עליה שהוא בחי' ירידה והשפלה למטה כך למעלה כתיב וישב ה' מלך לעולם.³⁷

For, by way of analogy, the throne on which a person sits is a matter of descent and lowering downward; so too above, it is written, "And G-d sat as King forever (le'olam)."

A person who sits down lowers himself. So too Psalms 29:10 says that G-d "sat as King," describing a descent.

פ"י מלך לעולם היינו להיות המשכת מלכותו ית' למטה להתהוות ב"ע שהן עולמות הנפרדים נק' המשכה זו בחי' ישיבה שהיא השפלה והמשכה

"King le'olam" means: for there to be a drawing down of His Malchus, may He be blessed, below, for the coming into being of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, which are the separate worlds (olamos). This drawing down is called the level of "sitting," which is a lowering and drawing down;

The Alter Rebbe reads le'olam, "forever," as "to the world": G-d's sovereignty is drawn down to bring into being Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, the worlds of separate existence. This lowering is what is called "sitting."

והיינו ע"י הכסא כס' א' שהוא בחי' לבוש³⁸ להלביש ולהעלים האור וחיות הנמשך מבחי' אל"ף אלופו של עולם להיות אל מסתתר³⁹ כדי שיהיה התהוות היש ודבר נפרד.

and this is through the Throne (kisei), kas alef [a covering of the alef], which is the level of a garment, to clothe and conceal the light and life-force drawn from the level of alef, "the Master (aluf) of the world," so that He be "a G-d Who hides Himself," in order that there be the coming into being of the existent (yesh) and separate thing.

It happens through the Throne (kisei), read as kas alef, "a covering of the alef": the Throne is a garment that hides the light coming from the alef, the aluf (Master) of the world, so that G-d is "a G-d Who hides Himself" (Isaiah 45:15). Only so can a created being feel itself to be a separate thing.

12 והנה עד"מ ביושב על הכסא הנה גופו וידיו⁴⁰ הם למעלה מהכסא רק רגליו הם מושפלים ונמשכים למטה לארץ.

Now, by way of analogy, in one who sits on a throne, his body and hands are above the throne; only his feet are lowered and extend downward to the ground.

Picture someone sitting on a throne: his body and hands are above the seat, and only his feet hang below it and reach the ground.

כמו"כ יובן למעלה. בענין על הכסא דמות כמראה אדם שהמשכה ממנו למטה להתהוות הנבראים הוא רק עד"מ מבחי' אחרונה הנקי רגלי וכמ"ש והארץ הדום רגלי:⁴¹

So too is it to be understood above, regarding "upon the Throne, a likeness like the appearance of a man": the drawing down from it below, for the coming into being of the created beings, is, by way of analogy, only from the last level, which is called "My feet," as it is written, "And the earth is the stool of My feet."

So it is above: of the figure "like the appearance of a man" upon the Throne, only the lowest level, called "My feet," reaches below the Throne to bring the created beings into existence. This is why Isaiah calls the earth "the stool of My feet."

13 וביאור ענין זה דהנה מבואר למעלה דבחי' כמראה אדם היינו נש"י. והנה הם הנקראים בנים לה' וברא כרעא דאבוה^{42,43} שהוא בחי' רגל

The explanation of this matter: it was explained above that the level of "like the appearance of a man" is the souls of Israel. Now, they are the ones called "children of G-d," and "a son is the leg of his father," which is the level of the foot,

As explained, "like the appearance of a man" is the souls of Israel. They are called "children of G-d," and the Talmud says that "a son is the leg of his father," so the soul is like a foot of its divine Father.

וכמ"ש שש מאות אלף רגלי העם⁴⁴ כו'. כי כמו עד"מ הרגל בטלה אצל הראש לכל אשר יחפוץ יטנו.⁴⁵ as it is written, "Six hundred thousand on foot (raglei) are the people," etc. For just as, by way of analogy, the foot is nullified to the head, [which] "turns it wherever it wishes,"

So too Moshe called the people "six hundred thousand on foot" (raglei, literally "feet"). A foot is nullified to the head, which "turns it wherever it wishes," in words borrowed from Proverbs 21:1.

כך כללות נשמות ישראל יש בהן בחי' בטול זה בטבע תולדותם אליו ית' והיא בחי' אהבה המסותרת שבכל אי מישראל בלי טעם ודעת כלל רק לפי שהן חלק הוי"ה עמו⁴⁶

so too the souls of Israel as a whole possess this level of self-nullification (bittul) toward Him, may He be blessed, by their inborn nature. This is the level of the hidden love that is in every one of Israel, without any reason or knowledge at all, only because they are "the portion of Havayah," "His people,"

In the same way every Jewish soul is by its very nature nullified to G-d. This is the "hidden love" present in every Jew, which has no reason or understanding behind it; it exists simply because the souls are "G-d's portion."

כמו הבן שנמשך ממוח האב והיה עצם א' עמו רק שאח"כ נמשך להיות דבר בפ"ע.

like the son, who is drawn from the brain of the father and was one essence with him, only that afterward he was drawn forth to become a thing unto himself.

It is like a son, who is drawn from his father's brain and was at first one being with him, and only later becomes a person in his own right.

כמו"כ כתיב שמע ישראל⁴⁷ הוי"ה אלהינו שלנו דהיינו שרש הנשמה כמו שהיתה כלולה עדיין במקורה ושרשה היא למעלה מבחי' רגל ובחי' כרעא דאבוה רק מתאחד"י עם מוח האב עד"מ והם דבר א' ממש עם אלהותו ית'.

So too it is written, "Hear, O Israel, Havayah is our G-d": ours, that is, the root of the soul as it was still included in its source and root, which is above the level of the foot and the level of "the leg of his father"; rather, they are united with the brain of the father, by way of analogy, and are literally one thing with His G-dliness, may He be blessed.

So in the Shema, "Havayah is our G-d," the word "our" refers to the root of the soul as it is still contained in its source. There it is not yet a "foot" or "the leg of the father"; it is united with the "brain of the father," truly one with G-dliness.

14 וזהו הוי"ה אלקינו ממש רק שאח"כ ירדו בהשתלשלות המדרגות להיות בחי' בפ"ע ונקי' רגל ואעפ"כ הוא כרעא דאבוה ממש.⁴⁸

This is "Havayah is our G-d," literally. Only that afterward they descended through the chain of descent (hishtalshelus) of the levels, to become a level unto themselves, and they are called "foot"; and even so, it is literally "the leg of his father."

This is what "Havayah is our G-d," literally, means. Afterward the souls descended through the chain of levels, became separate entities and are called "feet," yet even then each remains truly "the leg of its father."

ולכן יש בהם בחי' הבטול גם אח"כ מצד שרשן כו'. וזהו נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא⁴⁹ אתה בראתה⁵⁰ כו'.

Therefore they have the level of self-nullification even afterward, by virtue of their root, etc. And this is [the meaning of] "The soul that You have given within me is pure; You created it," etc.

Therefore the souls keep their self-nullification even after the descent, because of their root. The morning blessing says the same: "The soul that You have given within me is pure; You created it," and so on.

15 וידוע הקושיא איך שייך לומר טהורה היא קודם שהזכיר בריאתה וגם מה כפל ג' לשונות בראתה יצרתה נפחתה.

The question is well known: how can one say “it is pure” before mentioning its creation? And also, why the repetition of three expressions, “You created it, You formed it, You breathed it”?

A well-known question on this blessing: how can it call the soul “pure” before it even mentions that the soul was created? And why does it repeat three verbs, “You created it, You formed it, You breathed it”?

אך הענין דפי' טהורה היא הוא כענין שנאמר כאן וכעצם השמים לטהר^{51,52} שהוא בחי' בהירות האור.

But the explanation is that the meaning of “it is pure” (tehorah) is like what is said here, “and like the very essence of the heavens in purity (latohar),” which is the level of the brightness of the light.

The answer is that tehorah (“pure”) here means brightness, as in our own verse, “like the very essence of the heavens in purity (latohar),” which describes the clear radiance of the heavens.

16 וכן תרגום צהרים טיהרא^{53,54,55} וכך שרש הנשמה נמשכה ממקום גבוה מאד. וזהו טהורה היא שנמשכה מבחי' טהירו עלאה שבזוה"ק.⁵⁶

Similarly, the Targum [renders] tzohorayim (noon) [as] tihara. So too, the root of the soul is drawn from a very lofty place. And this is “it is pure”: that it is drawn from the level of tehiru ila'ah (the supernal brightness) [mentioned] in the holy Zohar.

Likewise, as Rashi notes, the Aramaic Targum renders tzohorayim, “noon,” as tihara, the bright time of day. So the soul's root is drawn from a very high place: “it is pure” means it comes from tehiru ila'ah, the “supernal brightness” of which the Zohar speaks at the very beginning of creation.

והוא ג"כ משארז"ל דע מאין באת^{57,58} שבחי' אין הוא שמתאחד עם אלהותו יתברך בתכלית וכנ"ל בפי' הוי"ה אלקינו ממש.

This is also what our Sages, of blessed memory, said: “Know from where (me'ayin) you came,” for the level of ayin (nothing) is what is utterly united with His G-dliness, may He be blessed, as explained above regarding “Havayah is our G-d,” literally.

The Mishnah's words “Know from where (me'ayin) you came” (Avos 3:1) are read as “from ayin,” from nothing: the soul's source is a level of divine “nothing” that is utterly one with G-d, as in “Havayah is our G-d” above.

וזהו בחי' הבהירות דהיינו שאינו יש ודבר בפ"ע כלל. אך אח"כ ירדה למטה בבחי' בי"ע להיות יש ודבר וזהו כפל הג' לשונות בראתה יצרתה נפחתה בי⁵⁹ כו'

And this is the level of brightness, meaning that it is not at all a yesh (an existent) and a thing unto itself. But afterward it descended below, into the level of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, to become a yesh and a thing; and this is the repetition of the three expressions, "You created it, You formed it, You breathed it into me," etc.

This is the "brightness": at its source the soul is not a yesh, a separate existence, at all. Only afterward does it descend into Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah and become a yesh, and that is why the blessing adds three verbs, one for each of those worlds: "You created it," "You formed it," "You breathed it into me."

(ואז נקר' בחי' רגל משא"כ בשרשה היא בחי' ישראל לי ראש⁶⁰ עמ"ש בפ' שלח ע"פ⁶¹ אני⁶² ה' אלהיכם וגו':)

(And then it is called the level of the foot; whereas in its root it is the level of Yisrael, li rosh ("a head for Me"). See what is written in Parshas Shelach on [the verse] "I am Havayah your G-d," etc.)

Once it has descended, the soul is called the level of the foot. In its root it is Yisrael, whose letters spell li rosh, "a head for Me"; the Alter Rebbe refers to his discourse in Likkutei Torah, Parshas Shelach, on "I am Havayah your G-d."

וזהו ביאור ענין הנ"ל בפ"י ועל דמות⁶³ הכסא כו' שהוא להיות התהוות בי"ע שזהו ע"י בחי' כסא ובחי' רגלי אדם

And this is the explanation of the matter mentioned above in the interpretation of "And upon the likeness of the Throne," etc.: that it is for the coming into being of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, which is through the level of the Throne and the level of the feet of the man,

This explains what was said above about the Throne: Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah come into being through the Throne and through the "feet" of the supernal man.

והיינו בחי' הנשמות כמו שהן בבחי' בראתה יצרתה כו' שע"י התלבשות האור בהן מקבלים שאר הנבראים וחיצוניות העולמות דבי"ע

that is, the level of the souls as they are at the level of "You created it, You formed it," etc., for through the enclothing of the light in them, the other created beings and the outer dimension (chitzoniyus) of the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah receive [from it];

Those "feet" are the souls as they exist on the level of "You created it, You formed it." Through the light clothed in them, the other creatures and the outer dimension of the lower worlds receive their life.

אבל כמו שהן בשרשן למעלה בחי' טהורה היא ישראל עלו במחשבה הן למעלה מבחי' כסא ומבחי' התהוות הנבראים דבי"ע כו'.^{64, 65}

but as they are in their root above, the level of "it is pure," "Israel arose in [the divine] thought," they are above the level of the Throne and above the level of the coming into being of the created beings of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, etc.

But in their root, "it is pure," "Israel arose in thought," the souls are above the Throne and above the whole process of creating the lower worlds.

17 ועי"פ לשון הקבלה יובן גי"כ הענין דבחי' כמראה אדם העליון הוא התלבשות אור א"ס ב"ה בעי"ס דאצי' והכסא הוא המסך שבין אצי' לבריאה כו' וכן בנש"י הנמשכים מבחי' עי"ס הנ"ל יש בהן ב' בחי'.

According to the language of the Kabbalah, too, the matter will be understood: the level of the supernal "like the appearance of a man" is the enclothing of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, in the ten Sefiros of Atzilus (Emanation), and the Throne is the screen (masach) between Atzilus and Beriah (Creation), etc. And likewise in the souls of Israel, which are drawn from the level of the ten Sefiros mentioned above, there are two levels.

In Kabbalistic terms, the supernal "like the appearance of a man" is the Infinite Light clothed in the ten Sefiros of Atzilus, and the Throne is the masach, the "screen" or barrier between Atzilus and Beriah. The souls of Israel, which come from those ten Sefiros, likewise have two levels.

היינו הא' בחי' מזליה חזי שבאצי' זהו למעלה מהכסא. והב' בחי' בראתה יצרתה כו' להתלבש בגוף.

That is: the first is the level of "his mazal sees," which is in Atzilus; this is above the Throne. And the second is the level of "You created it, You formed it," etc., to be enclothed in the body.

The first is the soul's root in Atzilus, called "his mazal sees," after the Talmud's remark that the men with Daniel did not see his vision, yet "their mazal saw": a higher part of the soul perceives what the person does not. This level is above the Throne; the second is the soul as created and formed to be clothed in a body.

וזהו הנק' בחי' רגל. ונק' גי"כ ב' בחי' אלו ישראל ויעקב כי ישראל לי ראש. ויעקב יו"ד המתלבש בכחינת עקב וכמ"ש במ"א:

And this is what is called the level of the foot. These two levels are also called Yisrael and Yaakov: for Yisrael is li rosh ("a head for Me"), and Yaakov is a yud enclothed in the level of akev (the heel), as is explained elsewhere.

The second level is called the "foot." The two levels are also called Yisrael and Yaakov: Yisrael spells li rosh, "a head for Me," while Yaakov is read as a yud clothed in akev, the "heel."

SECTION 4 • ¶18-24

Hands and feet

18 והנה משה רבינו ע"ה אמר שש מאות אלף רגלי העם אשר אנכי בקרב⁶⁶ כו'. שמבואר שמשנה רבע"ה הוא למעלה מעלה מבחי רגל.

Now, Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, said, "Six hundred thousand on foot (raglei) are the people in whose midst I am," etc. This makes clear that Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, is far, far above the level of the foot;

Moshe said, "Six hundred thousand on foot are the people in whose midst I am" (Numbers 11:21). By setting "I" apart from the people, whom he calls "feet," he shows that he himself is far above the level of the foot.

דהיינו אפי' לאחר ירידת נשמתו בגופו מאיר בו מבחי שלמעלה מבחי כסא ובחי רגל הנ"ל.

that is, even after the descent of his soul into his body, there shines in him [light] from the level that is above the level of the Throne and the level of the foot mentioned above.

Even after his soul came down into his body, there shone in him the level that is above the Throne and above the "foot."

19 והענין הוא ע"ד מארז"ל האבות הן הן המרכבה^{67,68} וידוע דהאבות הן היו מרכבה לבחי זרועות עולם⁶⁹ אברהם לבחי

The matter is like what our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "The Patriarchs, they are the Chariot." And it is known that the Patriarchs were a chariot for the level of "the everlasting arms" (zero'os olam): Avraham for the level of

The Sages said, "The Patriarchs, they are the Chariot": as a chariot has no will of its own and is wholly given over to its rider, so the Patriarchs were wholly given over to G-d. They were a chariot for "the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27), the arms of the supernal man, as the next part details.

חסד דרועא ימינא ויצחק לבחי דרועא שמאלא כו'. ובחי זרועות דאדם העליון הוא עד"מ למעלה מעלה מבחי הכסא כנ"ל.

Chesed (kindness), "the right arm," and Yitzchak for the level of "the left arm," etc. And the level of the arms of the supernal man is, by way of analogy, far, far above the level of the Throne, as mentioned above.

Avraham was the chariot for Chesed, "the right arm," and Yitzchak for "the left arm," and so on. The arms of the supernal man are far above the Throne, since, as explained, only the feet reach below it.

20 והענין דמבואר למעלה דבחי' הכסא הוא הלבוש והמסך המעלים על האור כדי שיהיה התהוות ביי"ע כו'. ובחי' הרגלים נמשכים למטה עיי' הכסא ולבוש הנ"ל.

The matter is this: it was explained above that the level of the Throne is the garment and the screen that conceals the light, so that there may be the coming into being of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, etc. And the level of the feet extends downward through the Throne and garment mentioned above.

As explained, the Throne is the garment and screen that hides the light so that the lower worlds can exist, and only the "feet" reach below it, through that garment.

אבל בחי' הידים הוא גילוי בחינה שלמעלה מלבוש והעלם זה והוא גילוי בחי' טהורה היא כו' שלמעלה מבחי' בראתה כו'

But the level of the hands is a revelation of a level that is above this garment and concealment; it is a revelation of the level of "it is pure," etc., which is above the level of "You created it," etc.

The "hands," however, reveal a level above that garment and concealment: the level of "it is pure," the soul's root, which is above "You created it."

והאבות ומשה רבע"ה היו מרכבה לבחי' גילוי אור זה והיינו עיי' שהיו מרכבה בבחי' בטול תמידי ממש.

And the Patriarchs and Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, were a chariot for the level of the revelation of this light; that is, because they were a chariot in a state of truly constant self-nullification (bittul).

The Patriarchs and Moshe were a chariot for the revelation of this light because they lived in a state of truly constant self-nullification, never feeling themselves apart from G-d.

21 ועיי' המשיכו גילוי זה. וביאור הענין הוא כי הנה אנו רואים עד"מ למטה באדם שהידים יש בהן גילוי המוחין

And through this they drew down this revelation. The explanation of the matter is that, by way of analogy, we see below, in a person, that in the hands there is a revelation of the mind (mochin)

Through this constant self-nullification they drew this revelation down. The Alter Rebbe explains with a human analogy: the hands reveal more of a person's mind than the feet do.

והשכל יותר מברגלים שמתאחדין ומתקרבים יותר אצל השכל והמוחין מהרגלים שאע"פ שהרגל ג"כ בטילה לגבי הראש ולכל אשר יחפוץ יטנו⁷⁰ מ"מ בטול זה אינו ממילא

and intellect more than in the feet, for they are more united with and closer to the intellect and mind than the feet are. For although the foot too is nullified to the head, and [the head] "turns it wherever it wishes," nevertheless this nullification does not come of itself,

The hands are closer to the intellect and more united with it. The feet too obey the head, which "turns them wherever it wishes," but that obedience does not happen by itself.

אלא ע"פ צווי השכל שהרגל נשמעת לצווי זה משא"כ תנועות הידים נעשה ממילא כפי רצון השכל וא"צ לצווי כלל

but by the command of the intellect, which command the foot obeys; whereas the movements of the hands happen of themselves, according to the will of the intellect, and need no command at all,

The feet move only by a command from the mind, which they obey. The hands move by themselves, following the mind's wish without any command.

כמו שאנו רואים הפרש בין טפוח בידיו לרקוד שברגליו שכאשר יהיה האדם בשמחה מיד יטפח בידיו דהיינו שיראה בידיו תנועה המורה על השמחה כמו להכות כף כו'

as we see the difference between clapping with one's hands and dancing with one's feet: when a person is joyful, he immediately claps his hands, that is, he shows with his hands a movement that indicates joy, such as striking palm [to palm], etc.;

For example, a joyful person claps his hands at once, without deciding to; the joy simply shows itself in his hands.

משא"כ ברגלים שיהיה נמשך מזה שיהיו רוקדים הוא אינו נעשה ממילא אא"כ יהי צווי והמשכה מהשכל לרגליו לרקד כו'.

whereas with the feet, that it should follow from this that they dance does not happen of itself, unless there is a command and a drawing forth from the intellect to his feet to dance, etc.

Dancing, by contrast, does not happen by itself: the mind must command it and send the impulse to the feet.

22 וכן עדין בשארי תנועות יהי ביד התהוות התנועה ממילא כפי המחשבה שבשכל כנראה בחוש משא"כ ברגל אינו ממילא רק ע"פ צווי.

And so too, in the same way, with other movements: in the hand the movement comes about of itself, according to the thought in the intellect, as is plainly seen; whereas in the foot it is not of itself, but only by command.

The same holds for other movements: the hand moves by itself, following the thought in the mind, as anyone can see, while the foot moves only on command.

וזה ראייה ברורה שבידיים יש גילוי השכל יותר עד שנמשכין מאליהן אחר מחשבת השכל כאלו אינן דבר בפ"ע.

This is clear proof that in the hands there is more revelation of the intellect, so much so that they follow the thought of the intellect of their own accord, as though they were not a thing unto themselves.

This clearly shows that the intellect is more revealed in the hands. They follow the mind's thought of their own accord, as though they had no existence of their own.

והנמשל יובן שזהו ההפרש בין מעלת האבות ומשה רב"ה שהיו בחי' מרכבה ובטלים לגמרי אליו ית' כאילו אינן יש ודבר נפרד בפ"ע כלל

And the analogue will be understood: this is the difference in the stature of the Patriarchs and Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, who were the level of a chariot and entirely nullified to Him, may He be blessed, as though they were not a yesh (an existent) and a separate thing unto themselves at all,

Now the application: this is what set the Patriarchs and Moshe apart. They were a "chariot," entirely nullified to G-d, as though they were not separate beings at all.

71 ולא פסקו תמידי מלקשר דעתם בבטול הנ"ל אפי' רגע א' לכן היו מרכבה לבחי' זרועות עולם שלמעלה מבחי' כסא ומסך.

and they never ceased, even for one moment, binding their minds in the self-nullification (bittul) mentioned above. Therefore they were a chariot for the level of "the everlasting arms," which is above the level of the Throne and screen

They never stopped, even for a moment, binding their minds to G-d in this self-nullification. Therefore they were a chariot for "the everlasting arms," the supernal hands, which are above the Throne and its screen.

(וכמ"ש באגה"ק⁷² ד"ה איהו וחיוהי וז"ל ואף גם לאחר שירדו הנר"נ דאצ"י לעוה"ז לצדיקים הראשונים אפשר שלא נשתנה מהותן⁷³ להיות דבר נפרד מאלקות כו' יעו"ש) ולמעלה מבחי' רגל כו'.

(as is written in Iggeres HaKodesh, in the discourse beginning "He and His life-force," and this is its wording: "And even after the nefesh, ruach and neshamah of Atzilus (Emanation) descended into this world, to the early tzaddikim, it is possible that their essence did not change so as to become a thing separate from G-dliness," etc.; see there) and above the level of the foot, etc.

The Alter Rebbe cites Iggeres HaKodesh (epistle 20 in Tanya): even after souls of Atzilus came down into this world in the early tzaddikim, their essence may not have changed into something separate from G-dliness. Such souls are above the level of the foot.

משא"כ שאר נשמות הצדיקים שלא הגיעו לבחי' וגדר בטול זה התמידי רק שמעוררים בנפשם הבטול והתפעלות

Whereas the other souls of the tzaddikim, who did not reach the level and degree of this constant self-nullification, but [only] arouse in their soul the self-nullification and the stirring

Other righteous souls did not reach this constant self-nullification. They must arouse self-nullification and feeling within themselves.

האוי"ר ה"ז בחי' רגל שבטילה ג"כ להשכלרק שאינו ממילא וצ"ל צווי והמשכה מהשכל והוא ענין המשכת ההתבוננות לעורר את האהבה כו'.

of love and awe: this is the level of the foot, which is also nullified to the intellect, only that it does not happen of itself, and there must be a command and a drawing forth from the intellect. And this is the matter of drawing out contemplation in order to arouse the love, etc.

Love and awe that have to be stirred up in this way are the level of the foot: it too obeys the mind, but only by command. This is the work of drawing out a contemplation in order to arouse the love of G-d.

23 ולכן אמר משה רבינו ע"ה על אנשי דורו אע"פ שהיו דור דעה שש מאות אלף רגלי⁷⁴ כו' משא"כ הוא עצמו אשר אנכי בקרבו למעלה מבחי' רגל וכמ"ש לקמן אי"ה.

Therefore Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, said of the people of his generation, even though they were the "generation of knowledge," "Six hundred thousand on foot," etc.; whereas he himself, "in whose midst I am," [was] above the level of the foot, as will be written below, G-d willing.

That is why Moshe called the people of his generation "six hundred thousand on foot," though they were the "generation of knowledge" that received the Torah. He himself, "in whose midst I am," was above the level of the foot, as will be explained later.

אך זהו דרך כלל נקי הנשמה בחי רגל. אך דרך פרט כל נשמה היא ציור אדם ויש בה ג"כ בחי יד ורגל

However, this is [how], in general, the soul is called the level of the foot. But in detail, every soul is the form of a man and also has in it the level of hand and foot.

But this is only the general picture, in which the soul as a whole is a "foot." In detail, every soul has the full form of a man, with its own "hands" and "feet."

והנה דו"ר טבעיים היינו האהבה הטבעית המסותרת נקי בחי רגל אבל בחי דו"ר שכליים נקי ידיים שמתאחדים עם השכל והמוחין.

Now, natural awe and love (dechilu urechimu), that is, the natural hidden love, are called the level of the foot; but the level of intellectual awe and love is called "hands," for they are united with the intellect and the mind (mochin).

Natural love and awe, the inborn hidden love, are the soul's "feet." Love and awe that are born of understanding are its "hands," since they are united with the intellect.

24 ומבחי דו"ר טבעיים יגיע לבחי דו"ר שכליים. והיינו בק"ש באמרו שמע ישראל⁷⁵ ה' אלהינו שהוא בחי שרש נשמתו בחי מזליה חזי כו'.

And from the level of natural awe and love one will reach the level of intellectual awe and love. That is, in the reading of the Shema, when he says, "Hear, O Israel, Havayah is our G-d," which is the level of the root of his soul, the level of "his mazal sees," etc.

From natural love one should rise to love born of understanding. This happens in the Shema: in "Hear, O Israel, Havayah is our G-d," one touches the root of one's soul, the level of "his mazal sees."

שהוא מיוחד ממש עם אלקות ומשם יאיר ומתגלה להיות ואהבת שיהי הוי"ה אלקיך⁷⁶ שיהי גילוי יחוד זה ג"כ למטה בהתלבשות הנשמה בגוף כמ"ש במ"א:

For it is truly united with G-dliness, and from there it will shine forth and be revealed, so that there be "And you shall love": that Havayah be "your G-d," that is, that this revelation of unity be below as well, in the soul's enclothing in the body, as is explained elsewhere.

That root is truly one with G-dliness, and from there it shines down so that "you shall love Havayah your G-d": Havayah becomes "your" G-d, and this unity is revealed even in the soul as it is clothed in the body.

Letters: horses, stones and a house

25 והנה ידוע דירידת הנשמה בעוה"ז (מאיגרא רמה⁷⁷ בחי טהורה היא לבחי עשייה נפחתה בי) הוא צורך עלייה והיינו ע"י אותיות התורה וכמ"ש במ"א שהאותיות⁷⁸ נקראים סוסים כמ"ש כי תרכב על סוסך.⁷⁹

Now, it is known that the descent of the soul into this world ("from a high roof," the level of "it is pure," to the level of Asiyah (Action), "You breathed it into me") is for the sake of an ascent; and this is through the letters of the Torah, as is explained elsewhere that the letters are called "horses," as it is written, "For You ride upon Your horses."

The soul's descent into this world, "from a high roof" (to a deep pit, in the Talmud's phrase), from "it is pure" down to Asiyah, "You breathed it into me," is for the sake of an ascent. The ascent comes through the letters of the Torah, which are called "horses," as in Habakkuk's "For You ride upon Your horses."

דכמו שהסוס יעלה ויביא את האדם הרוכב עליו למקום שלא יוכל לילך כ"כ בעצמו. כך אותיות התורה מעלים ומגביהים הנפש למעלה מעלה. ויש אותיות שהן בחי העלאה.

For just as the horse will raise and carry the person riding on it to a place he would not be able to go so far on his own, so the letters of the Torah raise and elevate the soul higher and higher. There are letters that are the level of raising up,

A horse carries its rider to places he could not reach on his own; so the letters of the Torah lift the soul higher and higher. Some letters serve this raising up.

ויש אותיות שהן בחינת הבאה והמשכה דהיינו מבחי סוכ"ע לבחי ממכ"ע מהעלם אל הגלוי וזהו פי' לשון אותיות לשון הבאה כמו אתא ואיתי מתניתא בידיה.⁸⁰ ואתה מרכבת קדש.⁸¹

and there are letters that are the level of bringing and drawing down, that is, from the level of the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin) to the level of the light that fills all worlds (memalei kol almin), from concealment to revelation. And this is the meaning of the word osiyos (letters): an expression of bringing, as in "he came and brought a baraisa in his hand," and "And He came from the holy myriads."

Other letters bring down, drawing the light that surrounds all worlds into the light that fills them, from concealment into revelation. The word osiyos (letters) itself means "bringing," from the root of "coming," as in the Talmud's "he came and brought a baraisa in his hand" and Moshe's blessing, "And He came from the holy myriads."

26 והנה האותיות נק' ג"כ בשם אבנים בס' יצירה שני אבנים בונות⁸² שתי בתים כו'. כי אבן הוא בחי' דומם והוא בחינה תחתונה מן ד' בחי' ארמ"ע ודצח"מ.

Now, the letters are also called by the name "stones" in Sefer Yetzirah: "Two stones build two houses," etc. For a stone is the level of the inanimate, and it is the lowest level of the four levels of fire, air, water and earth, and of inanimate, vegetative, animal and speaking.

Sefer Yetzirah also calls the letters "stones": "Two stones build two houses," meaning that two letters can be combined into two words, three into six, and so on. A stone is "inanimate," the lowest of the four elements (fire, air, water, earth) and of the four kingdoms (inanimate, vegetative, animal and speaking).

וכך האותיות הם גם כן מדרגה תחתונה ובחי' דומם לגבי השכל והמדות שהן בחי' חי וצומח כמ"ש במ"א.

So too the letters are the lowest level, the level of the inanimate, relative to the intellect and the emotive attributes (middos), which are the level of the animal and the vegetative, as is explained elsewhere.

So too the letters are the lowest, "inanimate" level compared with intellect and emotion, which are like the "living" and "growing" levels.

אך ע"ז אמר דהע"ה אבן מאסו הבונים⁸³ היתה לראש פנה שאע"פ שהאותיות הנק' אבנים הם למטה מהשכל והמדות אעפ"כ הם מעלים השכל והמדות למעלה ומדרגה הגבוה יותר מהחכמה.⁸⁴

But of this King Dovid, peace be upon him, said, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone": for although the letters, which are called "stones," are below the intellect and the emotive attributes, nevertheless they raise the intellect and the emotive attributes upward, to a level higher than Chochmah (wisdom).

Yet King Dovid said, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone": the letters, though lower than intellect and emotion, raise them higher, even above Chochmah (wisdom).

27 וכנ"ל בענין בחי' סוסים כו'. והיינו כמארז"ל דהרהור לא עביד מידי^{85,86} ובד"ת ג"כ כתיב למוצאיהם בפה דוקא.⁸⁷

[This is] as mentioned above regarding the level of "horses," etc. And this is as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, that "thought does nothing," and of the words of Torah, too, it is written, "to those who find them (lemotza'eihem)," [that is, who utter them] specifically with the mouth.

This is like the "horses" above. The Sages said that "thought does nothing" (Zohar 3:105a), and the Talmud reads Proverbs 4:22, "they are life to those who find them (lemotza'eihem)," as "to those who utter them with the mouth": words of Torah must be spoken.

והענין כמו עד"מ מהאבנים עושים בית לדירת האדם וא"א לדור בלי בית כך ע"י אותיות התורה ממשיכים גילוי אור א"ס ב"ה בחי' סוכ"ע שיהיה שוכן ומתלבש באותיות התורה

The matter is like this: by way of analogy, from stones one makes a house for a person to dwell in, and it is impossible to dwell without a house; so too, through the letters of the Torah one draws down a revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, the level of the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), so that it dwells and is enclothed in the letters of the Torah

As a house built of stones lets a person live in it, so the letters of the Torah draw down the Infinite Light, the light that surrounds all worlds, so that it dwells and is clothed in them.

(וההמשכה היא מבחי' א"ס ב"ה כי לא אדם הוא⁸⁸ שיהיה נמשך ומתלבש למטה בבחי' כמראה אדם ולכן ההמשכה דוקא ע"י בית בחי' אותיות

(and the drawing down is from the level of the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, for "He is not a man," that He should be drawn down and enclothed below in the level of "like the appearance of a man"; therefore the drawing down is specifically through a house, the level of letters,

That drawing down comes from the Infinite One Himself, who "is not a man," too high to be clothed in the form of a man. Therefore it comes only through a "house," the letters.

כמו שהבית הוא בחי' מקיף על האדם ולמעלה ממנו כו' ועמ"ש במ"א ע"פ מזוזה מימין⁸⁹ כו' נר מצוה (כו') וזהו לשון מקרא קורא בתורה כאדם שקורא לחבירו שיבוא אצלו.

just as a house is the level of something encompassing (makif) a person and above him, etc.; and see what is written elsewhere on "The mezuzah on the right," etc., "a mitzvah is a lamp," etc.). And this is the expression mikra, "one who reads (korei) in the Torah," like a person who calls (korei) his friend to come to him.

A house surrounds a person and is above him, like an encompassing light (makif); the Alter Rebbe refers to his discussion of the mezuzah and of the lamp of a mitzvah. And mikra, Scripture, is related to korei, "calling": reading Torah is like calling a friend to come.

כך ע"י אותיות התורה קורא להקב"ה להיות בגלוי למטה וכמארז"ל הקב"ה קורא ושונה כנגדו.^{90, 91}

So too, through the level of the letters of the Torah he calls the Holy One, blessed be He, to be revealed below; as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "The Holy One, blessed be He, reads and repeats opposite him."

So by reading the letters of the Torah one calls the Holy One, blessed be He, to be revealed below. As Tanna Devei Eliyahu says, "The Holy One, blessed be He, reads and repeats opposite him."

פ"י הקב"ה הוא בחי' סוכ"ע קורא ושונה ג"כ אותיות הללו דהיינו שנמשך לבא מהעלם אל הגלוי ומה שאמרנו כנגדו

This means that the Holy One, blessed be He, who is the level of the light that encompasses all worlds, also reads and repeats these letters, that is, He is drawn to come from concealment to revelation. And as for their saying "opposite him,"

That is, the Holy One, the light that surrounds all worlds, also "reads" these letters, meaning He comes from concealment into revelation. The Alter Rebbe then turns to the word "opposite him."

היינו לפי שגלוי זה נמשך לבחי' נשמות הנבראים שהם בחי' בע"ג וא"א להן להכיל גילוי אוא"ס הבלתי בעל גבול ע"כ אמר כנגדו

that is because this revelation is drawn to the level of the souls of created beings, which are the level of the limited, and it is impossible for them to contain the revelation of the Infinite Light, which is without limit; therefore it says "opposite him,"

It says "opposite him" because the revelation reaches souls and creatures, which are limited and cannot contain the Infinite Light as it is. It therefore comes to them in words that correspond to their own.

כי דבר ה' זו הלכה⁹² והקב"ה קורא דברי' אלו כנגד האדם הקורא מלמעלה למטה כו'.

for "the word of G-d: this is halachah," and the Holy One, blessed be He, reads these words opposite the person who reads, from above to below, etc.

For "the word of G-d: this is halachah" (Shabbos 138b): the words of Torah are G-d's own word, and the Holy One reads these same words, from above to below, opposite the person who reads them.

SECTION 6 • ¶28-30

Stones and bricks

28 וע"פ כל הנ"ל נבואה לבאור הפסוק ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו' כי הנה נת' שהאותיות נק' אבנים והנה באבנים יש שני מדרגות.

In light of all the above, we come to the explanation of the verse, "And under His feet was like the work of the brick of sapphire," etc. For it has been explained that the letters are called "stones." Now, among stones there are two grades.

With all this in place, the Alter Rebbe comes to explain "under His feet was like the work of the brick (livnas) of sapphire." The letters, as explained, are called "stones," and there are two kinds of stones.

הא' אבנים ממש שהן בריאה בידי שמים. והב' האבן הנעשה בידי אדם והיא הלכנה שנעשית מן העפר ע"י בני אדם שנעשית ג"כ חזקה וקשה והיא נק' ג"כ אבן

The first is actual stones, which are a creation by the hand of Heaven. And the second is the stone made by human hands, namely the brick, which is made from earth by human beings; it too becomes strong and hard, and it too is called "stone,"

One kind is natural stone, created by Heaven. The other is man-made stone, the brick, formed from earth by human beings, which also becomes strong and hard and is likewise called "stone."

כמ"ש הבה נלכנה לבנים⁹³ ונשרפה לשרפה ותהי להם הלכנה לאבן כו' וכידוע ומפורסם שגם הן הלכנים יבנו בנין בית חומה כמו מן האבנים.

as it is written, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly, and the brick served them as stone," etc. And as is known and well established, with bricks too one builds a building, a house, a wall, just as with stones.

So the builders of Babel said, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly," and "the brick served them as stone" (Genesis 11:3). Bricks, like stones, are used to build houses and walls.

אך שצריך תחלה הכנה איך לעשות הלכנים שיהיו חזקים ומתקיימים והוא ע"י שישרפו אותם ככבשן האש וכנ"ל באמרם נלכנה לבנים ונשרפה לשרפה ואז דייקא ותהי להם הלכנה לאבן

Only, there first needs to be a preparation, how to make the bricks so that they will be strong and durable; and this is by burning them in a fiery kiln, as mentioned above in their saying, "Let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly," and then specifically, "the brick served them as stone,"

But bricks must first be prepared so that they will be strong and lasting: they are fired in a kiln. Only after "let us burn them thoroughly" does the verse say "and the brick served them as stone."

והיא האבן הנעשה בידי אדם ולא בעצם תולדתם כמו אבנים ממש שהן בריאה בידי שמים.

and this is the stone made by human hands, and not by their very nature, like actual stones, which are a creation by the hand of Heaven.

Such a brick is a stone made by human hands, not by its own nature, unlike natural stones, which are a creation of Heaven.

⁹⁴ 29 והנמשל מב' בחי' אבנים אלו יוכן ג"כ ברוחניות בענין האותיות שנק' אבנים שיש בהם ג"כ ב' בחי'.

The analogue of these two levels of stones will also be understood spiritually, regarding the letters that are called "stones": they too have two levels.

In the spiritual realm, the letters, which are called "stones," also come in these two kinds.

הא' בחי' בריאה בידי שמים ונק' אבנים. והב' בחי' הנעשה בידי אדם ונק' לבינים. והיינו

The first is the level of a creation by the hand of Heaven, and it is called “stones.” And the second is the level of what is made by human hands, and it is called “bricks.” That is,

One kind is “created by Heaven” and called “stones.” The other is “made by human hands” and called “bricks.”

כי בחי' אותיות התורה הם נק' אבנים שהתורה היא מן השמים וידבר ה' אל משה והוא נק' לשון הקודש שנמשך מבחי' קדש העליון.

the level of the letters of the Torah is called “stones,” for the Torah is from Heaven, “and G-d spoke to Moshe,” and it is called the Holy Tongue, for it is drawn from the level of supernal holiness (kodesh ha'elyon).

The letters of the Torah are “stones,” for the Torah is from Heaven: “And G-d spoke to Moshe.” Its language is called the Holy Tongue because it is drawn from the level of supernal holiness.

אך בחי' הלבנים היינו אותיות של ע' לשון מלשונות האומות אשר כל עם ועם מדבר כלשונו.

But the level of bricks is the letters of the seventy tongues, of the languages of the nations, where each and every people speaks according to its own language.

The “bricks” are the letters of the seventy languages of the nations, in which each people speaks its own tongue.

30 והנה כתיב כארבע רוחות השמים פרשתי אתכם⁹⁵ דהיינו שישראל מפוזרים בע' אומות ומדברים ג"כ

כלשון עם ועם

Now, it is written, “For like the four winds of the heavens I have spread you out,” that is, Israel is dispersed among the seventy nations and also speaks the language of each and every people

Zechariah says, “Like the four winds of the heavens I have spread you out”: Israel is scattered among the nations and speaks the language of each people.

שהם דרים בתוכם בכל צרכי מו"מ ואחר כך כשמתפללים במס"נ בכוונה ולומדים תורה לשמה מיגיעת העסק במו"מ

among whom they dwell, in all the needs of commerce. And afterward, when they pray with self-sacrifice (mesirus nefesh), with concentration, and study Torah for its own sake, out of the toil of their occupation in commerce,

Jews use those languages in all their business dealings. Afterward, coming from the toil of business, they pray with self-sacrifice and concentration and study Torah for its own sake.

אזי מעלים כל צירופי אותיות שדברו בהם למעלה מעלה לשרש נשמתם שהיא בחי' טהורה היא טהירו עלאה שלפני ההשתלשלות.

then they raise all the combinations of letters in which they spoke higher and higher, to the root of their soul, which is the level of “it is pure,” the tehiru ila’ah (supernal brightness) that precedes the chain of descent (hishtalshelus).

Then they raise all the combinations of letters in which they spoke higher and higher, to the root of their soul, “it is pure,” the supernal brightness that comes before the chain of worlds.

וזהו הנקי חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקדש.⁹⁶ פ"י כי לה"קנמשך מבחי' קדש העליון משא"כ שאר לשונות הם חול

And this is what is called “unconsecrated things (chullin) prepared in the purity of the holy.” This means: the Holy Tongue is drawn from the level of supernal holiness, whereas the other languages are profane (chol);

This is what the Sages call “unconsecrated food prepared in the purity of holy food.” The Holy Tongue comes from supernal holiness, while the other languages are profane, chol.

אבל כשמתבררים ע"י התפלה כנ"ל (וגם כשמדברים בהם להבין התורה וכמו בגמ' יש כמה מלות לשון ארמי⁹⁷ הכי השתא אי אמרת בשלמא) הרי הם נעשים על טהרת הקדש בחי' קדש העליון וטה"ע.

but when they are refined through prayer, as mentioned above (and also when one speaks in them in order to understand the Torah, just as in the Gemara there are a number of words in the Aramaic language: hachi hashta (“is this so now?”), i amrat bishlama (“it is well if you say”)), they become [prepared] in the purity of the holy, the level of supernal holiness and the supernal brightness (tehiru ila’ah).

When these languages are refined through prayer, or used to understand Torah, as the Talmud uses Aramaic phrases like hachi hashta and i amrat bishlama, they become “prepared in the purity of the holy,” raised to supernal holiness and the supernal brightness.

וה"ז כמשל הלבנים שהגם שהן עפר פשוט מ"מ ע"י מעשה ידי אדם נעשים ג"כ קשים וחזקים בבחי' אבן כנ"ל עד שבונים מהם חומה כו' ואני חומה זו תורה⁹⁸ כו'.

This is like the analogy of the bricks: although they are simple earth, nevertheless through the work of human hands they too become hard and strong, at the level of stone, as mentioned above, so much so that one builds a wall from them, etc.; and “I am a wall”: this is Torah, etc.

This is the brick: plain earth that human work makes as hard and strong as stone, until walls are built of it. So the Sages read “I am a wall” (Song of Songs 8:10) as referring to Torah.

ואמנם הנה א"א שיתהפכו ויתבררו הצירופי אותיות (דחולין להיות נעשים עטה"ק) הנ"ל להיות נקי אבני קודש כ"א

However, it is impossible for the combinations of letters mentioned above (of the chullin, to become [prepared] in the purity of the holy) to be transformed and refined, so as to be called "holy stones," except

The letter-combinations of the profane cannot be transformed and refined into "holy stones" by just any means. The next part names the one way it can be done.

ע"י המס"נ בק"ש דכמו משל הלבינים דצריך שישרפו אותן בכבשן תחלה כנ"ל וע"י השריפה יתהפכו להיות קשים וחזקים כאבנים.

through the self-sacrifice in the reading of the Shema; just as in the analogy of the bricks, which must first be burned in a kiln, as mentioned above, and through the burning they are transformed to become hard and strong like stones.

They are transformed only through the self-sacrifice of the Shema, just as bricks become hard as stone only by being fired in a kiln.

וכך הענין בעבודת ה' ענין שריפת הלבינים הוא ע"י שיתפללו בכוונה בהתלהבות אהו"י באמרו ואהבת ככל לבבך⁹⁹ כו' ע"י זה נשרפים ונכללים אותיות הזרים מכל המו"מ שעוסק

So too is the matter in the service of G-d: the burning of the bricks is through praying with concentration, with the fiery enthusiasm of love and awe, when he says, "And you shall love... with all your heart," etc. Through this, the foreign letters of all the commerce in which he engages are burned and absorbed,

In serving G-d, "firing the bricks" is praying with concentration and with a burning love and awe, as when one says "And you shall love... with all your heart." This burns up and absorbs the foreign letters of all the business one is engaged in.

וגם כל החיות ושפע שנעשה מהן כמו מאכל ולבוש הכל עולים ונכללים באחדות בעבודת ה' כשמוסר נפשו באחד בהתלהבות.

and also all the life-force (chayus) and bounty that come from them, such as food and clothing: all of it ascends and is absorbed into the Oneness, in the service of G-d, when he gives over his soul at [the word] "One" with fiery enthusiasm.

All the life and bounty that came from those dealings, such as food and clothing, also rise and are absorbed into G-d's Oneness, when one gives over one's soul with fervor at the word "One" in the Shema.

אך צריך שהעסק במו"מ יהיה בקרירות ובע"כ שלא בתשוקה ממש רק כמו שכופין אותו עד שרוצה כדי להחיות נפשו ונפשות ביתו שיוכלו לעבוד את ה' כל ימי חלדם

But the occupation in commerce must be with coolness and against one's will, not with real desire, but only as one who is compelled until he is willing, in order to sustain his soul and the souls of his household, so that they can serve G-d all the days of their life,

But business must be done with coolness and reluctance, without real desire, like one who is compelled, only to support oneself and one's household so that they can serve G-d all their lives.

וכמו שארז"ל עשה תורתך קבע^{100, 101} ומלאכתך עראי שעיקר המכוון בהמלאכה כדי שיהיה תורתך קבע ואז ע"ז יוכל להעלות בהאותיות אח"כ כנ"ל:¹⁰²

as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Make your Torah fixed and your work occasional": the main intent in the work is so that your Torah be fixed. And then, through this, he will be able afterward to raise up the letters, as mentioned above.

As the Sages said, "Make your Torah fixed and your work occasional": the purpose of work is that Torah be fixed. Only then can one later raise the letters, as explained.

SECTION 7 • ¶ 31-33

The brick of sapphire

31 וזהו ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר¹⁰³ כו' תחת רגליו דוקא דהנה מבואר למעלה בענין וישב ה' מלך לעולם שיש בחי' כסא כס א' המלביש ומכסה לאור הנמשך מבחי' כמראה אדם כו'

And this is [the meaning of] "And under His feet was like the work of the brick of sapphire," etc.: specifically "under His feet." For it was explained above, regarding "And G-d sat as King le'olam," that there is the level of the Throne, kas alef, which clothes and covers the light drawn from the level of "like the appearance of a man," etc.,

Now the verse: "And under His feet was like the work of the brick of sapphire" stresses "under His feet." As explained, the Throne (kas alef) clothes and covers the light that comes from "like the appearance of a man."

עד שיוכל להיות התהוות היש ודבר נפרד בבי"ע ובחי' התהוות היש זהו בחי' תחת רגליו והוא מ"ש ומלכותו בכל משלה¹⁰⁴ היינו אפי' עד השרים כו'

so that there can be the coming into being of the yesh (the existent) and separate thing in Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah; and the level of the coming into being of the yesh is the level of "under His feet." This is what is written, "And His kingship rules over all," that is, even down to the princes, etc.;

This covering lets the separate yesh come into being in Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, and that level is "under His feet." It is the meaning of "His kingship rules over all" (Psalms 103:19), even down to the "princes," the powers appointed over the nations.

משא"כ בחי' יד הוא למעלה מבחי' כסא ואין שם בחי' יש ודבר נפרד רק איהו וגרמוהי חד. ע"כ אמר ותחת רגליו שהוא למטה מבחי' כסא הנ"ל שם הוא בחי' לבנת הספיר.

whereas the level of the hand is above the level of the Throne, and there there is no level of yesh and separate thing, only "He and His causations are one." Therefore it says, "And under His feet," which is below the level of the Throne mentioned above: there is the level of "the brick of sapphire."

The level of the hand is above the Throne, where there is no separate existence at all, only the oneness of G-d with the Sefiros through which He acts. So the verse places the brick of sapphire "under His feet," below the Throne.

פי' לבנת הוא מענין בחי' לבינים הנ"ל שהוא בירור והעלאת האותיות של העי' לשון שלאחר הבירור הם בחי' לבנת הספיר שמאירים כספירים¹⁰⁵ וכמ"ש מקום ספיר אבניה לא ידע אנוש ערכה.^{106, 107}

The meaning is: livnas ("the brick of") is from the matter of the level of bricks mentioned above, which is the refinement and elevation of the letters of the seventy tongues; after the refinement they are the level of "the brick of sapphire," for they shine like sapphires, as it is written, "Its stones are the place of sapphire"; "man does not know its worth."

Livnas, "brick of," recalls the bricks described above: the refining and raising of the letters of the seventy languages, which once refined shine like sapphires. Job says of the earth, "its stones are the place of sapphire," and of wisdom, "man does not know its worth."

(והגם שהאותיות הללו נעשים בידי אדם ולא בידי שמים מ"מ ע"י המס"נ בק"ש נתבררו כ"כ עד שנק' ספיר וכמ"ש אשר ברא אלקים לעשות.¹⁰⁸ לעשות לתקן בידי אדם¹⁰⁹ וע' בע"ח)

(And although these letters are made by human hands and not by the hand of Heaven, nevertheless through the self-sacrifice in the reading of the Shema they have been refined so much that they are called "sapphire," as it is written, "which G-d created to make": "to make" [means] to rectify by human hands. And see Etz Chaim.)

Though these letters are made by human hands, not by Heaven, self-sacrifice in the Shema refines them until they are called "sapphire." Genesis 2:3 says G-d created "to make," which the Midrash reads as "to rectify": creation is left for human beings to perfect.

ולקרב הדבר אל השכל איך אפשר שאותיות של ע' לשון יתעלו כ"כ ע"י עסק התפלה והתורה להיות ג"כ כמו אבני קדש עד שנק' לבנת הספיר.

And to bring the matter closer to the intellect: how is it possible that the letters of the seventy tongues should be elevated so much, through occupation in prayer and Torah, as to become, too, like holy stones, so much so that they are called "the brick of sapphire"?

To make this reasonable, the Alter Rebbe asks: how can the letters of the seventy languages rise so high through prayer and Torah that they become like holy stones, a "brick of sapphire"?

אך הענין דהנה אנו רואים שבכל עם ועם המדבר כלשונו עכ"ז אין בכל לשון רק הברת הכ"ב צירופי אותיות שבה' מוצאות הידועים אה"ע מהגרון כו'

But the matter is this: we see that in each and every people, which speaks its own language, nevertheless in every language there is only the pronunciation of the twenty-two combinations of letters, in the five well-known points of articulation: alef, ches, hei, ayin from the throat, etc.,

The answer: every people speaks its own language, yet every language uses the sounds of the same twenty-two letters, produced in the same five places of the mouth: alef, ches, hei, ayin from the throat, and so on.

כמו בלה"ק רק השינוי בין שאר לשונות ללה"ק הוא כלשון שצירוף בשר של לה"ק¹¹⁰ דאותיות אלו just as in the Holy Tongue. Only, the difference between the other languages and the Holy Tongue is in the language [itself]: that the combination basar (flesh) in the Holy Tongue, these letters

So it is in the Holy Tongue as well. The difference between the Holy Tongue and other languages lies in the words themselves, as the example of basar (flesh) will show.

בי"ת שיי"ן רי"ש הן מחי"י ממש את הבשר בדבר ה' בשימ"ב משא"כ בשאר הלשונות שהם הסכמיים כמ"ש בפרדס שער האותיות ובשל"ה.¹¹¹

bet, shin, resh, actually give life to the flesh, by the word of G-d in the six days of creation; which is not so in the other languages, which are conventional, as is written in Pardes, in Shaar HaOtiyos (the Gate of the Letters), and in the Shelah.

In the Holy Tongue the letters bet, shin, resh actually give life to flesh, for they are G-d's word from the six days of creation; in other languages words are only agreed conventions, as Pardes (Shaar HaOtiyos) and the Shelah explain.

32 וכן תמונת אותיות דכתב אשורי רומז לענינים נפלאים שהרי ר"ע היה דורש על כל קוץ¹¹² כו'

Likewise, the shape of the letters of the Ashuri script alludes to wondrous matters, for Rabbi Akiva would expound upon every tip (kotz), etc.;

The shapes of the letters in the Ashuri script, the square script of the Torah scroll, also allude to wondrous things. The Talmud tells that Rabbi Akiva would derive heaps of laws from every tip (kotz) of the letters.

וכי"ז אינו כלל וכלל בשאר כתבים ולשונות. אבל עכ"ז הברת כ"ב אותיות יש בהן ג"כ כשורה.

and none of this exists at all in other scripts and languages. But nevertheless, the pronunciation of the twenty-two letters is present in them too, equally.

Nothing of this kind exists in other scripts and languages. Yet the sounds of the twenty-two letters are found equally in all of them.

33 וידוע דשורש כ"ב בחי"י אותיות אלו נמשכים ממקום גבוה מאד ולמעלה מהשכל רק שקבען בפה כו'

And it is known that the root of these twenty-two kinds of letters is drawn from a very lofty place, above the intellect; only that "He fixed them in the mouth," etc.

The root of the twenty-two letters is very lofty, above intellect; only afterward, in the classic phrase, "He fixed them in the mouth," in the five places where speech is formed.

א"כ על כל פנים אנו רואים שגם ע' לשון יש שרש להאותיות למעלה לכך יוכלו להתעלות¹¹³ ע"י מס"נ בק"ש כנ"ל וזהו בחי"י לבנת הספיר שהוא תחת רגליו

If so, at any rate we see that the seventy tongues too have a root for their letters above; therefore they can be elevated through self-sacrifice (mesirus nefesh) in the reading of the Shema, as mentioned above. And this is the level of "the brick of sapphire," which is "under His feet,"

So even the seventy languages have a lofty root for their letters, and that is why they can be raised through self-sacrifice in the Shema. This is the "brick of sapphire" that is "under His feet."

דהיינו בבירור מבחי' נוגה ושם יש ג"כ כעצם השמים לטוהר¹¹⁴ שהוא בחי' אותיות התורה שהתורה היא מהשמים והאותיות הן מבחי' טה"ע

that is, in the refinement from the level of nogah. And there, there is also “like the very essence of the heavens in purity,” which is the level of the letters of the Torah, for the Torah is from Heaven, and the letters are from the level of tehiru ila’ah (the supernal brightness),

The brick of sapphire is the refinement of what is in nogah, the realm in which good and evil are mixed. There too is “like the very essence of the heavens in purity”: the letters of the Torah, which is from Heaven and whose letters come from the supernal brightness.

כמ"ש בזוהר גליף גליפו בטה"ע¹¹⁵ ונמשכה למטה ג"כ תחת רגליו בעשיה כנ"ל ונמצא לבנת הספיר ועצם השמים לטוהר הם בחינת ב' מיני אותיות הנ"ל

as is written in the Zohar, “He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness”; and it was drawn downward too, “under His feet,” into Asiyah, as mentioned above. It follows that “the brick of sapphire” and “the very essence of the heavens in purity” are the level of the two kinds of letters mentioned above,

As the Zohar says, “He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness”: the letters were first engraved there and then drawn down “under His feet” into Asiyah. So the “brick of sapphire” and “the very essence of the heavens in purity” are the two kinds of letters, those of the world’s languages and those of the Torah.

שע"י ב' מיני אותיות הנ"ל הוא עליית הנשמות אחר ירידתן שירדו מבחינת טהורה היא להיות בבחינת רגל כנ"ל וע"י ב' בחינת אותיות התורה הנ"ל שהם בבחינת תחת רגליו ע"י הוא העלייה:

for through the two kinds of letters mentioned above comes the ascent of the souls after their descent, in which they descended from the level of “it is pure” to be at the level of the foot, as mentioned above; and through the two levels of the letters of the Torah mentioned above, which are at the level of “under His feet,” through this comes the ascent.

Through these two kinds of letters the souls ascend after their descent from “it is pure” to the level of the foot. Both are “under His feet,” and through them comes the ascent.

SECTION 8 • ¶ 34-37

What the elders saw

34 וזהו ויראו את אלקי ישראל.¹¹⁶ דהנה לעיל מניה כתיב ונגש משה לבדו אל הוי"ה והם לא יגשו¹¹⁷ כי שרש בחי' משה היה למעלה מבחי' כסא ה' המתלבש בבי"ע.

And this is [the meaning of] “And they saw the G-d (Elokei) of Israel.” For just before it, it is written, “And Moshe alone shall approach Havayah, but they shall not approach,” because the root of the level of Moshe was above the level of the Throne of G-d, which is enclothed in Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah

Now the beginning of the verse, “And they saw the G-d (Elokei) of Israel.” Just before it, the Torah says “Moshe alone shall approach Havayah, but they shall not approach” (Exodus 24:2), because Moshe’s root was above the Throne of G-d that is clothed in Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah.

(וכמש"ל בפ"י רגלי העם אשר אנכי בקרב) ולכן ניתנה התורה על ידו כי התורה ירדה מן השמים היינו שנמשכה מאצי' לבריאה דרך בחי' הכסא הנ"ל

(as was written above in the explanation of “on foot are the people in whose midst I am”). Therefore the Torah was given through him, for the Torah descended from Heaven, that is, it was drawn from Atzilus (Emanation) to Beriah (Creation) by way of the level of the Throne mentioned above

This was shown above from “the people in whose midst I am.” Therefore the Torah was given through Moshe: the Torah came down from Heaven, drawn from Atzilus to Beriah by way of the Throne.

(ועמ"ש במ"א בפ"י השמים כסא^{118, 119} דקאי על התורה שירדה להיות בחי' כסא לגילוי רצונו וחכמתו כו'. ועמ"ש בביאור למ"ש בלק"א פ"ג)

(and see what is written elsewhere on the interpretation of “The heavens are My Throne,” that it refers to the Torah, which descended to be the level of a throne for the revelation of His will and His wisdom, etc.; and see what is written in the explanation of what is written in Likkutei Amarim, chapter 13).

The Alter Rebbe refers to his explanation of “The heavens are My Throne” (Isaiah 66:1) as the Torah, which came down to be a “throne” for the revelation of G-d’s will and wisdom. He also refers to his explanation of a passage in Likkutei Amarim (Tanya), chapter 13.

וכדי להמשיכו ולהורידו מאצ"י לבריאה היא ע"י מרבע"ה ששרש השגתו היה בבחי' אצ"י ממש וכמ"ש
בו מן המים משיתיהו¹²⁰ מבחי' מים עליונים שהוא בחי' אצ"י כו'.

And to draw it down and bring it down from Atzilus to Beriah is through Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, the root of whose comprehension was in the level of Atzilus itself, as it is written of him, "From the water I drew him": from the level of the upper waters, which is the level of Atzilus, etc.

Drawing the Torah down from Atzilus to Beriah required Moshe, whose understanding was rooted in Atzilus itself. "From the water I drew him" (Exodus 2:10) alludes to the upper waters, the level of Atzilus.

וזהו תורה צוה לנו משה¹²¹ שהמשיך התורה מאצ"י לבי"ע. משא"כ הזקנים לא היתה השגתם באצ"י
כלל רק בבריאה

And this is [the meaning of] "Moshe commanded us the Torah": that he drew the Torah down from Atzilus to Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah. Whereas the elders' comprehension was not in Atzilus at all, only in Beriah;

This is "Moshe commanded us the Torah" (Deuteronomy 33:4): he drew the Torah down from Atzilus into the lower worlds. The elders' understanding, by contrast, did not reach Atzilus at all, only Beriah.

ולכן נאמר בהם ויראו את אלקי ישראל בחי' אלקי הוא מדת הצמצום וההסתר בחי' הכסא הנ"ל.
therefore it is said of them, "And they saw the G-d (Elokei) of Israel": the level of Elokei is the attribute of tzimtzum (contraction) and concealment, the level of the Throne mentioned above.

So of the elders it says "they saw the G-d (Elokei) of Israel": Elokei is the Name Elokim, the attribute of contraction and concealment, which is the level of the Throne.

משא"כ במשה כתיב ונגש אל¹²² הו"י שהוא בחי' שלמעלה מהצמצום דשם אלקים דהיינו למעלה מבחי'
הכסא.

Whereas of Moshe it is written, "shall approach Havayah," which is the level that is above the tzimtzum of the Name Elokim, that is, above the level of the Throne.

Of Moshe, however, it says that he "shall approach Havayah," the level above the contraction of the Name Elokim, which is above the Throne.

35 ולהיות שהשגת הזקנים היה מבחי' אלקים שהוא אחר ההעלם דכסא הנ"ל לכן שם ראו והשיגו בחי' לבנת הספיר ובחי' כעצם השמים¹²³ שהם ב' בחי' אותיות הנ"ל

And since the elders' comprehension was from the level of Elokim, which is after the concealment of the Throne mentioned above, therefore there they saw and comprehended the level of "the brick of sapphire" and the level of "like the very essence of the heavens," which are the two levels of letters mentioned above;

Because the elders' understanding came from Elokim, beneath the concealment of the Throne, what they saw there was the "brick of sapphire" and "the very essence of the heavens," the two kinds of letters.

דהיינו שיש שם ג"כ מבחי' עצם השמים והוא אותיות התורה שניתנה מהשמים שהרי נמשכה ונתלכשה ג"כ תחת הכסא הנ"ל. וזהו בחי' אבני קדש.

that is, there is there also [something] of the level of "the very essence of the heavens," which is the letters of the Torah that was given from Heaven, for it too was drawn down and en clothed beneath the Throne mentioned above. And this is the level of "holy stones."

"The very essence of the heavens" is the letters of the Torah, given from Heaven, which were drawn down and clothed beneath the Throne as well. These are the "holy stones."

ועוד יש שם ג"כ בחי' לבנת הספיר שהם אותיות המתבררים מע' לשון שבחי' אותיות אלו אינם דוקא רק תחת בחי' כסא כנ"ל באריכות:

And furthermore, there is there also the level of "the brick of sapphire," which is the letters refined from the seventy tongues; for the level of these letters is specifically only beneath the level of the Throne, as explained above at length.

The "brick of sapphire" is the letters refined from the seventy languages, which exist only beneath the Throne, as explained at length above.

36 וזהו ואל אצילי בני ישראל לא שלח ידו.¹²⁴ פי' ידו הן בחי' חג"ת שהן סמוכין אל

And this is [the meaning of] "And to the nobles of the Children of Israel He did not send forth His hand." This means: "His hand" is the level of Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes (kindness, restraint and beauty), which are adjacent to

Now the second verse: G-d "did not send forth His hand" to the nobles. G-d's "hand" is Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes, which, like the arms and upper body, are close to the head.

הראש ומחוברין עמו והם למעלה מבחי כסא והעלם ע"כ הזקנים לא זכו לגילוי זה מבחי שלמעלה מהכסא דהיינו מבחי הידים והשגתם היה רק ע"י הכסא.

the head and joined with it, and they are above the level of the Throne and concealment. Therefore the elders did not merit this revelation from the level that is above the Throne, that is, from the level of the hands; their comprehension was only through the Throne.

These attributes are joined to the "head" and are above the Throne and its concealment. So the elders did not merit the revelation from above the Throne, the "hands"; their understanding came only through the Throne.

37 וזהו ותחת רגליו כו' ולכן לא שלח ידו אליהם. והגם שנקר' אצילי בני ישראל¹²⁵ וכמ"ש בהו ויאצל מן הרוח¹²⁶ עכ"ז יש הפרש ביניהם למשה שהם לא השיגו רק הארת האצ"י המתלבש בבריאה וכמ"ש ויראו את אלקי כו'.

And this is "And under His feet," etc., and therefore "He did not send forth His hand" to them. And although they are called "the nobles (atzilei) of the Children of Israel," as it is written of them, "And He drew (vayatzel) from the spirit," nevertheless there is a difference between them and Moshe: they comprehended only the radiance of Atzilus that is enclothed in Beriah, as it is written, "And they saw the G-d (Elokei)," etc.

So "under His feet" and "He did not send forth His hand" fit together. The elders are called atzilei, "nobles," a word related to vayatzel, "He drew from the spirit" upon the seventy elders (Numbers 11:25), and to Atzilus; yet unlike Moshe they grasped only the radiance of Atzilus clothed in Beriah, "the G-d (Elokei) of Israel."

ולכן והם לא יגשו¹²⁷ לבחי גילוי שם הוי"ה. אבל במשה רבע"ה כתיב ונגש לבחי שם הוי"ה. וכן אבות העולם היו מרכבה לבחינת זרועות עולם¹²⁸ כנ"ל.

Therefore "but they shall not approach" the level of the revelation of the Name Havayah. But of Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, it is written "shall approach," to the level of the Name Havayah. And likewise the Patriarchs of the world were a chariot for the level of "the everlasting arms," as mentioned above.

Therefore "they shall not approach" the revelation of the Name Havayah, while Moshe "shall approach" it. Likewise the Patriarchs were a chariot for "the everlasting arms."

(ובזה יובן קצת מ"ש בשיר השירים דודי שלח ידו¹²⁹ כו' דהיינו לנשמות הגבוהות במאד אבות העולם ומשה רבינו עליו השלום כנ"ל):

(And with this one can understand somewhat what is written in the Song of Songs, "My beloved sent forth his hand," etc., that is, to the very lofty souls, the Patriarchs of the world and Moshe Rabbeinu, peace be upon him, as mentioned above.)

This also sheds some light on "My beloved sent forth his hand" (Song of Songs 5:4): G-d sends forth His "hand," the revelation above the Throne, to the very loftiest souls, the Patriarchs and Moshe.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Business should be done coolly, only as far as necessary to support oneself and one's household, with Torah fixed and work occasional. Then, in prayer with self-sacrifice and burning love in the Shema, and in Torah study for its own sake, one raises all the letters one spoke and all the life one drew from one's dealings into holiness. One should also rise from the natural hidden love to a love born of understanding, and be of lowly spirit before every person, for even the "feet" have a virtue that the "head" lacks.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does Ezekiel say "like the appearance of a man" and not simply "a man," and in what sense do the souls of Israel "make" G-d?
2. What does the Throne conceal, and why must the light be concealed for the lower worlds to exist?
3. How does the difference between clapping one's hands and dancing with one's feet explain the difference between the Patriarchs and Moshe and other righteous souls?
4. Why are the letters of the nations' languages compared to bricks, and what is the "kiln" that turns them into holy stones?
5. What did the elders see at Sinai, and why did G-d not "send forth His hand" to them?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 ויראו את אלקי ישראל

Another version of this maamar: the transcript made by the Mitteler Rebbe, printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5568 with glosses by the Tzemach Tzedek.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחת כ"ק אדה"א בסה"מ תקס"ח ע' סד עם הגהות מהצ"צ. בכו"ך 1113 נה, א גוכתי"ק הצ"צ, בכותרת: תורת שבת פי משפטים תקסח"י. כנראה מהדו"ק בלי כמה הגהות שנדפסו כאן. וכן יש שם הגהות שלא נדפסו כאן. ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע. המאמר (בשינויים) והגהות באוה"ת ע' ארסו. אירעו. כרך ח ע' גמו. המאמר נזכר בלקו"ת ויקרא ב, ב. מטות פא, ג. סה"מ תרס"ט ע' קסו.

2 ויראו את אלקי ישראל

The verse tells what Moshe, Aharon, Nadav, Avihu and the seventy elders saw after the covenant at Sinai: the G-d of Israel, and under His feet the likeness of a sapphire brick. The whole maamar is an explanation of this verse.

Exodus 24:10: שמות כ"ד

וִירָאוּ אֶת אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתַחַת רַגְלָיו כְּמַעֲשֵׂה לְבֶנֶת הַסַּפִּיר וְכַעֲצֵם הַשָּׁמַיִם לְטָהָר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כד, י.

3 תחת רגליו . . ועל דמות

Above the firmament Ezekiel sees the likeness of a throne, and upon it a likeness like the appearance of a man. The Alter Rebbe uses it to explain what "under His feet" refers to.

Ezekiel 1:26: יחזקאל א'

וּמִמַּעַל לָרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשָׁם כְּמִרְאֵה אֲבֹן־סַפִּיר דְּמוּת כֶּסֶף וְעַל דְּמוּת הַכֶּסֶף דְּמוּת כְּמִרְאֵה אָדָם עָלָיו מְלֻמָּעָה:

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

יחזקאל א, כו. וכ"כ בלקח טוב "ותחת רגליו זה כסא הכבוד", ראה תורה שלמה כאן אות פו (כרך יט ע' רסט).

4 ואל אצילי בני ישראל

The verse says that G-d did not send forth His hand against the nobles of Israel, though they saw Him. The maamar

will read it as saying that they did not receive the revelation of His "hand."

Exodus 24:11: שמות כ"ד

וְאֶל־אֲצִילֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא שְׁלַח יָדוֹ וַיַּחֲזִיז אֶת־הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ:

And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand; and they beheld G-d, and did eat and drink.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כד, יא.

5 אני לו גוף

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה פיוט "יגדל".

PARAGRAPH 2

6 אני ה' לא שניתי

G-d declares through the prophet, "For I, Havayah, have not changed." The Alter Rebbe takes it to mean that the creation of the worlds made no change in Him.

Malachi 3:6: מלאכי ג'

כִּי אֲנִי ה' לֹא שֶׁנִּיתִי וְאַתֶּם בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב לֹא כִלִיתֶם:

For I the L-RD change not; and ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מלאכי ג, ו.

7 אתה הוא קודם שנברא

On "Let every soul praise G-d" (36a), the Alter Rebbe quotes the same verse and the same words of the prayer book, and contrasts G-d with the soul, which is affected by what happens to the body because it is truly clothed within it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לעיל לו, א. לח, ב.

8 שמלך שמו נקרא עליהם

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע"פ פיוט אדון עולם.

PARAGRAPH 4

9 אדם אתם

G-d tells Israel, "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are adam (man)." The Alter Rebbe uses it to identify the souls of Israel with the "man" of Ezekiel's vision.

Ezekiel 34:31: יחזקאל ל"ד

וְאִתָּן צֹאנִי צֹאן מִרְעִיתִי אָדָם אִתָּם אֲנִי אֱלֹקֵיכֶם נֹאֵם אֲדֹנָי ה'

And ye My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, are men, and I am your G-d, saith the L-rd GOD.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

יחזקאל לד, לא. בכרך 1113 נוסף הגה"ה: (שהכהנים ליום וישראלים הם נגד גי קווים שבבחי ציור אדם כהנים חסד כו').

10

ישראל עלו במחשבה

There "Israel arose in thought" explains the phrase "our signs we have not seen": in exile the souls' root in the divine thought is hidden, and the world appears to be a separate existence, for G-d is "a G-d Who hides Himself." The note also points to the sources listed there.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר בתחלתו. ראה בהנסמן לעיל ג, ב.

11

ישראל עלו במחשבה

Among the things that preceded the world, the Midrash says that the thought of Israel came before everything. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that the souls are the "man" through whom the worlds were created.

Bereshit Rabbah 1:4 ד"ד: רבא

... "ה' קנני ראשית דרכו" כסא הכבוד מנין דכתיב (תהלים צג, ב): "נכון כסאך מאז וגו'". האבות וישראל ובית המקדש וישוה של משיח, עלו במחשבה להבראות האבות מנין שנאמר (הושע ט, י): "כענבים במדבר וגו'" ישראל מנין שנאמר (תהלים עד, ב): "זכור עדתך קנית קדם" בית המקדש מנין שנאמר (ירמיה יז, יב): "כסא כבוד מרום מראשון וגו'" שמו של משיח מנין שנאמר (תהלים עב, יז): "יהי שמו לעולם וגו' [לפני שמש ינון שמו]" רבי אהבה ברבי זעירא אמר אף התשובה שנאמר (שם צ, ב) "בטרים הרים יולדו" ואותה השעה (שם),

...

"In the beginning, G-d created" - six items preceded the creation of the world; some of them were [actually] created, and some of them G-d contemplated creating, [though He did not actually do so]. The Torah and the Throne of Glory were created. Torah, from where is it derived? As it is stated: "The L-rd made me at the beginning of His way" (Proverbs 8:22). The Throne of Glory, from where is it derived? "Your throne stands firm from earliest time, [You are from eternity]" (Psalms 93:2). The patriarchs, Israel, ...

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PARAGRAPH 5

12

ושכנתי בתוכם בתוכו לא נאמר

"And they shall make Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell within them." The plural "within them," where one might expect "within it," is read as G-d dwelling in the people themselves.

Exodus 25:8 ד"ח: שמות

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם:

And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

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ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'

KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כה, ח. כן הובא בלקו"ת ר"פ נשא. ועוד. ובכ"מ. עיי' בראשית חכמה שער האהבה פ"ו קרוב לתחלתו. ובשלי"ה שער האותיות אות ל. מס' תענית רד"ה מענין העבודה. פי תרומה חלק תו"א שכה, ב. שכו, ב. ועוד — לקו"ש ח"ג ע"י 106.

PARAGRAPH 6

13

מכון לשבתך

In the Song at the Sea Israel sings of being planted on G-d's mountain, "the place of Your dwelling which You, G-d, have made." The Alter Rebbe applies it to G-d's dwelling in the souls of Israel.

שמות ט"ו:17 Exodus 15:17

תבאמו ותטעמו בהר נחלתך מכון לשבתך פעלת Havayah מקדש אד"נ כוננו ידך:

Thou bringest them in, and plantest them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, The place, O L-RD, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, The sanctuary, O L-rd, which Thy hands have established.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות טו, יז.

14

שבא נחש על חוה

The Talmud says that when the serpent came upon Chavah it cast filth into her, and that the filth of Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai, ceased. The Alter Rebbe draws on both statements.

Shabbat 146a:1 א"א: שבת קמ"ו

שבא נחש על חוה הטיל בה זוהמא, ישראל שעמדו על הר סיני — פסקה וזהמתן. גוים שלא עמדו על הר סיני — לא פסקה וזהמתן. אמר לקה רב אחא בריה דרבא לרב אשי: גרים מאי? אמר לקה: אף על גב דאינהו לא הוו, מוליהו הוו. דכתיב: "את אשר ישנו פה עמנו עומד היום לפני ה' אלקינו ואת אשר איננו פה וגו'".

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

Zohar I, 126a זח"א קבו,

KEHOT'S NOTE

שבת קמו, א. זח"א קבו, א.

15

ואף שבמתן תורה פסקה זוהמתן

The Zohar says that Israel's filth ceased when they stood at Mount Sinai, and that after they sinned they all returned to their filth as before. This is the Alter Rebbe's source for the filth returning to the body.

ספר זוהר, חיי שרה י"ג:פ"ב-פ"ז 87-82 Zohar, Chayei Sara 13:82-87

But,' said R. Jose, 'is it not written, "and he went not as at the other times to meet with enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness" (Ibid. 24, 1)?' Said R. Isaac to him: 'The lower side, which comes from the unclean spirit above, was the unclean spirit prevailing in the wilderness when Israel made the calf in order to defile themselves therewith; and Balaam tried every device of magic to uproot Israel, but without success.' Said R. Jose: 'You rightly said that when the serpent had ...

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

16 שבמ"ת פסקה זוהמתן . . ע"י חטא העגל . . חזרה הזוהמא

The Rebbe notes that the Zohar says the filth returned after the sin of the Calf, while the Talmud (Shabbos 146a, Avodah Zarah 22b) and the Zohar elsewhere imply it did not, and gives the resolution of Nitzutzei Oros: not all of the filth returned.

יבמות ק"ג ב:3:103b Yevamot

דקא שדי בה זוהמא. דאמר רבי יוחנן: בשעה שפא נחש על חנה הטיל בה זוהמא. ישראל, שעמדו על הר סיני — פסקה זוהמתן. גוים, שלא עמדו בהר סיני — לא פסקה זוהמתן.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

כ"ה בוח"א נה, ב. קכו, ב. שם ח"ג קצג, ב. ועוד, ומה דמשמע בשבת (קמו, א) ובע"ז (כב, ב) דלא חזרה וכן הוא בוח"ג (יד, ב) — מבואר בניצוצי אורות שם דלא כל הזוהמא חזרה, ועיין ג"כ חדא"ג מהרש"א יבמות קג, ב — הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר ז"ע בפתח דבר לקונטרס קב (חה"פ תשי"ב).

17 משכא דחויא

The Targum says that the garments G-d made for Adam and his wife were from the skin the serpent had shed. The Alter Rebbe uses the related term "the serpent's skin" for the physical body.

תרגום יונתן על בראשית ג:21א"כ Targum Jonathan on Genesis 3:21

ועבד יי אלקים לאדם ולאנתתיה לבושי דיקר מן משה חיינא דאשליח מניה על משה בשריהון חלף שופריהון דאשתלחו ואלבשינון

And the L-rd G-d made to Adam and to his wife vestures of honour from the skin of the serpent, which he had cast from him, upon the skin of their flesh, instead of that adornment which had been cast away; and He clothed them.

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

18 כי חלק ה' . . עמו

"For G-d's portion is His people; Yaakov is the lot of His inheritance." The Alter Rebbe adds "literally" to show that the soul itself, part of G-d, was untouched by the filth.

דברים ל"ב:9ט"ז Deuteronomy 32:9

כי חלק Havayah עמו יעקב חבל נחלתו:

For the portion of the L-RD is His people, Jacob the lot of His inheritance.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים לב, ט.

19 שהגוף נקרא משכא דחויא

There the Alter Rebbe explains that a person cannot see the worlds' nullification to their source because he is in a physical body, "the serpent's skin," which grows from physical things that hide and conceal; contemplating this in the Shema should awaken a longing to remain bound to it all day.

בראשית ג:21א"כ Genesis 3:21

ויעש ה' אלקים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבשם:

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כוי

And the L-RD G-d made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תרגום יונתן בראשית ג, כא. וראה לעיל טז, ב. ולקמן ק, ד ובמ"מ לשם.

20 שהנשמה א"צ תקון לעצמה

Tanya says, citing Etz Chaim (Shaar 26), that the soul itself needs no rectification at all and descended into this world only to draw down light to rectify the body, the animal soul and its share of the world.

תניא, חלק ראשון; ליקוטי אמרים 37:18 Tanya, Likkutei Amarim

וכמו שכתוב [בעץ חיים שער כ"ו], כי הנשמה עצמה אינה צריכה תיקון כלל כוי, ולא הוצרכה להתלבש בעולם הזה וכוי, רק להמשיך אור לתקנם כוי, והוא ממש דוגמת סוד גלות השכינה, לקרר ניצוצין וכוי.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תניא פל"ז מע"ח שער כו.

21 ועצמותיה יחליץ

Isaiah promises that G-d will guide and satisfy the faithful "and invigorate your bones." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the future refinement of the body itself.

ישעיהו נ"ח:11א"י Isaiah 58:11

ונתק ה' תמיד והשביע בצחצחות נפשך ועצמותיה יחליץ והיית כגן רוה וכמוצא מים אשר לא ייבשו מימיו:

And the L-RD will guide thee continually, And satisfy thy soul in drought, And make strong thy bones; And thou shalt be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י נח, יא.

22 ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר

Zechariah prophesies that on that day G-d "will remove the spirit of impurity from the land." It describes the removal of the filth that now clings to the body.

זכריה י"ג:2ב' Zechariah 13:2

והיה ביום ההוא נאם ה' צבאות אקריט את שמות העצבים מן הארץ ולא יזכרו עוד וגם את הנביאים ואת רוח הטומאה 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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KEHOT'S NOTE

זכריה יג, ב.

23 ונגלה כבוד ה'

"The glory of G-d will be revealed, and all flesh together will see." The Alter Rebbe stresses "flesh": in the future

the revelation will reach the body, not only the soul.

Isaiah 40:5: מִיָּהּ יִשְׁעִיהוּ

וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה' וְרָאוּ כָּל-בָּשָׂר יַחְדּוֹ 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

ישעיה מ, ה.

PARAGRAPH 7

24

אדם אתם

"You are adam (man)," said of Israel. The Alter Rebbe reads it as describing the form of a man that the divine revelation takes in the souls of Israel.

Ezekiel 34:31: לִיד: לִיחֻקָּאֵל

וְאַתֶּם צֹאֲנֵי צֹאן מִרְעִיתִי אֲדָם אַתֶּם אֲנִי אֱלֹקֵיכֶם נֹאֵם אֲדֹנָי ה'

And ye My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, are men, and I am your G-d, saith the L-rd GOD.'

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PARAGRAPH 8

25

נודע בשערים בעלה

In the praise of the woman of valor, "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land." The Zohar reads the husband as G-d and the "gates" as the measure of each person's heart.

Proverbs 31:23: מְשָׁלִי לִי־אֵלֶּיָּהּ כִּי־גִבּוֹרֵת

נֹדֵעַ בְּשַׁעְרִים בְּעֵלָה בְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עִם־זְקֵנֵי־אֶרֶץ:

Her husband is known in the gates, When he sitteth among the elders of the land.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי לא, כג.

26

בכל חד לפום מאי דמשער בלביה

The Zohar explains that G-d is known to each one according to what he measures in his heart, playing on she'arim (gates) and meshaer (measures). The Alter Rebbe uses it for the different ways G-dliness is revealed in different souls.

Zohar I, 103b: זח"א קג,

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א קג, ב. תניא בהקדמה. ובארוכה בלקו"ת מסעי פה, ב.

PARAGRAPH 9

27

The princes chosen to count the people are called "the heads of the thousands of Israel." The Alter Rebbe applies the phrase to souls rooted in the intellect, who are vessels for Torah.

Numbers 1:16: ט"ז: במדבר

אֵלֶּה קְרוּאֵי הָעֵדָה נְשִׂאֵי מִשּׁוֹת אֲבוֹתָם רֹאשֵׁי אֶלְפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם:

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כוי

These were the elect of the congregation, the princes of the tribes of their fathers; they were the heads of the thousands of Israel.

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28

ויש נשמות שהן כלי לבחיי המדות

Or HaTorah's version adds here "such as 'Chesed is the right arm'" after the souls that are vessels for the emotions, and discusses the matter at length.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"כמו חסד דרועא ימינא" — אוה"ת כאן ע' א'רסו. וראה שם בארוכה.

29

נודע בשערים

"Her husband is known in the gates." The Alter Rebbe reads "known" as joining and binding: G-d is bound to every kind of soul.

Proverbs 31:23: מְשָׁלִי לִי־אֵלֶּיָּהּ כִּי־גִבּוֹרֵת

נֹדֵעַ בְּשַׁעְרִים בְּעֵלָה בְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עִם־זְקֵנֵי־אֶרֶץ:

Her husband is known in the gates, When he sitteth among the elders of the land.

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30

והוי שפל רוח בפני כל אדם

The note sends the reader to a talk of the Rebbe in Likkutei Sichos on this Mishnah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות פ"ד מ"י. עיי' לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1212.

31

והוי שפל רוח בפני כל אדם

Rabbi Meir teaches, "Be of lowly spirit before every person." The Alter Rebbe grounds it in the advantage that even the "feet" have over the "head."

Pirkei Avot 4:10: מִשְׁנַת אֲבוֹת ד':

רַבִּי מֵאִיר אָמַר, הָיִי מְעַט בְּעֶסֶק, וְעֶסֶק בְּתוֹרָה. וְהָיִי שָׁפֵל רוּחַ בְּפָנֵי כָּל אָדָם. וְאִם בְּטִלְתָּ מִן הַתּוֹרָה, יֵשׁ לָךְ בְּטָלִים הַרְבֵּה כְּנֶגְדְּךָ. וְאִם עֲמַלְתָּ בַתּוֹרָה, יֵשׁ לְךָ שָׂכָר הַרְבֵּה לְתֵן לָךְ:

Rabbi Meir said: Engage but little in business, and busy yourself with the Torah. Be of humble spirit before all men. If you have neglected the Torah, you shall have many who bring you to neglect it, but if you have labored at the study of Torah, there is much reward to give unto you

Torat Emet 357 (Public Domain) • Mishnah Yomit by Dr. Joshua Kulp (CC-BY)

PARAGRAPH 10

32

כמראה אדם

Ezekiel saw upon the Throne "a likeness like the appearance of a man." The Alter Rebbe stresses the kaf, "like": G-d is not a man, but appears as one.

Ezekiel 1:26: א' כ': יחזקאל

וּמִמַּעַל לָרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשָׁם כְּמֵרָאָה אֶבֶן־סַפִּיר דְּמוּת כֶּסֶף וְעַל דְּמוּת הַכֶּסֶף דְּמוּת כְּמֵרָאָה אָדָם עָלָיו מְלֻמָּעָה:

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone;

and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.

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33 כמראה אדם בכף הדמיון

This encyclopedia of Chabad concepts notes that the precision here, the kaf of comparison, shows that G-d is above the level of “man,” while other sources say that “like the appearance of a man” is below “man” itself.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בספר הערכים-חב"ד ח"א במילואים לערך אדם העליון טור תרפב שהדיוק כאן כי הוא למעלה מבחי אדם, אמנם בלקו"ת מטות פא, ג, חינוך (שבשע"ת לאדה"א ח"ב) פ"ח ואילך. אוה"ת ואתחנן ע' פו. לקו"ת לג"פ נג, ד. ובד"ה עיר קטנה תרכ"ו איתא שדמות כמראה אדם הוא למטה מבחי אדם עצמו.

34 כי לא אדם הוא

Shmuel tells Shaul that G-d does not change His mind, “for He is not a man.” The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that G-d has no human attributes in Himself.

I Samuel 15:29 ט"ז: כ"ט

וְגַם נִצָּח יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִשְׁקַר וְלֹא יִנָּחֵם כִּי לֹא אָדָם הוּא לְהִנָּחֵם:

And also the Glory of Israel will not lie nor repent; for He is not a man, that He should repent.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמואל א-טו, כט. ראה לעיל עא, ג. ובד"ה באתי לגני תשכ"ח סעי' ד (סה"מ מלוקט ח"ב ע' רמג).

35 ועשיתם אתם וארז"ל כאלו עשאוני

“If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and do them.” The Sages read “do (make) them” as though, by keeping the mitzvos, Israel “makes” G-d, as it were.

Leviticus 26:3 ג' כ"ו

אִם-בְּחֻקֵּי תִלְכוּ וְאֶת-מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעִשִּׂיתֶם אֹתָם:

If ye walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them;

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Zohar III, 113b זח"ג קיג,

Vayikra Rabbah 35:6 ו"ה: רבה ל"ה

KEHOT'S NOTE

ויקרא כו, ג. זח"ג קיג, ב. וראה ויק"ר לה, ו. "דרי"ל כאלו עשאוני בבחי כמראה אדם" — אוה"ת פ' משפטים ע' ארעט. בבוך 1113 נוסף כאן קיצור: (שנשיי ממשכים להיות הוא ית' מתלבש בבחי כלים ומדותיו ית' להיות כמראה אדם וכמ"ש ג"כ במ"א בפ"י אני ה' אלקיכם שנשיי ממשכים שיתלבש בשי הוי' כו'. והיינו כי בחי אדם היינו מדותיו ית' שבאצי שהן בחי עם הנחלקי לג' קוין חנון ורחום שהן בחי ציור אדם חסד דרועא ימינא וגבורה דרועא שמאלא ותפארת גופא הוא מדת הרחמים הכלולה מחו"ג ולכן נקי ת"ת כו' ונשיי נמשכו מבחי כלים דע"ס הנ"ל ע"כ נקי ג"כ אדם אתם ולכן כמו שלמעלה הע"ס הם כללי לגילוי אי"ס ב"ה כמ"כ הם נשיי בחי כללי לגילוי האור גם למטה והם ממשכים שיהי התלבשו אור אי"ס בע"ס דאצי ובביע כו' וזהו פ"י כאילו עשאוני).

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'

PARAGRAPH 11

36 ועל דמות הכסא דמות כמראה אדם

The figure “like the appearance of a man” is seen upon the likeness of a throne. The Alter Rebbe now asks what the Throne itself signifies.

Ezekiel 1:26 י"ז: כ"ו חזקאל

וּמַעַל לְרִקְיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשָׁם כְּמֶרְאֵה אֲבֹנ־סַפִּיר דְּמוּת כְּסֵא וְעַל דְּמוּת הַכְּסֵא דְּמוּת כְּמֶרְאֵה אָדָם עָלָיו מְלֻמָּעָה:

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.

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37 וישב ה' מלך לעולם

“G-d sat at the Flood, and G-d sits as King forever.” The Alter Rebbe reads “sat” as a lowering and le'olam as “to the world,” the descent of G-d's sovereignty into the worlds.

Psalms 29:10 י"ט: כ"ט תהילים

ה' לְמַבּוּל יָשָׁב וַיֵּשֶׁב ה' מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם:

The L-RD sat enthroned at the flood; Yea, the L-RD sitteth as King for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים כט, י.

38 הכסא . . שהוא בחי לבוש

The note points to chapter 24 of this work for the idea of the Throne as a garment.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה שרש מצות התפלה פכ"ד.

39 אל מסתתר

“Truly You are a G-d Who hides Himself, the G-d of Israel, the Savior.” The Alter Rebbe uses it for the concealment brought about by the Throne.

Isaiah 45:15 ט"ו: כ"ה ישעיהו

אֲכֵן אַתָּה אֵל מְסֻתָּר אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹשִׁיעַ:

Verily Thou art a G-d that hidest Thyself, O G-d of Israel, the Saviour.

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PARAGRAPH 12

40 גופו וידיו למעלה מהכסא רק רגליו הם מושפלים

Or HaTorah explains this image, the body and hands above the throne and only the feet below it, and refers there to this maamar.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נתבאר באוה"ת בראשית כרך ג תעא, א ושם מציין לכאן.

50

נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא אתה בראתה

The Talmud gives the blessing said on waking: "My G-d, the soul You have given within me is pure; You created it, You formed it, You breathed it into me." The Alter Rebbe uses it to describe the soul's root and its descent.

ברכות ס' ב:ד' Berakhot 60b:4

כי מתער אומר: "אלהי, נשמה שנתת בי טהורה. אתה יצרתה בי, אתה נפחתה בי, ואתה משמרה בקרבי, ואתה עתיד ליטלה ממני ולהחזירה בי לעתיד לבא. כל זמן שהנשמה בקרבי מודה אני לפניך ה' אלהי ואלקי אבותי, רבון כל העולמים, אדון כל הנשמות. ברוך אתה ה', המחזיר נשמות לפגרים מתים."

When he awakens he says: "O my G-d, the soul which Thou hast given me is pure. Thou didst create it within me, Thou didst breathe it into me, Thou preservest it within me, and Thou wilt take it from me, but wilt restore it unto me hereafter. So long as the soul is within me, I will give thanks unto Thee, O L-rd my G-d and G-d of my fathers, Sovereign of all worlds, L-rd of all souls. Blessed art Thou, O L-rd, Who restorest souls unto dead ...

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC) • Tractate Berakot by A. Cohen, Cambridge University Press, 1921 (Public Domain)

PARAGRAPH 15

51

וכעצם השמים לטהר

The second half of the maamar's verse: "and like the very essence of the heavens in purity." The Alter Rebbe takes tohar here to mean brightness and applies it to the soul's "purity."

Exodus 24:10 שמות כ"ד:

ויראו את אלהי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר וכעצם השמים לטהר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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52

וכעצם השמים לטהר

The Talmud explains "the tohar of the altar," first by the saying tihara for midday, then as the exposed surface of the altar, citing "like the very essence of the heavens latohar." It shows that tohar can mean clear and bright.

Yoma 59a:10 יומא נ"ט א:

מיתבי: כשהוא מזה — אינו מזה לא על גבי האפר ולא על גבי הגחלים, אלא חותה גחלים אילך ואילך, ומזה. אלא אמר רבה בר רב שילא: על גלויה דמזבח, כדכתיב: "וכעצם השמים לטהר".

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

PARAGRAPH 16

53

תרגום זהרים טיהרא

On "they will eat with me at noon," Rashi notes that every Targum of tzoharayim (noon) is tihara. The Alter Rebbe

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כי

uses it to show that tohar means brightness.

Rashi on Genesis 43:16 רש"י על בראשית מ"ג ט"ז:

וטבח טבח והכן. כמו ולטבח טבח ולהכין, ואין טבח לשון צווי, שהיה לו לומר וטבח: בצהרים. זה מתרגם בשירותא, שהוא לשון סעודה ראשונה בלשון ארמי ובלעז דיוג'ר, ויש הרבה בתלמוד, שדא לכלא שירותא; בצע אכולא שירותא, אבל כל תרגום של צהרים טיהרא:

AND SLAUGHTER THE BEASTS AND MAKE READY — The Hebrew is the same as ולהכין וטבח טבח והכן (infinitives) "and to slaughter... and to prepare". The word וטבח is not an imperative, for this should be וטבח (as from שלח the imperative is שלח) AT NOON — This word is rendered in the Targum by בשירותא which in Aramaic denotes the first meal during the day; in old French disner. It occurs frequently in the Talmud: (Ta'anit 11a, lib) "He threw the dog his meal; ...

Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain) • Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain)

54

טיהרא

Onkelos renders "you will grope at noon" with tihara for "noon." It is one of the places where the Targum translates noon this way.

Onkelos Deuteronomy 28:29 תרגום אונקלוס על דברים כ"ח:כ"ט:

ותהי ממשש בטיהרא כמה די ממשש צוריא בקבלא ולא תצלח ית ארחתיה ותהי ברם עשיק ואנסי כל יומיא ולית דפריק:

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55

טיהרא

Targum Yonasan renders "at noon" as "at the meal of tihara." Another example of the Targum's word for noon.

Targum Jonathan on Genesis 43:16 תרגום יונתן על בראשית מ"ג ט"ז:

וחמא יוסף עמהון ית בנזמין ואמר למנשה דמנא אפטרופוס על ביתיה אעיל ית גובריא לביתא ופרע בית ניקסתא וסב גידא נשיא ואתקון תבשילא באפיהון ארום עמי יכלון גובריא באישון שירותא דטיהרא

And Joseph saw Benjamin with them: and he said to Menasheh whom he had made superintendent over his house, Bring the men into the house, and unloose the house of slaughter, and take out the sinew that shrank, and prepare meat before them; for the man shall eat with me at the time of the noon/day meal.

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

56

מבחי טהירו עלאה שבזוה"ק

At the opening of the Zohar on Bereshis, the King "engraved engravings in the supernal brightness." The Alter Rebbe identifies this supernal brightness as the source of the "pure" soul.

Zohar I, 15a טו, זח"א

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א טו, א.

57

דע מאין באת

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות פ"ג מ"א.

58

דע מאין באת

Akavya ben Mahalalel teaches, "Know from where you came." The Alter Rebbe reads me'ayin as "from ayin," the divine nothing that is the soul's root.

Pirkei Avot 3:1 אבות ג' א"א:1

עקביא בן מהללאל אומר, הסתכל בשלשה דברים ואי אתה בא לידי עברה. דע מאין באת, ולאן אתה הולך, ולפני מי אתה עתיד לתן דין וחשבון. מאין באת, מטפה קרוחה, ולאן אתה הולך, למקום עפר רמה ותולעה. ולפני מי אתה עתיד לתן דין וחשבון, לפני מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא:

Akavyah ben Mahalalel said: mark well three things and you will not come into the power of sin: know from where you come, and where you are going, and before whom you are destined to give an account and reckoning. From where do you come? From a putrid drop. Where are you going? To a place of dust, of worm and of maggot. Before whom you are destined to give an account and reckoning? Before the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Torat Emet 357 (Public Domain) • Mishnah Yomit by Dr. Joshua Kulp (CC-BY)

59

בראתה יצרתה נפחתה בי

The morning blessing over the soul lists three stages: "You created it, You formed it, You breathed it into me." The Alter Rebbe matches them to the soul's descent through the three lower worlds.

Berakhot 60b:4 ס"ב:ד'4

כי מתער אומר: "אלקי, נשמה שנתת בי טהורה. אתה יצרתה בי, אתה נפחתה בי, ואתה משמרה בקרבי, ואתה עתיד ליטלה ממני ולהחזירה בי לעתיד לבא. כל זמן שהנשמה בקרבי מודה אני לפניך ה' אלקי ואלקי אבותי, רבון כל העולמים, אדון כל הנשמות. ברוך אתה ה', המחזיר נשמות לפגרים מתים."

When he awakens he says: "O my G-d, the soul which Thou hast given me is pure. Thou didst create it within me, Thou didst breathe it into me, Thou preservest it within me, and Thou wilt take it from me, but wilt restore it unto me hereafter. So long as the soul is within me, I will give thanks unto Thee, O L-rd my G-d and G-d of my fathers, Sovereign of all worlds, L-rd of all souls. Blessed art Thou, O L-rd, Who restorest souls unto dead ...

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC) • Tractate Berakot by A. Cohen, Cambridge University Press, 1921 (Public Domain)

60

ישראל לי ראש . . וכמ"ש במ"א

There Yaakov is called by the name "children of Israel" because he receives from supernal Chochmah, the level of Yisrael, li rosh, "a head for Me"; the passage goes on to explain that signs and wonders, which change nature, come from the radiance of supernal Chochmah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'

וראה לעיל ג, ב ובהנסמן לשם.

61

עמ"ש בפי שלח ע"פ . . וגו'

A manuscript variant: the reference to Parshas Shelach is missing in this manuscript.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 1113 ליתא.

62

בפי שלח ע"פ אני ה' אלקיכם

The discourse in Likkutei Torah to which the Alter Rebbe refers for the soul's root as Yisrael, li rosh, "a head for Me."

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת פי שלח.

63

שו"ה וזהו ביאור — בפי ועל דמות כסא

A manuscript variant: this manuscript reads "in the explanation of 'And upon the Throne,' etc." in place of "And upon the likeness of the Throne."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוכ 1113: בפי ועל הכסא כו'.

64

וכעצם השמים לטהר . . וכן תרגום צהרים טיהרא

The words here quote Exodus 24:10; the passage is shown below.

Exodus 24:10 שמות כ"ד:י

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר וכעצם השמים לטהר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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

Yoma 59a:10 יומא נ"ט א:י"10

מיתבי: קשהוא מזה — אינו מזה לא על גבי האפר ולא על גבי הגחלים. אלא חותה גחלים אילה ואילה, ומזה. אלא אמר רבה בר רב שילא: על גלויה דמזבח, כדכתיב: "וכעצם השמים לטהר".

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כד, י. ראה ת"א עה"פ תבוא כח, כט. וראה פרש"י ות"י עה"פ מקץ מג, טז. יומא נט, א. אוה"ת משפטים כרך ז ע' ב'תשלו.

65

מחנה מיכאל כאריה שאג

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לעיל ג, א.

PARAGRAPH 18

66

שש מאות אלף רגלי העם אשר אנכי בקרבו

Moshe tells G-d that the people among whom he stands number six hundred thousand on foot. The Alter Rebbe

reads the verse as contrasting the people, the “feet,” with Moshe himself.

במדבר י"א:כ"א Numbers 11:21

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה שְׁש־מֵאוֹת אֶלֶף רַגְלֵי הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי בְּקִרְבִּי וְאַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ בְּשָׂר אֶתָּן לָהֶם וְאָכְלוּ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים:

And Moses said: ‘The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand men on foot; and yet Thou hast said: I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month!’

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PARAGRAPH 19

67

האבות הן הן המרכבה

There the Patriarchs, who “are the Chariot,” are called the supernal living beings of Atzilus, which were first contained in supernal Imma (Binah), as in gestation, and then came forth into revelation; they are contrasted with Malchus, the “inanimate,” which is not drawn from the levels above it in a gradual chain.

KEHOT’S NOTE

נסמן לעיל ד, ג.

68

האבות הן הן המרכבה

On “And G-d went up from upon Avraham,” Reish Lakish says, “The Patriarchs, they are the Chariot.” The Alter Rebbe uses it for the Patriarchs as a chariot for the supernal arms.

Bereshit Rabbah 47:6 וי"ו:6

ויכל לדבר אתו - תני, הנפטר מחבירו בין גדול בין קטן, צריך ליטול ממנו רשות. ממי את למד? מאברהם. פעם אחת היה אברהם מדבר עם הקב"ה, באו מלאכי השרת לדבר עמו. אמר להם: נפטר מן השכינה, שהיא גדולה מכם תחלה, אחר כך אני מדבר עמכם. כיון שדבר עם הקדוש ברוך הוא כל צרכו, אמר לפניו: רבון העולמים! צריך אני לדבר. אמר לו: הפטר בשלום, הה"ד: ויעל אלקים מעל אברהם. אמר ריש לקיש: האבות הן הן המרכבה, שנא: ויעל אלקים מעל אברהם. ויעל מעליו אלקים. (בראשית כה) והנה ה' נצב עליו:

“He concluded speaking with him, and G-d ascended from upon Abraham” (Genesis 17:22). It is taught: One who departs from another person, whether of greater or lesser stature, must take his leave from him. From whom do you derive this? From Abraham. On one occasion, Abraham was speaking with the Holy One blessed be He, when the ministering angels came to speak with him. He said to them: ‘Let me first take my leave from the Divine Presence, which is of greater stature than you, then I will speak with ...’

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69

זרועות עולם

“A dwelling is the G-d of old, and beneath are the everlasting arms.” The Alter Rebbe reads “the everlasting arms” as

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כוי

the supernal arms, Chesed and Gevurah, for which the Patriarchs were a chariot.

דברים ל"ג:כ"ז Deuteronomy 33:27

מְעֵנָה אֱלֹהֵי קֶדֶם וּמִתַּחַת זְרַעַת עוֹלָם וַיִּגְרֶשׁ מִפְּנֵיהָ אוֹיֵב וַיֹּאמֶר ה' שְׁמִד: The eternal G-d is a dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms; And He thrust out the enemy from before thee, And said: ‘Destroy.’

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PARAGRAPH 21

70

ולכל אשר יחפוץ יטנו

“He turns it wherever He wishes,” said of the king’s heart in G-d’s hand. The Alter Rebbe uses the phrase for the head directing the foot.

משלי כ"א:1 Proverbs 21:1

פֶּלֶאֱמִים לִב־מֶלֶךְ בְּיַד־ה' עַל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יַחְפֹּץ יִטֵּנוּ:

The king’s heart is in the hand of the L-RD, as the water-courses: He turneth it whithersoever He will.

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PARAGRAPH 22

71

זרועות עולם

“Beneath are the everlasting arms.” The Alter Rebbe reads them as the supernal arms above the Throne, for which the Patriarchs and Moshe were a chariot.

דברים ל"ג:כ"ז Deuteronomy 33:27

מְעֵנָה אֱלֹהֵי קֶדֶם וּמִתַּחַת זְרַעַת עוֹלָם וַיִּגְרֶשׁ מִפְּנֵיהָ אוֹיֵב וַיֹּאמֶר ה' שְׁמִד: The eternal G-d is a dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms; And He thrust out the enemy from before thee, And said: ‘Destroy.’

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72

וכמ"ש באגה"ק

The epistle explains that souls coming from Atzilus, before they descend into Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, are not a separate existence but a contracted likeness of G-dliness; in a parenthesis it adds the line quoted here, that the souls of Atzilus in the early tzaddikim may not have changed even in this world, and therefore would depart when they wished to sin, before they sinned.

KEHOT’S NOTE

סי" כ (קל, א). וראה שם בליקוט פי' — חסידים.

73

אפשר שלא נשתנה מהותן

According to the note, this maamar explains that the souls meant here are souls of actual Atzilus, which descended only by passing through Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, and so even below they are Atzilus.

KEHOT’S NOTE

ראה ד"ה פתח אלי תרנ"ח (הגהות לתו"א) אות ב. היינו בבחי' נשמות דאצילות ממש שירדו רק בדרך מעביר בריאה יצירה עשי' ולזאת גם למטה הן אצ"י ע"ש.

PARAGRAPH 23

74 שש מאות אלף רגלי

“Six hundred thousand on foot are the people in whose midst I am.” Moshe applies “feet” even to the generation that received the Torah, while setting himself apart.

Numbers 11:21א"כ:י"א במדבר

ויאמר משה שש מאות אלף רגלי העם אשר אנכי בקרבם ואתה אומר בשר אתו להם ואכלו חדש ימים:

And Moses said: “The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand men on foot; and yet Thou hast said: I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month!

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PARAGRAPH 24

75 שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו

“Hear, O Israel, Havayah is our G-d, Havayah is One.” “Our G-d” refers to the root of the soul, which is one with G-d.

Deuteronomy 6:4ד'ו:ו' דברים

שמע ישראל Havayah אלקינו Havayah אחד:

HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE L-RD OUR GOD, THE L-RD IS ONE.

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

76 ואהבת שיהי הוי"ה אלקיך

“And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart.” The Alter Rebbe reads it as the revelation of the soul’s root below, so that Havayah becomes “your” G-d.

Deuteronomy 6:5ד'ו:ו' דברים

ואהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך:

And thou shalt love the L-RD thy G-d with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

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PARAGRAPH 25

77 מאיגרא רמה

Kehot’s note points to Chagigah 4b for these words.

Chagigah 4בד"ב חגיגה

KEHOT’S NOTE

ע"פ לשון חז"ל חגיגה ד, ב.

78 וכמ"ש במ"א שהאותיות נק' סוסים

In Beshalach (62c), on “the horse and its rider He cast into the sea,” the Alter Rebbe cites “For You ride upon Your horses” and explains that the letters are called horses.

KEHOT’S NOTE

ע"י לעיל סב, ג. ולקמן צא, ב. צו, ד. ובכ"מ.

79 כי תרכב על סוסך

Habakkuk says to G-d, “For You ride upon Your horses, Your chariots are salvation.” The Alter Rebbe reads the

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'

“horses” as the letters of the Torah.

Habakkuk 3:8ח"ח:ח' חבקוק

הבנהרים תרה ה' אם בנהרים אפך אם־בַּיַם עברתך כי תרכב על־סוסיה: מרכבתיה וְשֹׁעָה:

Is it, O L-RD, that against the rivers, is it that Thine anger is kindled against the rivers, or Thy wrath against the sea? That Thou dost ride upon Thy horses, upon Thy chariots of victory?

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KEHOT’S NOTE

חבקוק ג, ח.

80 אתא ואייתי מתניתא בידיי

The Talmud’s expression for a sage who “came and brought a baraisa in his hand.” The Aramaic asa (came) shows that osiyos (letters) is an expression of bringing, of drawing down.

Shabbat 19b:2ב'ב:ט"ט שבת

ורבי יוסי בר חנינא מאי טעמא לא אמר כרבי אלעזר? אמר לה, הָתָם הוּא דְּמַעֲיָקְרָא אוֹכֵל וְלִבְסוּף אוֹכֵל, הָכָא מַעֲיָקְרָא אוֹכֵל וְהַשְׁתָּא מַשְׁקָה. וְרַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר אָמַר לָהּ: הָא שְׂמַעִינוּ לָקָה לְרַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר דְּאִפִּילוּ זִיתִּים וְעִנְבִּים נָמִי שָׁרִי. דְּהָא כִּי אָתָּא רַב הוֹשַׁעְיָא מִנְהַרְדְּעָא, אָתָּא וְאִיִּיתִי מִתְּנִיתָא בִּידֵיהּ: זִיתִּים וְעִנְבִּים שְׁרִיִּסְקוּ מַעְרַב שְׁבֶת וְיִצְאוּ מַעְצָמָן — אֲסוּרִין. רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר וְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן מִתִּירִין. וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר חֲנִינָא בְּרִייתָא לָא שְׂמִיעַ לָקָה.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

שבת יט, ב. וש"נ.

81 ואתה מרבבת קודש

In Moshe’s blessing, G-d “came from the holy myriads.” The Hebrew asah, “came,” is another example of the root of osiyos.

Deuteronomy 33:2ב'ג:ב' דברים

ויאמר ה' מסיני בא וזרח משעיר למו הופיע מהר פארן ואתה מרבבת קדש מימינו אש דת למו:

And he said: The L-RD came from Sinai, And rose from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, And He came from the myriads holy, At His right hand was a fiery law unto them.

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KEHOT’S NOTE

דברים לג, ב.

PARAGRAPH 26

82 Sefer Yetzirah counts the combinations of letters: “Two stones build two houses, three stones build six houses,” and so on. The Alter Rebbe uses its name for the letters, “stones.”

Sefer Yetzirah 4:12ד"י:ב"ד ספר יצירה

שבע כפולות כיצד צרפן. שתי אבנים בונות שני בתים. שלש בונות ששה בתים. ארבע בונות ארבעה ועשרים בתים. חמש בונות מאה ועשרים בתים. שש בונות שבע מאות ועשרים בתים. שבע בונות חמשת

אלפים וארבעים בתים. מכאן ואילך צא וחשוב מה שאין הפה יכול לדבר ואין האוזן יכולה לשמוע. ואלו הן שבעה כוכבים בעולם חמה נוגה כוכב לבנה שבתאי צדק מאדים. ואלו הן ז' ימים בשנה שבעה ימי בראשית. ושבעה שערות בנפש שתי עינים שתי אזנים ושני נקבי האף והפה. ובהן נחקקו שבעה רקיעים ושבע ארצות ושבע שעות. לפיכך חבב שביעי ...

Sefer Yetzirah, Warsaw 1884 (Public Domain)

83 **אבן מאסו הבונים**
 "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." The Alter Rebbe applies it to the letters, the lowest level, which nevertheless raise the higher faculties.

Psalms 118:22 כ"ח: כ"ב

אבן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה:

The stone which the builders rejected Is become the chief cornerstone.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קיח, כב.

84 **בספר יצירה**
 There, on "When is He great? When He is in the city of our G-d," a city is made of many houses, and the houses are combinations of letters, as Sefer Yetzirah says, "Two stones build two houses": G-d's greatness spreads and divides into many levels as intellect divides into the letters of thought.

KEHOT'S NOTE

פ"ד מט"ו. וראה לעיל נו, ב.

PARAGRAPH 27

85 **כמארו"ל דהרהור לא עבד מידי**
 Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זהר אמור קה, א.

86 **דהרהור לא עבד מידי**
 The Zohar says that thought "does nothing": it makes no sound and does not rise, whereas a word spoken aloud becomes a voice that rises above. The Alter Rebbe uses it to explain why the letters must be spoken.

ספר הזהר, אמור מ"ה: ר"צ-מ"ז: ש"300-47:290 Emor, Zohar,

For this reason it is permitted on Sabbath to think about ordinary things, because mere thinking produces no effect, but if a word issues from a man's mouth it becomes a voice and rises aloft and breaks through ethers and firmaments and arouses something else. Therefore it says, "Not to find thine own pleasure nor speaking thine own word". But if a man utters a holy word of the Torah, it rises aloft and arouses the saints of the King, who set a crown on its head, so that there ...

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

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כוי

87 **ובד"ת . . כתיב למוצאיהם בפה דוקא**
 "For they are life to those who find them." The Talmud reads lemotza'eihem as "to those who bring them out" with the mouth.

משלי ד': כ"ב Proverbs 4:22

כ"ח: כ"ב הם למצאיהם ולכלי בשרו מרפא:

For they are life unto those that find them, And health to all their flesh.

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עירובין נ"ד א:ג' Eruvin 54a:3

אמר לקה שמואל לרב יהודה: שינא, פתח פומיה קרי, פתח פומיה תני, כי היכי דתתקנים ביה ותוריה חיי, שנאמר: "כי חיים הם למצאיהם ולכל בשרו מרפא", אל תקרי "למצאיהם" אלא "למוצאיהם בפה".

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי ד, כב. עירובין נד, א.

88 **כי לא אדם הוא**
 "For He is not a man." The drawing down from the Infinite One cannot be clothed in the form of a man, so it comes through the letters.

שמואל א ט"ו: כ"ט I Samuel 15:29

וגם נצח ישראל לא ישקר ולא ינחם כי לא אדם הוא להנחם:

And also the Glory of Israel will not lie nor repent; for He is not a man, that He should repent.'

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89 **ועמ"ש במ"א ע"פ מזוזה מימין**
 The page belongs to the maamar on why the Chanukah lamp is placed on the left, "so that the mezuzah is on the right" (beginning on 41d).

KEHOT'S NOTE

לעיל מב, א.

90 **הקב"ה קורא ושונה כנגדו**
 Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

תדב"א רבה רפ"ח.

91 **הקב"ה קורא ושונה כנגדו**
 Tanna Devei Eliyahu teaches that when a person studies, the Holy One, blessed be He, reads and repeats opposite him. The Alter Rebbe reads it as G-d being drawn into revelation through the letters.

תנא דבי אליהו רבה י"ח: ב'2-1:18 Tanna DeBei Eliyahu Rabbah

... איכ למה נאמר בכל צרתם לו צר אלא אמר הקב"ה בכל צער וצער שיש לישראל כביכול אני עמהם שנאמר לו צר א"ת לו צר אלא לי צר שנאמר (ישעיהו מ"ט:ג') ויאמר לי עבדי אתה ישראל אשר כך אתפאר לך נאמר קומי רני בלילה וגוי מאי שפכי כמים לבך נכח פני ה' מכאן אמרו כל ת"ח שיושב וקורא ושונה ועוסק בתורה הקב"ה יושב כנגדו וקורא ושונה עמו שכאן נאמר נכח פני ה' ולהלן הוא אומר ויחננו אלה

נוכח אלה וגוי (מלכים א כ':כ"ט) מה להלן פניהם של אלו נוכח פניהם ...

OYW (segmentation according to Warsaw 1880) (Public Domain)

92 דבר ה' זו הלכה

The Talmud explains "the word of G-d" as halachah. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that the words a person studies are G-d's own word.

Shabbat 138b:11-12 א-י"א-י"ב שבת קל"ח ב:

"דבר ה' — זו הלכה, "דבר ה' — זה הקץ, "דבר ה' — זו נבואה. ומאי "ישוטטו לבקש את דבר ה'?" אמרו: עתידה אשה שתטול כפר של תרומה ותחזור בכתי כנסיות ובכתי מדרשות לידע אם טמאה היא ואם טהורה היא, ואין מבין.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שבת קלח, ב.

PARAGRAPH 28

93 הבה נלכנה לבנים

The builders of the tower of Babel decide to make bricks and fire them, "and the brick served them as stone." The Alter Rebbe takes from it that a brick becomes stone only through firing.

Genesis 11:3 א-ג:ג בראשית י"א:

ויאמרו איש אל-רעהו הבה נלכנה לבנים ונשרפה לשרפה ותהי להם הלכנה לאבן ותחמר ה'ה להם לחמר:

And they said one to another: 'Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית יא, ג.

PARAGRAPH 29

94 בענין האותיות . . שיש בהם ג"כ ב' בחי'

There the Alter Rebbe refers to this maamar on "the brick of sapphire" and "the very essence of the heavens in purity," applying it to the two Torahs: the letters of the Written Torah are "stones," created by Heaven, "the very essence of the heavens," and the letters of the Oral Torah are "the brick of sapphire," bricks made by human beings from earth that also became like stones.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בלקו"ת שה"ש כה, א מציין לכאן.

PARAGRAPH 30

95 כארבע רוחות השמים פרשתי אתכם

G-d says, "For like the four winds of the heavens I have spread you out." The Alter Rebbe sees in the exile the pur-

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו'

pose of raising the languages of the nations.

Zechariah 2:10 זכריה ב':י

הו' ונסו מארץ צפון נאם-ה' כי כארבע רוחות השמים פרשתי אתכם נאם-ה'

Ho, ho, flee then from the land of the north, saith the L-RD; for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the L-RD.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

זכריה ב, י.

96 חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקדש

The Talmud speaks of unconsecrated food eaten in the purity of holy food. The Alter Rebbe applies it to the profane languages once they are refined to holiness.

Chagigah 19b:4-6 ו-ד:ב י"ט ב:ד-ו חגיגה י"ט ב:

אתאן לרבי מאיר, דאמר: חולין ומעשר כהדדי נינהו, רישא רבנן וסיפא רבי מאיר! אין, רישא רבנן וסיפא רבי מאיר. רב אחא בר אדא מתני לה בסיפא חמש מעלות, ומוקי לה כולה כרבנן. אמר רב מרי: שמע מינה חולין שנעשו על טהרת הקודש — כקודש דמו. ממאי —

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יט, ב. ושי"נ. ראה לעיל יב, ב. יג, א.

97 בגמ' יש כמה מלות לשון ארמי

A talk of the Rebbe that discusses at length the Aramaic words in the Talmud, citing a passage further on in Torah Ohr.

Sotah 49b:11-12 א-א:י"א-י"ב סוטה מ"ט ב:

איני? והאמר רבי: בארץ ישראל לשון סורסי למה? אלא אי לשון הקודש, אי לשון יונית. ואמר רב יוסף: בבבל לשון ארמי למה? אלא או לשון הקודש, או לשון פרסי! לשון יונית לחוד, והקמת יונית לחוד.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בארוכה בלקו"ש חכ"א ע' 447 שמציין מלקמן עה, ג "מצינו בתנאים ואמוראים שדברו בלשון ארמי הכי השתא כו' — וצ"ע שה"ז לשון גמרא ירושלמית ובבליית רובה. וראה רש"י (סוטה מט, ב ד"ה) לשון סורסי קרוב הוא ללשון ארמי ואומר אני שזה לשון גמרת ירושלמי כו', ע"ש.

98 ואני חומה זו תורה

"I am a wall, and my breasts like towers." The Sages read the wall as Torah.

Song of Songs 8:10 ח-י:ח שיר השירים ח:

אני חומה ושדי כמגדלות או הייתי בעיניו כמוצאת שלום:

I am a wall, And my breasts like the towers thereof; Then was I in his eyes As one that found peace.

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Pesachim 87a:8 ח-ח:א פסחים פ"א א:

"אני חומה ושדי כמגדלות", אמר רבי יוחנן: "אני חומה" — זו תורה, "ושדי כמגדלות" — אלו תלמידי חכמים. ורבא אמר: "אני חומה" — זו כנסת ישראל, "ושדי כמגדלות" — אלו כתי כנסיות וכתי מדרשות.

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

יבמות ס"ב ב:י"ד-ט"ו 62b:14-15 Yevamot

במערכא אמרי: בלא תורה, בלא חומה. בלא תורה, דכתיב: "האם אין עזרתי כי ותושיה נדחה ממני". בלא חומה, דכתיב: "נקמה תסובב גבר". רבא בר עולא אמר: בלא שלום, דכתיב: "וידעת כי שלום אהלק ופקדת נוך ולא תחטא".

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שיר השירים ח, י. פסחים פז, א. יבמות סב, ב דקאי על תושבע"פ. ראה לקו"ת ואתחנן י, א. בסה"מ תקס"ח עי' עו "ולכאורה אין מאמר זה מובן דמה שייכות יש לתורה להיות נקראת בשם חומה דוקא". ושם בעי' עו מבאר השייכות דפסוק זה לכאן.

99

ואהבת בכל לבבך

"And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart."
The fiery love of the Shema is the "kiln" that turns the bricks into stone.

Deuteronomy 6:5 דברים ו:ה

ואהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך:

And thou shalt love the L-RD thy G-d with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

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100

עשה תורתך קבע

One of the places the note lists for the meaning of keva, making Torah "fixed."

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות פ"א מט"ו. ראה מאמרי אדה"א הנחות תקע"ז עי' קנו. סה"מ תרכ"ט עי' כז. תא. תרל"ג עי' קלו — בפ"י קבע.

101

עשה תורתך קבע

Shammai teaches, "Make your Torah fixed." The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that work is only a means for Torah.

Pirkei Avot 1:15 משנה אבות א:ט"ו

שמאי אומר, עשה תורתך קבע. אמר מעט ועשה הרבה, והוי מקבל את כל האדם בספר פנים יפות:

Shammai used to say: make your [study of the] Torah a fixed practice; speak little, but do much; and receive all men with a pleasant countenance.

Torat Emet 357 (Public Domain) • Mishnah Yomit by Dr. Joshua Kulp (CC-BY)

102

לה"ק נמשך מבחי' קדש העליון

A gloss of the Tzemach Tzedek on the Holy Tongue being drawn from supernal holiness, printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5568.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה הגהת כ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ בסה"מ תקס"ח עי' סט. בענין לשון הקודש, ראה אוה"ת פ' ראה עי' קצח ואילך בשם הפרדס ושל"ה. נ"ך כרך ב עי' תתקד.

PARAGRAPH 31

103

ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר

The maamar's verse. The Alter Rebbe now explains that the brick of sapphire is "under His feet" because it is the

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כי

refined letters of the world's languages, below the Throne.

Exodus 24:10 שמות כ"ד:י

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר וכעצם השמים לטהר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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104

ומלכותו בכל משלה

"G-d has established His Throne in the heavens, and His kingship rules over all." The Alter Rebbe reads it as G-d's sovereignty extending, through the Throne, to the separate worlds.

Psalms 103:19 תהילים ק"ג:י"ט

ה' בשמים הכין כסאו ומלכותו בכל משלה:

The L-RD hath established His throne in the heavens; And His kingdom ruleth over all.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קג, יט.

105

לבנת הספיר שמאירים כספירים

The note points to these places in Or HaTorah on "the brick of sapphire," which shines like sapphires.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת פ' משפטים עי' ארפו. ובס' החקירה ע, ב ב' פ' בספיר אי דעת רבינו סעדי' גאון שהוא גוון לבן, והבי' דעת האבן עזרא שהוא תכלת ע"ש. ועיי' באוה"ת בראשית כרך א קז, ב. וביאוה"ז לכ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ עי' עב.

106

מקום ספיר אבני' לא ידע אנוש ערכה

Job says of the earth, "Its stones are the place of sapphire." The Alter Rebbe applies it to the refined letters, which shine like sapphire.

Job 28:6 איוב כ"ח:ו

מקום ספיר אבני' ועפרת זָהָב לוֹ:

The stones thereof are the place of sapphires, And it hath dust of gold.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

איוב כח, ו. יג. ראה לקו"ת שה"ש כא, ב.

107

לא ידע אנוש ערכה

Of wisdom Job says, "Man does not know its worth." The Alter Rebbe joins it to the previous verse to describe the hidden value of the refined letters.

Job 28:13 איוב כ"ח:י"ג

לא ידע אנוש ערכה ולא תמצא בארץ חיים:

Man knoweth not the price thereof; Neither is it found in the land of the living.

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108

אשר ברא אלקים לעשות

G-d rested from all His work "which G-d created to make." The Midrash reads "to make" as "to rectify," the work left

for human beings.

בראשית ב:ג: Genesis 2:3

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת-יּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְקַל־מְלָאכְתּוֹ
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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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית ב, ג.

109 לעשות לתקן בידי אדם

There "which G-d created to make," with the Midrash's "to make, to rectify," is explained as serving G-d by rectifying the concealment that comes from the Name Elokim and turning darkness into light, through self-nullification, self-sacrifice in prayer, and Torah and mitzvos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה פרש"י לב"ר פ"א, ז. וראה לעיל יז, ד. תו"ח בראשית כ, ג. כה, ג.

110 שצירוף בשר של לה"ק

The talk observes that the Alter Rebbe chose specifically the example of "flesh," though it does not bear on the point about the Holy Tongue and other languages, to hint that the refinement of the lowest level, the seventy languages, penetrates even the flesh.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בשיחת ש"פ משפטים תשמ"ט הערה 121: "שרבינו הזקן נקט דוגמא מ"בשר" דוקא . . ולכאורה אי"ז נוגע לתוכן הענין המבואר . . ע"ד החילוק שבין לה"ק לשאר הלשונות — לרמז שבידור התחתון (ע' לשון) הוא באופן שחודר אפילו ב"בשר" עכ"ל.

111 בפרס שער האותיות ובשלי"ה

The work the Alter Rebbe himself cites for the difference between the Holy Tongue and conventional languages.

KEHOT'S NOTE

פ"א. בשלי"ה בתחלתו בחלק בית נאמן, בטעם שנקרא לשון הקדש. ראה אוה"ת וארא ע' קצח.

PARAGRAPH 32

112 ר"ע הי' דורש על כל קוץ

The Talmud relates that Moshe saw G-d tying crowns to the letters and was told that Rabbi Akiva would one day expound heaps of laws from every tip. The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that the shapes of the Torah's letters carry hidden meaning.

Menachot 29b:3-4 ב"ט ב:ג: Menachot 29b:3-4

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב בשעה שעלה משה למרום מצאו להקב"ה שיושב וקושר כתרים לאותיות אמר לפניו רבש"ע מי מעכב על ידך אמר לו אדם אחד יש שעתיד להיות בסוף כמה דורות ועקיבא בן יוסף שמו שעתיד לדרוש על כל קוץ וקוץ תילין תילין של הלכות אמר לפניו רבש"ע הראהו לי אמר לו חזור לאחורך הלך וישב בסוף שמונה שורות

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כיו

ולא היה יודע מה הן אומרים תשש כחו כיון שהגיע לדבר אחד אמרו לו תלמידיו רבי מנין לך אמר להן הלכה למשה מסיני נתיישבה דעתו

Wikisource Talmud Bavli (CC-BY-SA)

KEHOT'S NOTE

מנחות כט, ב. ראה לעיל ו, ג. לקו"ת האזינו עג, ב.

PARAGRAPH 33

113 שו"ה רואים — להתעלות

A manuscript variant: the handwritten text adds, "according to the conditions mentioned above, that the occupation in business be with coolness and only as necessary, and through self-sacrifice."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בגובות"ק נוסף: עפ"י תנאי הנ"ל שיה"י העסק במו"מ בקרירות וכפי הכרח: וע"י מס"נ.

114 כעצם השמים לטוהר

"And like the very essence of the heavens in purity." The Alter Rebbe identifies it with the letters of the Torah, which come from the supernal brightness.

שמות כ"ד: Exodus 24:10

וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתַחַת רַגְלָיו כְּמַעֲשֵׂה לְבֶנֶת הַסַּפִּיר וּכְעֶצֶם הַשָּׁמַיִם לְטָהָר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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115 גליף גליפו בטה"ע

At the opening of the Zohar on Bereshis, the King "engraved engravings in the supernal brightness." The Alter Rebbe takes these engravings as the source of the letters of the Torah.

Zohar I, 15a טו, א"ח

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א טו, א. וראה בד"ה על שלשה דברים תרנ"א.

PARAGRAPH 34

116 ויראו את אלקי ישראל

The opening of the maamar's verse. The Alter Rebbe now stresses the Name Elokei: the elders saw G-d at the level of Elokim, the Throne.

שמות כ"ד: Exodus 24:10

וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתַחַת רַגְלָיו כְּמַעֲשֵׂה לְבֶנֶת הַסַּפִּיר וּכְעֶצֶם הַשָּׁמַיִם לְטָהָר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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117 ונגש משה לבדו אל הו"ה והם לא יגשו

G-d commands that Moshe alone approach Him and the others not approach. The Alter Rebbe reads it as Moshe

reaching the level of Havayah, above the Throne.

שמות כ"ד:2: Exodus 24:2

וַיָּגֶשׁ מֹשֶׁה לְבָדּוֹ אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה לֹא יִגָּשׁוּ וְהָעָם לֹא יֵעָלוּ עִמּוֹ:

and Moses alone shall come near unto the L-RD; but they shall not come near; neither shall the people go up with him.'

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118

ועמ"ש במ"א בפ"י השמים כסא

There "The heavens are My Throne" is explained: the heavens are the Torah, which became a throne for the Infinite Light, as sitting lowers a person's stature; through the Torah G-d's will, wisdom and understanding descend into physical things such as tefillin, tzitzis and charity, and "the earth is the stool of My feet" is a small seat under the feet.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לעיל א, ב.

119

השמים כסא

"The heavens are My Throne." The Alter Rebbe refers to his interpretation of the heavens as the Torah, a throne for G-d's will and wisdom.

Isaiah 66:1א: ישעיהו ס"ו:1א

כֹּה אָמַר ה' הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסֵּאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הֶדְם רִגְלִי אֵינִי בֵּית אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ לִי וְאֵינִי מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי:

Thus saith the L-RD: The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that ye may build unto Me? And where is the place that may be My resting-place?

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120

מן המים משיתיהו

Pharaoh's daughter names Moshe, "for I drew him from the water." The Alter Rebbe reads the water as the upper waters of Atzilus, the root of Moshe's understanding.

Exodus 2:10ב: שמות ב':10

וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וְתִבְאָהוּ לְבַת־פַּרְעֹה וַיְהִי־לָהּ לְבֵן וְתִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מֹשֶׁה וְתֹאמַר כִּי מִן־הַמַּיִם מְשִׁיתִיהוּ:

And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and said: 'Because I drew him out of the water.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות ב, י.

121

תורה צוה לנו משה

"Moshe commanded us the Torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov." The Alter Rebbe reads it as Moshe drawing the Torah down from Atzilus.

Deuteronomy 33:4ד: דברים ל"ג:4

תּוֹרָה צִוְּהָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מִרְשָׁה קְהֵלֶת יַעֲקֹב:

Moses commanded us a law, An inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ויראו את אלקי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר כו

דברים לג, ד.

122

ונגש אל ה'

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

יתרו כ, יח.

PARAGRAPH 35

123

כעצם השמים

"Like the very essence of the heavens." The Alter Rebbe identifies what the elders saw with the two kinds of letters beneath the Throne.

שמות כ"ד:10י: Exodus 24:10

וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתַחַת רִגְלָיו כְּמַעֲשֵׂה לְבֶנֶת הַסַּפִּיר וְכַעֲצָם הַשָּׁמַיִם לְטָהָר:

and they saw the G-d of Israel; and there was under His feet the like of a paved work of sapphire stone, and the like of the very heaven for clearness.

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PARAGRAPH 36

124

ואל אצילי בני ישראל לא שלח ידו

"And to the nobles of the Children of Israel He did not send forth His hand." The Alter Rebbe reads the "hand" as the attributes above the Throne, not revealed to the elders.

שמות כ"ד:11א: Exodus 24:11

וְאֶל־אֲצִילֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא שָׁלַח יָדוֹ וַיַּחֲזוּ אֶת־הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ:

And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand; and they beheld G-d, and did eat and drink.

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PARAGRAPH 37

125

אצילי בני ישראל

The elders are called "the nobles (atzilei) of the Children of Israel." The Alter Rebbe connects the word to Atzilus.

שמות כ"ד:11א: Exodus 24:11

וְאֶל־אֲצִילֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא שָׁלַח יָדוֹ וַיַּחֲזוּ אֶת־הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ:

And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand; and they beheld G-d, and did eat and drink.

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126

ויאצל מן הרוח

G-d "drew from the spirit that was upon him [Moshe]" and placed it on the seventy elders. It shows the elders had a share in Moshe's spirit, yet only as a radiance.

במדבר י"א:25 Numbers 11:25

וַיֵּרֶד ה' בְּעָנָן וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו וַיֹּאצֵּל מִן־הָרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּתֵּן עַל־שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִן־הָעָם וַיְהִי כְנוּחַ עֲלֵיהֶם הָרוּחַ וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ וְלֹא יָסֹפוּ:

And the L-RD came down in the cloud, and spoke unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders; and it came to pass, that, when the spirit

rested upon them, they prophesied, but they did so no more.

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127

והם לא יגשו

“But they shall not approach.” The elders did not reach the revelation of Havayah that Moshe reached.

Exodus 24:2 כ"ד:ב' שמות

וַיִּגֶשׁ מֹשֶׁה לְבַדּוֹ אֶל־יְהוָה וְהָם לֹא יִגְשׁוּ וְהָעָם לֹא יַעֲלוּ עִמּוֹ:

and Moses alone shall come near unto the L-RD; but they shall not come near; neither shall the people go up with him.'

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128

זרועות עולם

“Beneath are the everlasting arms.” The Patriarchs were a chariot for these supernal arms.

Deuteronomy 33:27 כ"ז:ג דברים

מֵעַנָּה אֱלֹהֵי קָדֶם וּמִתַּחַת זְרֻעֹת עוֹלָם וַיִּגְרֶשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם אוֹיֵב וַיֹּאמֶר הִשְׁמַד:

The eternal G-d is a dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms; And He thrust out the enemy from before thee, And said: ‘Destroy.’

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129

דודי שלח ידו

“My beloved sent forth his hand through the opening.” The Alter Rebbe reads it as G-d’s “hand” revealed to the loftiest souls.

Song of Songs 5:4 ד"ה: שיר השירים

דוֹדִי שָׁלַח יָדוֹ מִן־הַחֹר וּמַעֲי הָמוּ עָלָיו:

My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, And my heart was moved for him.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שיר השירים ה, ד.



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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

About this edition

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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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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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