



TORAH OHR • PARSHAS TOLDOS • MAAMAR 1

אלה תולדות יצחק וגו'

“These are the generations of Yitzchak”



Avraham draws G-dliness down from above, and Yitzchak raises the created world up to G-d in awe and self-nullification; the ascent from below is unlimited, but it can come about only when it is “born” of the light drawn down from above.

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

Avraham draws G-dliness down from above, and Yitzchak raises the created world up to G-d in awe and self-nullification; the ascent from below is unlimited, but it can come about only when it is “born” of the light drawn down from above.

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

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar reads the verse “His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me” as Yitzchak and Avraham: Yitzchak is the ascent from below upward, Avraham the drawing down from above. The command “And you shall love” shows why both are needed: contemplating that Havayah is One leads the soul to yearn upward (ratzo), but G-d wants a dwelling place below, so love must return downward (shov). Avraham’s hospitality made G-d known to wayfarers; Yitzchak’s wells uncovered hidden water, a lasting flow that the Philistines could not stop, hinted in the full spelling of “names” with a vav. Drawing down has limits, while the ascent from below is endless and is the source of Yitzchak’s laughter: turning “something” into “nothing.” Avraham loves this opposite quality, the Fear of Yitzchak, but cannot bring it down, since creation cannot bear such self-nullification; Yaakov, who includes both, can, and in the time to come it will be revealed to all. Finally, the doubled names in “Yitzchak son of Avraham; Avraham begot Yitzchak” teach that the ascent from below is born of the light from above, as in the analogy of conception.

OUTLINE

- 1 Left and right: the two directions** ¶1
Yitzchak is from below upward, Avraham from above downward; the command to love shows that the upward yearning (ratzo) must return downward (shov), for G-d wants a dwelling place below.
- 2 Hospitality and wells** ¶2-3
Avraham draws G-dliness down to others; Yitzchak uncovers what is hidden. Yitzchak’s wells flow without end, and the ascent from below, turning something into nothing, is unlimited and brings laughter and delight.
- 3 The Fear of Yitzchak** ¶4-7
Avraham loves his opposite, Yitzchak’s awe and self-nullification, but cannot draw it down; it appeared only above the worlds at the binding, Yaakov could bring it down, and in the time to come it will be revealed below.

Through the analogy of conception, the ascent from below is shown to depend on and be refined by the light from above, Avraham as Chochmah.

KEY CONCEPTS

From below upward / from above downward ממטה למטה

למעלה / מלמעלה למטה

The two directions of divine service: the creature rising toward G-d, and G-dliness drawn down into the world.

Ratzo and shov רצוא ושוב

“Running and returning”: the soul’s longing to rise and dissolve into G-d, and its return to serve Him in the world below.

The Fear of Yitzchak פחד יצחק

Yitzchak’s quality of awe and self-nullification, too intense for creation to receive now; it will be revealed in the time to come.

Nullifying something into nothing ביטול היש לאין

The reverse of creation: the person turns the world and the self back into nothing before G-d, the source of Yitzchak’s laughter.

A dwelling place among the lower realms דירה בתחתונים

G-d’s purpose in creation, which is why the upward yearning must turn back downward.

Raising the feminine waters העלאת מיין נוקבין

The arousal from below that rises toward G-d; here it is itself awakened by the light from above.

SECTION 1 • 11

Left and right: the two directions

1 אלה תולדות יצחק¹ וגוי. כתיב שמאלו תחת לראשי² וימינו תחבקני. שמאלו הוא בחיי יצחק ממטה למעלה.

“These are the generations of Yitzchak,” etc. It is written, “His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me.” “His left hand” is the level of Yitzchak, [which is] from below upward.

The maamar opens with the verse that heads the parsha and at once pairs it with a verse from the Song of Songs about the left hand and the right hand. The left hand is linked to Yitzchak, whose mode of service moves “from below upward”: the created being rising toward G-d.

וימינו כוי הוא בחיי אברהם מלמעלה למטה.³ והנה מדת אברהם הוא הכנסת אורחים כוי ויצחק היה חופר בארות⁴ כוי.

“And his right hand,” etc., is the level of Avraham, from above downward. Now, the attribute of Avraham is hospitality to guests, etc., and Yitzchak would dig wells, etc.

The right hand is linked to Avraham, whose mode is “from above downward”: bringing G-dliness down into the world. The two practices the Torah records of them, Avraham’s hospitality and Yitzchak’s digging of wells, will be shown to express these two directions.

ולחבין זה הנה כתיב ואהבת. אשר לכאורה לא שייך בזה לשון צווי לאהוב⁵ כוי. אך הוא⁶ שבתחלה כתיב⁷ הוי אחד^{8,9} כוי.

To understand this: it is written, “And you shall love.” Seemingly, the language of a command to love does not apply here, etc. But [the explanation] is that first it is written, “Havayah is One,” etc.

The verse “And you shall love” is phrased as a command, yet love is a feeling, and it is hard to see how one can be commanded to feel. The answer begins with the verse that comes just before it, the declaration that Havayah is One.

ובהתבוננות ענין אחד איך שאין ערוך אליו כלל כוי¹⁰ הוי אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו¹¹ (שהוא בחיי צמצום) פיי שיתהווה בחיי אבותינו חו”ב [חכמה ובינה] כוי

And through contemplating the meaning of “One,” how there is no comparison to Him at all, etc., [one understands] “Havayah, our G-d and the G-d of our fathers” (which is the level of tzimtzum). This means that the level of “our fathers,” Chochmah and Binah, should come into being, etc.

When a person contemplates what “One” means, that G-d is beyond any comparison with anything, he also understands the phrase from the first blessing of the Amidah, “our G-d and the G-d of our fathers.” “Our G-d” (Elokeinu) stands for tzimtzum, G-d’s self-concealment; “our fathers” stands for Chochmah and Binah, the first powers of intellect, which could only come into being after that contraction.

אנת חכים כ'י אשר אין ערוך כלל¹² לגבי מהותו ית' אנת הוא חד¹³ כ'י לכן צריך קודם בח'י אלקינו
שהוא בח'י צמצום

“You are wise,” etc., which has no comparison at all to His essence, may He be blessed, [for] “You are One,” etc. Therefore there must first be the level of “our G-d,” which is the level of tzimtzum,

The quoted words come from the prayer of Eliyahu in the Tikkunei Zohar: “You are wise, but not with a known wisdom; You are One, but not in number.” Even divine wisdom has no comparison to G-d’s essence, so before Chochmah can exist there must first be a contraction, the level of “our G-d.”

ואח"כ ואלקי בח'י וא"ו המשכה שיתהווה בח'י אבותינו ובהתבונן כ"ז [כל זה] בוודאי כל איש ישראל
יהיה חפצו ורצונו תמיד ליכלל בה' אחד ולא שירד למטה במקום חשך.

and afterward “and the G-d of” (ואלקי), the level of the vav (ו), a drawing down, so that the level of “our fathers” should come into being. And when one contemplates all this, certainly the desire and will of every Jew will always be to be absorbed into the One G-d, and not to descend below, into a place of darkness.

Only after the contraction comes the letter vav, the “and” (ו) of “and the G-d of” (ואלקי); a vav is drawn as a straight line downward, so it stands for the drawing down that brings the level of “our fathers,” Chochmah and Binah, into being. A Jew who grasps how everything below is only a contracted ray of the One will naturally long to be absorbed back into Him rather than remain in the darkness of this lower world.

אמנם זהו בח'י רצוא אבל צ"ל אח"כ בח'י שוב¹⁴ כדכתיב כיתרון האור מן החשך¹⁵ ורצונו ית' להיות לו
דווקא דירה בתחתונים ולכן הצווי ואהבת הוא הפ"י בהיפוך מלמעלה למטה.^{16, 17}

However, this is the level of ratzo (running [toward G-d]); but afterward there must be the level of shov (returning), as it is written, “like the advantage of light out of darkness.” And His will, may He be blessed, is specifically to have a dwelling place among the lower realms. Therefore the command “And you shall love” means the reverse: from above downward.

That longing to rise and dissolve into G-d is called ratzo, “running”; it must be followed by shov, “returning,” to life and service below, because G-d wants a dwelling place precisely in the lowest realms, where light that comes out of darkness has an added quality. So the command “And you shall love” is not about rising upward but the reverse: drawing G-dly love from above down into the world, and this answers why love can be commanded.

SECTION 2 • ¶2-3

Hospitality and wells

2 וכמארז"ל [וכמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] שיהא שם שמים¹⁸ מתאהב ע"י. פי' להמשיך גילוי אור אלקותו מלמעלה למטה. וזהו מעשה אברהם¹⁹ הכנסת אורחים שנתן לערביים לאכול

As our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "That the Name of Heaven become beloved through you." This means: to draw down the revelation of the light of His G-dliness from above downward. And this is the deed of Avraham, hospitality to guests: he gave the Arabs to eat,

The Sages' teaching that one should make G-d beloved through one's conduct is read as the task of drawing G-dliness downward. Avraham did this through hospitality: he fed the passing Arabs who came to his tent.

ואח"כ אמר להם דעו למי מברכים²⁰ כ' בכדי להיות גילוי אלקות למטה שגם הערביים יכירו גדולתו כ' כ"ז [כל זה] הוא בחי' אברהם המשכה מלמעלה למטה.²¹

and afterward he said to them, "Know Whom you are blessing," etc., so that there would be a revelation of G-dliness below, so that even the Arabs would recognize His greatness, etc. All this is the level of Avraham: drawing down from above downward.

After they ate and wished to bless him, Avraham told them to know Whom they were really blessing, the G-d who provides. In this way even people far from G-d came to recognize Him, which is the downward flow, from above to below, that marks Avraham.

ויצחק הי' חופר בארות שהוא בחי' גילוי ממטה למעלה²² מהעלם לגילוי כמשל הבור אשר המים שם בהעלם וע"י החפירה נגלו המים כ'.

And Yitzchak would dig wells, which is the level of revelation from below upward, from concealment to revelation, as in the analogy of a well, where the water is there in concealment, and through the digging the water is revealed, etc.

Yitzchak's wells show the opposite direction. The water was already there, hidden in the ground; digging removes what covers it. So too Yitzchak's service uncovers the G-dliness already hidden in the lower realms and brings it up into revelation.

3 והנה הגם שאברהם היה ג"כ חופר בארות אבל כתיב ויסתמום פלשתים כו' ויצחק חפר אותן וקרא להם שמות כשמת אשר קרא להן אביו²³ הראשון מלא והשני חסר לפי

Now, although Avraham too dug wells, it is written, "and the Philistines stopped them up," etc., and Yitzchak dug them [again] "and called them names (שמות) like the names (שמת) that his father had called them." The first is written full and the second defective, because

Avraham had dug wells first, but the Philistines stopped them up, and Yitzchak reopened them and gave them the names his father had given. In the verse the first "names" is spelled with a vav (שמות) and the second without it (שמת), and the maamar now explains why.

שע"י חפירה דיצחק לא נפסק עוד נביעתם²⁴ ונמשכים ונובעים הששה מדות שהן בחי' וי"ו ע"כ הוא שמות מלא בוי"ו.²⁵

through Yitzchak's digging their flowing was no longer interrupted, and the six emotive attributes (middos), which are the level of the vav, are drawn forth and flow. Therefore it is "names" (שמות), written full, with a vav.

The letter vav stands for the six emotive attributes (its numerical value is six). Once Yitzchak dug, the flow of the wells was never cut off again, so the emotions keep flowing; hence his "names" are spelled full, with the vav.

אבל שמת דאברהם חסר וי"ו לפי שסתמום פלשתים ויש לחיצונים יניקה מהם.²⁶ לכן ע"י חפירה דיצחק הוא שמות בוי"ו (ועמ"ש כה"ג [כהאי גוונא] ע"פ ששת ימים תאכל מצות^{27,28} כו' מלא וי"ו) ולע"ל [ולעתיד לבוא] כתיב

But the "names" (שמת) of Avraham lack the vav, because the Philistines stopped them up, and the external forces draw nourishment from them. Therefore, through Yitzchak's digging it is "names" (שמות) with a vav. (And see what is explained along these lines on the verse "Six days you shall eat matzos (מצות)," etc., [written] full, with a vav.) And of the Time to Come it is written,

Avraham's wells could be stopped, which means the forces opposed to holiness could draw nourishment from them, so his "names" lack the vav. The text points to a parallel discussion of the full spelling of "matzos" in another maamar, and then turns to the future.

כי אתה אבינו²⁹ שעיקר הצחוק והשמחה יהיה מבחי יצחק שהוא ממטה למעלה אשר בחי זו אין קץ ותכלית כו

“For You are our father”: [meaning] that the essence of laughter and joy will be from the level of Yitzchak, which is from below upward, a level that has no end or limit, etc.

In Isaiah the people say to G-d, “For You are our father, for Avraham does not know us”; the Gemara (Shabbos 89b) reads “For You are our father” as said to Yitzchak in the time to come. Then the greatest joy and laughter will come from Yitzchak’s mode, the ascent from below, which is unlimited.

משא”כ (אברהם) בבחי ממעלה למטה יש לה גבול המשכה למטה ולכן באברהם כתיב ב”פ [בי פעמים] אברהם אברהם³⁰ הא’ הוא המשכה שיתהווה בחי חו”כ [חכמה ובינה] דאצי ואלקי אבותינו כנ”ל.

Whereas (Avraham), at the level of from above downward, has a limit to [its] drawing down below. Therefore it is written of Avraham twice, “Avraham, Avraham”: the first is the drawing down by which the level of Chochmah and Binah of Atzilus comes into being, “and the G-d of our fathers,” as [explained] above;

Drawing down from above always has limits, since it must fit the capacity of what receives it. The doubled “Avraham, Avraham” at the binding of Yitzchak hints at two stages of that descent: the first brings Chochmah and Binah of the World of Atzilus into being, the “G-d of our fathers” explained above.

והמשכה ב’ בבי”ע. משא”כ יצחק בחי אין קץ ותכלית והכל ירוממוך סלה. and the second drawing down is into [the worlds of] Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah. Whereas Yitzchak is the level of from below upward, a level without end or limit: “and all will exalt You, Selah.”

The second stage extends into the three lower worlds, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah. Yitzchak’s ascent, by contrast, has no end, as the prayer says, “and all will exalt You, Selah.”

ומזה נתהווה עיקר הצחוק כי גמירי משמיא מיהב יהבי³¹ משקל לא שקלי כו מיהב הוא בחי השתלשלות מאין ליש כו.

And from this comes about the essence of laughter, for we have a tradition: “From Heaven they give; they do not take [back],” etc. “Giving” is the level of the chain of descending worlds (hishtal-shelus), from nothing to something, etc.

The name Yitzchak means “he will laugh.” Heaven, the Gemara says, gives but does not take back: G-d’s giving is the chain of worlds, bringing something out of nothing. The saying comes from a Gemara story in which a gift sent down from Heaven was later taken back at the recipient’s request, and the Sages called that second miracle greater than the first, because Heaven’s way is to give, not to take back. So here “taking back,” the rare reverse movement from something to nothing, is the surprise that brings about laughter.

אבל עבודת האדם הוא ההיפוך והוא להיות בטול היש לאין והוא בחי' יצחק צחוק ותענוג³² גדול כו':

But the divine service of man is the reverse: it is the nullification of the something into nothing. And this is the level of Yitzchak: laughter and great delight, etc.

Man's task is the reverse, turning the "something" of the world and of the self back into "nothing," into self-nullification before G-d. This reversal is the source of Yitzchak's laughter and great delight.

SECTION 3 • 14-7

The Fear of Yitzchak

4 והנה כתיב באברהם קח נא את בנך³³ כו' אשר אהבת את יצחק כו'. כי ידוע הטבע לאהוב ההיפוך³⁴

Now, it is written of Avraham, "Take, please, your son," etc., "whom you love, Yitzchak," etc. For it is known that it is natural to love the opposite,

The verse at the binding calls Yitzchak the son "whom you love." The maamar explains this love by a rule of nature: one loves one's opposite.

כדכתיב מים קרים על נפש עיפה.³⁵ וכמו"כ [וכמו כן] להיפוך מי שקר לו מאד רוצה למים חמים.

as it is written, "Cold water on a weary soul." And likewise the reverse: one who is very cold wants warm water.

The verse from Proverbs shows that a weary, heated person longs for cold water; likewise one who is very cold wants warm water. Opposites attract.

5 ולכן אברהם שמדתו המשכה מלמעלה למטה אוהב ג"כ ההיפוך בחי' יצחק מלמטה למעלה. היינו שבחי' יצחק הוא פחד יצחק³⁶ שהוא בחי' יראה ובטול

Therefore Avraham, whose attribute is drawing down from above downward, also loves the opposite, the level of Yitzchak, from below upward. That is, the level of Yitzchak is "the Fear of Yitzchak," which is the level of awe and self-nullification (bittul).

Avraham, all drawing down, loves Yitzchak's opposite mode of ascent. Yitzchak's quality is called "the Fear of Yitzchak": awe and self-nullification before G-d.

ולכן זה א"א שימשיך אברהם למטה בחי' פחד יצחק הנ"ל שבחינת בטול כזה א"א לנבראים לקבל

And therefore it is impossible for Avraham to draw down below the level of the Fear of Yitzchak mentioned above, for created beings cannot receive such a level of self-nullification.

That is why Avraham could not bring Yitzchak's level down to the world: created beings cannot bear such complete self-nullification; they would cease to exist as separate beings.

כי גם למעלה אמרו הושיט הקב"ה אצבעו³⁷ הקטנה ביניהם ושרפן ע"י גילוי רב ומכ"ש [ומכל שכן] למטה בנבראים.

For even above, [the Sages] said: "The Holy One, blessed be He, stretched out His little finger among them and burned them," through an intense revelation; all the more so below, among created beings.

The Gemara tells that G-d stretched out His little finger among a group of angels and burned them; the revelation was too great for them to contain. If even angels cannot bear it, surely created beings below cannot.

6 ולכן כתיב ויעקוד אותו על המזבח³⁸ ממעל לעצים למעלה מבחינת עה"ח [עץ החיים] ועה"ד [ועץ הדעת] שם יוכל להתגלות בחי' פחד יצחק³⁹ הנ"ל.

Therefore it is written, "and he bound him upon the altar, above the wood (עצים)": above the level of the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. There the level of the Fear of Yitzchak mentioned above could be revealed.

At the binding, Yitzchak was placed "above the wood," and the word for wood, etzim, also means trees. So he was above the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge, a level beyond the worlds; only there could the Fear of Yitzchak be revealed.

אמנם ביעקב כתיב ופחד יצחק היה לי. כי יעקב היה בחור שבאבות^{40, 41, 42} בחי' התכללות מבריה מן הקצה^{43, 44} כו'.

However, of Yaakov it is written, "and the Fear of Yitzchak was with me." For Yaakov was the choicest of the Patriarchs, the level of inclusion, "the bar that reaches from end [to end]," etc.

Yaakov, however, says "the Fear of Yitzchak was with me." Yaakov is the choicest of the Patriarchs because he includes both Avraham and Yitzchak, like the middle bar of the Tabernacle that ran from one end to the other.

ולכן אמר אלקי אבי אברהם ופחד יצחק היה לי שהי' [שהיה] לו שני הבחינות בחי' אברהם כנ"ל. וגם פחד יצחק היה יכול להמשיך למטה ג"כ.

Therefore he said, "the G-d of my father Avraham, and the Fear of Yitzchak was with me": for he had both levels, the level of Avraham, as [explained] above, and he could also draw the Fear of Yitzchak down below as well.

Because he combined both, Yaakov could draw even the Fear of Yitzchak down below, which Avraham alone could not do.

7 והנה לע"ל [לעתיד לבוא] כתיב כי אתה אבינו⁴⁵ פ"י כי עתה א"א שבח"י פחד יצחק יהי [יהיה] בבח"י אבינו שהיא המשכה למטה וכנ"ל.

Now, of the Time to Come it is written, "For You (אתה) are our father." The meaning is: for now (עתה) it is impossible for the level of the Fear of Yitzchak to be at the level of "our father," which is drawing down below, as [explained] above.

The maamar reads "For You (atah) are our father" as if it said "for now (atah, spelled עתה)": now the Fear of Yitzchak cannot become "our father," a level that flows down to us, since creation cannot bear it, as explained.

אבל לע"ל [לעתיד לבוא] כשיהיה בלע המות לנצח⁴⁶ ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר⁴⁷ כו' אז יתגלה בח"י פחד יצחק למטה שיהי [שיהיה] הוא בח"י אבינו

But in the Time to Come, when "He will swallow up death forever," and "I will remove the spirit of impurity," etc., then the level of the Fear of Yitzchak will be revealed below, so that it will be the level of "our father,"

In the time to come, when death is swallowed up and the spirit of impurity removed, the obstacles will be gone, and Yitzchak's level of awe will be revealed below and become "our father."

כדכתיב לבא בנקרת הצורים⁴⁸ ובסעיפי הסלעים מפני פחד ה' שיתגלה בח"י פחד ובטול למטה וראו כל בשר.⁴⁹

as it is written, "to go into the clefts of the rocks and into the crevices of the crags, from before the fear of Havayah": that the level of fear and self-nullification will be revealed below, "and all flesh shall see."

Isaiah foretells that on the day G-d arises, people will flee into the clefts of the rocks from the terror of Havayah. The maamar reads that "fear" as the awe and self-nullification of Yitzchak, which will then be openly revealed in this world, so that "all flesh shall see."

SECTION 4 • 18-10

Yitzchak born of Avraham

8 וזהו אלה תולדות יצחק בן אברהם. אברהם הוליד את יצחק.⁵⁰ ב"פ [ב' פעמים] אברהם וב"פ [וב' פעמים] יצחק. כנודע ממשל גשמי שהזכר יוכל להזריע בלא נקבה משא"כ הנוקבא כו'.

And this is [the meaning of] “These are the generations of Yitzchak, son of Avraham; Avraham begot Yitzchak”: twice Avraham and twice Yitzchak. As is known from a physical analogy, the male can emit seed without a female, which is not so of the female, etc.

The opening verse names Avraham twice and Yitzchak twice. The maamar explains this with an analogy from physical procreation: the male can emit seed without the female, but the female cannot initiate by herself.

והגם שאמרו אשה מזרעת תחלה⁵¹ כו' היינו ג"כ ע"י התעוררות הדכר תוכל הנוקבא להזריע תחלה כו'.

And although [the Sages] said, “[If] the woman emits seed first,” etc., this too means that through the arousal of the male the female can emit seed first, etc.

The Sages say that when the woman emits seed first the child is male; even so, this happens only through the man's arousal. The analogy prepares the point that the ascent from below (Yitzchak) depends on an arousal from above (Avraham).

9 וגם אח"כ עיקר ההולדה מטפת הדכר שממנו הלובן והוא המברר הולד להיות הפסולת יוצא לחוץ. ומהבירור נעשה הולד כו'.

And afterward too, the main part of the conception is from the drop of the male, from which comes the white [matter], and it is this that refines the offspring, so that the waste goes out. And from the refinement the offspring is formed, etc.

Continuing the analogy: the formation of the child comes mainly from the male drop, the source of the “white”, which refines and sorts, so that waste is expelled and the child is formed.

כמו"כ [כמו כן] למעלה שיתהווה בחי' יצחק ממטלמ"ע [ממטה למעלה] שבאמת אין ערוך אליו כלל הוא בא ע"י בן אברהם פי' ע"י ההארה הבאה מלמעלה למטה שיתהווה בכ"א [בכל אחד / בכל אחת] בחי' יצחק העלאת מ"ן [מ"ן נוקבין] ממטה למעלה.

So too above: that the level of Yitzchak should come into being, from below upward, which in truth has no comparison to Him at all, comes about through "son of Avraham," meaning, through the illumination that comes from above downward, so that the level of Yitzchak should come into being in each one: the raising of mayin nukvin (the feminine waters) from below upward.

So too above: Yitzchak's ascent from below has no comparison to G-d at all and could never reach Him by itself. It comes through "son of Avraham," the light drawn down from above, which awakens in every person the ascent called raising the feminine waters (mayin nukvin).

10 וזהו תולדות יצחק הוא בן אברהם כו'. ואח"כ אברהם הוליד את יצחק.⁵² פי' שיהי' [שיהיה] בחי' יצחק בבחי' הולדה

And this is [the meaning of] "the generations of Yitzchak" being "son of Avraham," etc. And afterward, "Avraham begot Yitzchak": meaning that the level of Yitzchak should be at the level of birth,

This is why the verse calls Yitzchak "son of Avraham" and then repeats that "Avraham begot Yitzchak": Yitzchak's ascent must be "born," brought forth into actual existence.

כי באמת אין ערוך נברא לבורא ושיהי' [ושיהיה] ההעלאה בחי' בטול לאלקות בתכלית א"א כ"א ע"י אברהם שהוא בחי' אב"ר מ"ה [שם מ"ה] בחכמה אתברירו

for in truth there is no comparison [between] a creature and the Creator, and that the ascent be a level of utter self-nullification to G-dliness is impossible except through Avraham (אברהם), who is the level of "ever Mah" (אב"ר מ"ה, the limb of Mah) — "through Chochmah they are refined" —

A creature has no comparison to its Creator, so complete self-nullification to G-d can come only through Avraham. The letters of his name form אבר מה, the "limb" of Mah (מ"ה, 45, the number of the Name Havayah spelled out with alefs), the Name linked to Chochmah, and through Chochmah everything is refined.

שהוא המברר להוליד בחי' יצחק להיות נתפס בחי' גילוי אלקות והפסולת יוצא לחוץ ע"י טפת דכר שממנו יוצא לובן העליון כנ"ל בחי' אברהם כו' וד"ל [ודי למבין]:

which is what refines, to bring forth the level of Yitzchak, so that a level of revelation of G-dliness may be grasped, and the waste goes out, through the drop of the male, from which the supernal white issues, as [explained] above: the level of Avraham, etc. And this suffices for one who understands.

Avraham's Chochmah refines and gives birth to Yitzchak's ascent, so that the person can grasp a revelation of G-dliness while the waste is expelled, just as in the analogy of the male drop. The maamar closes by noting that the matter suffices for one who understands.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Contemplating G-d's oneness should stir a longing to rise to Him, but a Jew must then return and bring G-dliness into the world, as Avraham did through kindness; and his own work is to turn the "something" of self and world into "nothing" before G-d, which becomes true joy.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why must the upward yearning of ratzo be followed by shov, and how does this answer the question of how love can be commanded?
2. What do Avraham's hospitality and Yitzchak's wells each teach about how G-dliness is revealed?
3. Why is drawing down from above limited, while the ascent from below is without limit?
4. Why could Yaakov, but not Avraham, draw the Fear of Yitzchak down below?
5. In what sense is the ascent from below "born" of Avraham?

FOR CHILDREN • AGES 9-13

For the children at the table

Avraham's kindness and Yitzchak's wells

THE BIG IDEA

Avraham brings G-dliness down into the world, Yitzchak lifts the world up to G-d, and we need both.

The Torah says, "These are the generations of Yitzchak, son of Avraham." The maamar explains that Avraham and Yitzchak show two ways of serving G-d. Avraham goes from above to below. He welcomed guests and fed travelers, and afterward told them Whom to bless, so that even they came to know G-d. Yitzchak goes from below to above. He dug wells: the water is already there, hidden in the ground, and digging brings it out. When we think about how G-d is One, our soul wants to run up to Him. This is called ratzo, "running." But G-d wants a home in this lower world, so we must also come back and bring His light into our lives. That is shov, "returning." The wells Yitzchak dug kept flowing, and going up from below has no end. When a person makes their own "something" into "nothing" before G-d, that brings true laughter and joy, the meaning of the name Yitzchak. Yitzchak's quality is awe of G-d and bittul, setting oneself aside before Him. Yaakov, who had both qualities, could bring it down into the world, and in the time to come everyone will see it.

THE MASHAL

Water can lie hidden deep under the ground. When someone digs a well, the water that was there all along comes up and can be seen. That is Yitzchak's way: uncovering what is hidden below so that it rises into the open.

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

1. What is the difference between Avraham's way, from above to below, and Yitzchak's way, from below to above?
2. Why did Yitzchak dig wells, and what does the hidden water teach us?
3. After you pray or learn about G-d this week, how can you bring it into your day with a kindness to someone, as Avraham did for his guests?

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SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 אלה תולדות יצחק

The note says the Mittlerer Rebbe's transcript of this maamar is printed there, and dates the maamar to 5569 (1808-09).

KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי בסה"מ תקס"ח ח"א ע"י תקטו בהתחלה "שמאלו תחת לראשי". (והוא משנת תקס"ט). ובכרך 1118 קנח, א מציין "שבת תנאים עם הרב מטשערנובל (חורף תקס"ט)". ראה לעיל בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע. המאמר עם הגהות וקיצורים באוה"ת בראשית כרך ד תתד, ב. תתיג, א. תתיח, ב. קיצורים להנחת אדה"א בסה"מ תקס"ח ע"י תקטו. ראה גם ד"ה אלה תולדות תרמ"א דשם מכאן עבודת א"א מלמעלמ"ט, ועבודת יצחק מלמטה למעלה. פלח הרמון בראשית עו, א. חלק מהמאמר מובא באוה"ת פ' ואתחנן כרך ו ע' בירסג עם הגהות. המאמר נזכר בלקו"ת שלח ג, ד. פינחס עח, א. ראה כו, ד. ר"ה סג, א. וזאת הברכה צו, ג.

2 שמאלו תחת לראשי

In the Song of Songs the beloved (in the Sages' reading, the Jewish people) speaks of her lover: his left hand beneath her head, his right hand embracing her. The Alter Rebbe reads the left hand as Yitzchak and the right as Avraham.

Song of Songs 2:6 שיר השירים ב' ו':

שְׁמָאלוֹ תַּחַת לְרָאשִׁי וְיְמִינוֹ תִּחְבְּקֵנִי:

Let his left hand be under my head, And his right hand embrace me.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש ב, ו.

3 יצחק ממטה למעלה . . אברהם מלמעלה למטה

Torah Chaim opens its discourses on this parsha with the same theme of Yitzchak from below upward and Avraham from above downward, at much greater length.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תרי"ח ריש פרשתנו. אוה"ת כרך ד תתד, ב ואילך. ד"ה ואלה תולדות תרע"ח ע' עג. ד"ה אריב"ל חצרות פי"ו (סה"מ קונטרסים ח"ב). לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 194.

4 מדת אברהם הוא הכנסת אורחים כו' ויצחק היה חופר בארות

Or HaTorah adds here the image of the well, where hidden water is revealed by digging, the same image this maamar gives just below.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת תתח, א: שהוא בחי' גילוי ממטה למעלה מהעלם לגילוי, כמשל הבור אשר המים שם בהעלם וע"י החפירה נגלו המים, ע"ש וכ"ה לקמן יז, ג. בפלח הרמון מכאן שיעקר עבודת אברהם אבינו וכוונתו בהמשכת והתגלות אלקות למטה הי' ע"י הכנסת אורחים, ועבודת יצחק בחפירת בארות שאף מן הסתם גם הוא הכניס אורחים, ע"ש.

5 לא שייך בזה לשון צווי לאהוב

Or HaTorah sends the reader to Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah, adding that elsewhere the answer is that souls are called G-d's children and so have a natural love, like a son's for his father.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת תתיג, א מציין לעיין בתו"א פו, ג. ובאוה"ת ואתחנן כרך ו ע' ארסג מוסיף גם ללקו"ת ד"ה שמע ישראל: "ובמ"א נתי' שזהו ע"י כי חביבין הנשמות שנקראים בנים למקום, וא"כ יש אהבה טבעית כאהבת הבן אל האב".

6 אך הוא

The Devarim printing agrees with our text, "But it is"; the Toldos printing reads "But the matter is" (אך הענין הוא).

KEHOT'S NOTE

כ"ה גם באוה"ת דברים כרך ו ע' בירסג שנדפס מגוכתי"ק כ"ק אדמו"ר הצ"צ, אבל באוה"ת תולדות תתיג, א ובהגהות הרה"ח ר' אשר: אך הענין הוא.

7 שבתחלה כתיב ה' אחד

Or HaTorah suggests the text should read "first it is written, Havayah our G-d, Havayah is One," and asks why the Name Havayah is doubled and what "our G-d" means.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת ואתחנן שם: "נ' שצ"ל שבתחילה כתיב ה' אלקינו ה' אחד, וצ"ל מה ענין כפל שמות הוי' וענין אלקינו)".

8 ואהבת . . הוי' אחד

The command to love G-d with all one's heart, soul and might; the maamar asks how love can be commanded.

דברים ו' ה' 5: Deuteronomy 6:5

וְאַהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ:

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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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ו, ה. ד.

9 הוי' אחד

The Shema, declaring that Havayah is One; contemplating this oneness is what leads to love.

דברים ו' ד' 4: Deuteronomy 6:4

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה' אֶחָד:

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

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10 ובהתבוננות ענין אחד איך שאין ערוך אליו כלל כו'

Or HaTorah glosses "One" in the sense of "You are One, but not in number."

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת ואתחנן שם ("ר"ל פי אחד ע"ד אנת הוא חד ולא בחושבן, וכן פי בלקרית פי ואתחנן בד"ה ענין ק"ש אחד ואהבת)."

- 11 הוי אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו**
Or HaTorah prefaces this with "In the blessing of the Patriarchs in the Amidah we say," identifying the phrase's source in the prayer.

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת ואתחנן שם מקדים לזה "והנה בברכת אבות בשמו"ע אומרים". בד"ה ואלה תולדות תשי"ח הקשה הרי אלקינו הוא אלקי כל ישראל, וא"כ הרי מצד סדר הדורות הול"ל תחלה אלקי אבותינו ואח"כ אלקינו. ומפרש אלקינו הו"ע הצמצום, דע"י הצמצום נמשך אח"כ ע"י הוא"ו דואלקי שיהי בחי אבותינו התהוות המוחין, ואומר על זה אלקינו אלקה שלנו, והיינו דזה שנעשה הצמצום בשביל המשכת החכמה הנה הגורם את הצמצום הם ישראל דבשביל ישראל נעשה כל ענין הצמצום וההמשכה, ע"ש בארוכה.

- 12 אין ערוך כלל**
The same gloss: "no comparison" in the sense of "You are One, but not in number."

KEHOT'S NOTE

באוה"ת ואתחנן שם נוסף: ("ר"ל פי אחד ע"ד אנת הוא חד ולא בחושבן, וכן פי בלקרית פי ואתחנן בד"ה ענין ק"ש אחד ואהבת)."

- 13 אנת חכים . . אנת הוא חד**
The prayer of Eliyahu (Patach Eliyahu) says G-d is wise but not with a known wisdom, and One but not in number; it shows that even Chochmah has no comparison to His essence.

Tikkunei Zohar, Patach Eliyahu · 17a:9-11-א:ט"ז · אנת הוא חד ולא בחושבן. אנת הוא

פתח אליהו ואמר רבון עלמין דאנת הוא חד ולא בחושבן. אנת הוא עלאה על כל עלאין סתימא על כל סתימין. לית מחשבה תפיסא כך כלל. אנת הוא דאפיקת עשר תקונין. וקרינן לון עשר ספירן. לאנהגא בהון עלמין סתימין דלא אתגליין. ועלמין דאתגליין. ובהון אתכסיאת (נ"א אתכסייא) מבני נשא.

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"ז בהקדמה (פתח אליהו).

- 14 בחי רצוא אבל צ"ל אח"כ בחי שוב**
The living creatures of the Chariot "ran and returned" (ratzo vashov); Chassidus uses the phrase for the soul's yearning upward and its return to service below.

Ezekiel 1:14-יד"ד:א:יחזקאל

והחיות רצוא ושוב כמראה הבזק:

And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

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

- 15 כיתרון האור מן החשך**
Koheles (King Shlomo) says that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness. Chassidus reads it as "the advantage of light that comes out of darkness": the return downward,

into the dark world, yields a greater light, so G-d wants the shov.

Ecclesiastes 2:13-ג"ג:ב:קהלת

וראיתי אני שיש יתרון לחכמה מן הסכלות כיתרון האור מן החשך:

Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

קהלת ב, יג. וראה באוה"ת תולדות כרך ד תתו, ב שמביא הפסוק כי עין בעין.

- 16 Kehot's note points to Genesis 25:20 for these words.**

בראשית כ"ה:20-Genesis

ויהי יצחק בן־אברהם שנה בקחתו את־רבקה בת־בטואל הארמי מפון ארם אחות לבן הארמי לו לאשה:

And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean, of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife.

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

- 17 The opening verse of the parsha, "These are the generations of Yitzchak son of Avraham; Avraham begot Yitzchak," whose doubled names the maamar explains at its end.**

בראשית כ"ה:19-Genesis

ואלה תולדות יצחק בן־אברהם אברהם הוליד את־יצחק:

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begot Isaac.

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PARAGRAPH 2

- 18 שיהא שם שמים**

The Gemara teaches that one should conduct oneself so that the Name of Heaven becomes beloved through him; here it means drawing G-dliness down.

Yoma 86a:12-ב"א:י"א יומא

אב"י אמר, כדתניא: "וְאֶהְיֶה לָּהֶם שֵׁם, שֵׁיחָה שְׁמִים מִתְאַהֲבָה עַל יָדָהּ. שֵׁיחָה קוֹרָא וְשׁוֹנָה וּמִשְׁמַשׁ תְּלִמְיָדֵי חֲכָמִים, וְיֵהָא מִשְׁאֵל וּמִתְנָה בְּנִחַת עִם הַבְּרִיּוֹת, מֵהַ בְּרִיּוֹת אוֹמְרוֹת עָלָיו — אֲשֶׁרִי אָבִיו שְׁלֹמֹדוֹ תוֹרָה, אֲשֶׁרִי רַבּוֹ שְׁלֹמֹדוֹ תוֹרָה. אוֹי לָהֶם לְבְרִיּוֹת שְׁלֹא לְמֹדוֹ תוֹרָה, פְּלוּנִי שְׁלֹמֹדוֹ תוֹרָה — רָאוּ כְּמָה נְאִים דְּרָכִיו, כְּמָה מִתּוֹקְנִים מַעֲשָׂיו. עָלָיו הִכְתוּב אוֹמֵר: "וַיֹּאמֶר לִי עֲבָדִי אֶתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בָּךְ אֶתְפָּאֵר".

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

יומא פו, א. ע"י לקמן פב, ב.

- 19 מעשה אברהם . . אמר להו דעו**
The Gemara tells how Avraham's guests, after eating, were led to bless the G-d of the world who provided the food.

Sotah 10a-י"א סוטה

KEHOT'S NOTE

סוטה י, א. ב"ר פי מ"ט. נתבאר בארוכה בד"ה ויטע אשל תשי"א ע"י 13 ואילך.

20

אמר להם דעו למי מברכים

The Midrash on Avraham's hospitality, cited by the Kehot notes alongside the Gemara.

Bereshit Rabbah 49:4 מ"ט:ד' רבה

... ר' עזריה בשם ר"י מתחלה צדק לבסוף משפט הא כיצד אברהם היה מקבל את העוברים ואת השבים משהיו אוכלים ושותים אמר להם ברכו אמרו ליה מה נאמר א"ל אמרו ברוך אל עולם שאכלנו משלו אם מקבל עליו וברוך הוה אכיל ושתי ואזיל ואי לא הוה מקבל עליה וברוך הוה א"ל הב מה דעלך ואמר מה אית לך עלי הוה א"ל חד קסיט דחמר בעשרה פולרין וחד ליטרא דקופר ב"י פולרין וחד עיגול דריפתא ב"י פולרין מאן יהיב לך חמרא במדברא מאן יהיב לך קופר במדברא מאן יהיב לך עיגולא ...

"For I love him, so that he will command his children and his household after him, that they observe the way of the L-rd, to perform righteousness and justice, so that the L-rd will bring upon Abraham what He spoke concerning him" (Genesis 18:19). "For I love him, so that he will command [his children...to perform righteousness and justice]" - Rabbi Yudan in the name of Rabbi Alexandri: This refers to providing the first meal to mourners after a burial. The Rabbis say: It refers to visiting the ill. Rabbi ...

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21

בחי' אברהם המשכה מלמעלה למטה

A talk on Avraham's service as drawing down from above.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 119.

22

ויצחק . . ממטה למעלה

A parallel discussion of Yitzchak's service from below upward.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה יהל אור ע' קיא.

PARAGRAPH 3

23

ויסתמום פלשתים . . שמות כשמת אשר קרא להן אביו

Yitzchak reopened the wells dug in Avraham's day that the Philistines had stopped, and gave them the names his father had given; the spelling of "names" carries the lesson here.

בראשית כ"ו:18 י"ח

וַיִּשָּׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחְפֹּר אֶת־בְּאֵרֵת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בִּימֵי אֲבִרְהָם אָבִיו וַיִּסְתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֲחֵרֵי מוֹת אֲבִרְהָם וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶן שְׁמוֹת כַּשֶּׁמֶת אֲשֶׁר־קָרָא לָהֶן אָבִיו:

And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כו, יח.

24

לא נפסק עוד נביעתם

The note says "their flowing" means the flowing of the waters of kindness of Avraham, as Torah Chaim states explicitly.

KEHOT'S NOTE

והכוונה ב"נביעתם" היא — לנביעת מי החסדים דאברהם כמפורש בתו"ח פ"ז — לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 120 הערה 21. בלקו"ת ואתחנן ה, א מציין לכאן.

25

לפי שעי"י . . מלא בוי"ו

A manuscript variant: manuscript 260 lacks the words from "because through" to "full, with a vav."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בכת"י 260 ליתא.

26

ויש לחיצונים יניקה מהם

The same passage explains why the external forces could draw from Avraham's wells: kelipah's frivolity is the opposite counterpart of holy love, so it could feed on it once Avraham died, but it has no counterpart that can stand against Yitzchak's awe.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם לקו"ת ואתחנן ה, א.

27

ע"פ ששת ימים תאכל מצות

The maamar on "Six days you shall eat matzos," which asks why matzah is eaten six days and connects it to the seventh day's "assembly"; it is the place referred to in the parenthesis.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת פ' צו יג, ב.

28

ששת ימים תאכל מצות

The verse on eating matzos for six days, whose spelling with a vav is discussed elsewhere along similar lines.

דברים ט"ז:8:16 Deuteronomy

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצּוֹת וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׂבִיעִי עֲצַרְתָּ לְה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה:

Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread; and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the L-RD thy G-d; thou shalt do no work therein.

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29

ולע"ל . . כי אתה אבינו

In the prophet's prayer the people say to G-d, "For You are our father, for Avraham does not know us and Israel does not recognize us." The Gemara (Shabbos 89b) applies "You are our father" to Yitzchak in the time to come, and the maamar reads it as Yitzchak's level revealed then.

ישעיהו ס"ג:16:63 Isaiah

כִּי־אַתָּה אָבִינוּ כִּי אֲבִרְהָם לֹא יָדְעָנוּ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִכְרְנוּ אֶתָּה ה' אָבִינוּ גִּאֲלָנוּ מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמֶךָ:

For Thou art our Father; for Avraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us; Thou, O L-RD, art our Father, Our Redeemer from everlasting is Thy name.

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שבת פ"ט ב"ב 89b Shabbat

KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י סג, טז. ראה שבת פט, ב.

30

אברהם אברהם

At the binding of Yitzchak the angel of G-d calls from heaven, "Avraham, Avraham," to stop him. The maamar reads the doubled name as two stages of Avraham's drawing down: into Chochmah and Binah of Atzilus, and into the three lower worlds.

בראשית כ"ב:11 Genesis 22:11

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהֵי מִלְאָךְ ה' מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִרְהָם אֲבִרְהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּנִּי:

And the angel of the L-RD called unto him out of heaven, and said: 'Abraham, Abraham.' And he said: 'Here am I.'

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31

גמירי משמיא מיהב ייהבי

A golden table leg was given from Heaven to Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa and then, at his prayer, taken back; the Gemara says the second miracle was greater, for it is a tradition that Heaven gives but does not take back. Here "giving" is creation, something from nothing; the reverse, something returned to nothing, is the wonder that brings laughter.

תענית כ"ה א:ד"ד Taanit 25a:4

אמר לה: ניתא לך דמיכל אכלי כולי עלמא אפתורא דמשלם ואנן אפתורא דמחסר. אמרה לקה: ומאי נעביד? בעי רחמי דנשקלינהו מינה. בעי רחמי ונשקלוהו. תנא: גדול הנה נס אחרון יותר מן הראשון. דגמירי, דמיהב נהבי מישקל לא שקלי.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

תענית כה, א.

32

בחי יצחק צחוק ותענוג

On 50b-c Likkutei Torah cites the Ramaz that the souls at the resurrection will be of the level of Yitzchak, and refers to this maamar: Yitzchak is laughter and delight, to be revealed in the time to come. (The passage resolved for 27d, about bread and Netzach and Hod, does not bear on this point.)

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת שה"ש כז, ד, נ, ב.

PARAGRAPH 4

33

קח נא את בנך

G-d's command to Avraham to bring his beloved son Yitzchak as an offering.

בראשית כ"ב:2 Genesis 22:2

וַיֹּאמֶר קַח־נָא אֶת־בְּנֶךָ אֶת־יִחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר־אֶהְיֶה אֹתוֹ וְלִדְּךָ אֵלֶּיךָ אֲרִיץ הַמֶּרְיָה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ:

And He said: 'Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.'

אלה תולדות יצחק וגוי

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כב, ב. קטע מכאן נעתק בלקו"ת פי' ראה כה, רע"א.

34

כי ידוע הטבע לאהוב ההיפוך

The same principle of loving the opposite is discussed there, and the Chachlili maamar quotes a passage from here.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת נח ס, א. ובכרך ז לד"ה חכלילי סעי' ב מביא קטע מכאן.

35

מים קרים על נפש עיפה

The proverb says, "Like cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a distant land." The maamar takes only its image: the overheated, weary person longs for the cold that is his opposite.

משלי כ"ה:25 Proverbs 25:25

מִיָּם קָרִים עַל־נֶפֶשׁ עֵיפָה וְשִׂמוּעָה טוֹכָה מֵאַרְץ מְרֹחֶק:

As cold waters to a faint soul, So is good news from a far country.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי כה, כה.

PARAGRAPH 5

36

פחד יצחק

Yaakov calls G-d "the Fear of Yitzchak," the name the maamar gives to Yitzchak's quality of awe.

בראשית ל"א:מ"ב Genesis 31:42

לֹאֲלִי אֱלֹהִים אָבִי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִרְהָם וּפְחַד יִצְחָק הֵיחָ לִי כִּי עָתָה רִיגָם שְׁלָחַתִּנִּי אֶת־עֲנָנִי וְאֶת־יָגִיעַ כִּפִּי רָאָה אֱלֹקִים וַיֹּכַח אִמָּשׁ:

Except the G-d of my father, the G-d of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been on my side, surely now hadst thou sent me away empty. G-d hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and gave judgment yesternight.'

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37

הושיט הקב"ה אצבעו

The Gemara recounts that G-d burned a group of angels with His little finger when they objected to the creation of man; here it illustrates a revelation too great for its recipients.

סנהדרין ל"ח ב:ה'38b Sanhedrin 38b:5

אָמְרוּ לְפָנָיו: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, "מָה אָנוּשׁ כִּי תוֹכְרָנוּ וְכֵן אָדָם כִּי תַפְקְדֵנוּ?" הוֹשִׁיט אֶצְבָּעוֹ קִטְנָה בִּינְיָהוּ וְשָׂרְפָם. וְכֵן כַּת שְׂנִיָּה. כַּת שְׁלִישִׁית אָמְרוּ לְפָנָיו: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, רְאוּשׁוֹנִים שְׂאֲמָרוּ לְפָנָיו מָה הוֹעִילוֹ? כָּל הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלֵו שְׁלֵךְ הוּא. כָּל מָה שְׂאֲמָתָה רוֹצָה לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּעוֹלָמָהּ - עֲשֵׂה.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

סנהדרין לח, ב. ראה לקו"ת אמור לו, א.

PARAGRAPH 6

38 ויעקוד אותו על המזבח

Avraham bound Yitzchak and placed him on the altar above the wood; the maamar reads “the wood” as the two Trees.

בראשית כ"ב:ט"ז: Genesis 22:9

וַיָּבֹאוּ אֱלֹהֵי־מִקּוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר־לוֹ הָאֱלֹקִים וַיָּבֹן שָׁם אֲבִרָהָם אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיַּעֲרֹךְ אֶת־הַעֲצִים וַיַּעֲקֹד אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנֹו וַיִּשֶׁם אֹתוֹ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִמַּעַל לְעֲצִים:

And they came to the place which G-d had told him of; and Abraham built the altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כב, ט.

39 ופחד יצחק הי לי

Yaakov says the G-d of Avraham and the Fear of Yitzchak were with him.

בראשית ל"א:מ"ב: Genesis 31:42

לֹוֹלִי אֱלֹקִי אָבִי אֱלֹקֵי אֲבִרָהָם וַפֶּחַד יִצְחָק הָיָה לִי כִי עָתָה רִיקָם שְׁלַחְתָּנִי אֶת־עֲנָנִי וְאֶת־יָגִיעַ כַּפִּי רָאָה אֱלֹקִים וַיֹּוכַח אִמְשׁ:

Except the G-d of my father, the G-d of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been on my side, surely now hadst thou sent me away empty. G-d hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and gave judgment yesternight.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית לא, מב.

40 יעקב הי בחור שבאבות

The Midrash calls Yaakov the choicest of the Patriarchs.

בראשית רבה ע"ו:א' Bereshit Rabbah 76:1

... שני בני אדם הבטיחן הקב"ה ונתיראן: הבחור שבאבות והבחור שבנביאים. הבחור שבאבות, זה יעקב, שנאמר (שם קלח): כי יעקב בחר לו יה. ואמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: והנה אנכי עמך ובסוף נתיירא, שנאמר: ויירא יעקב! הבחור שבנביאים, זה משה, שנאמר (שם קו): לולי משה בחירו. ואמר לו הקב"ה כי אהיה עמך, ולבסוף נתיירא, (במדבר כא): ויאמר ה' אל משה אל תירא אותו, אינו אומר אל תירא אותו, אלא למי שנתיירא. ר' ברכיה ור' חלבו, בשם ר' שמואל בר נחמן, משם ר' נתן: ראויים היו ישראל כלייה בימי המן, אלולי ...

"Jacob was very frightened and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks, and the cattle, and the camels, into two camps" (Genesis 32:8). "Jacob was very frightened and distressed" - Rabbi Pinhas in the name of Rabbi Reuven: The Holy One blessed be He made a promise to two people, but they were afraid; the chosen of the patriarchs, and the chosen of the prophets. The chosen of the patriarchs - this is Jacob, as it is stated: "For the L-rd has chosen Jacob for ...

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Zohar I, 119b, זח"א קיט,

Zohar II, 23a, זח"ב כג,

Zohar III, 99b, זח"ג צט,

KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"ר עו, א. זח"א קיט, ב. קסג, ב. קעא, ב. רו, א. זח"ב כג, א. ראה זח"ג צט, ב: יצחק תושבחתיי דאבהן. ע"ח שער לח (שער לאה ורחל) פ"ב. לקו"ת להארז"ל תולדות כו, כה. לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 832 הערה 11.

41 יעקב היה בחור שבאבות

Another Zohar passage the Kehot notes cite for Yaakov as the choicest of the Patriarchs.

ספר זוהר, ויצא ל"ח:שנ"ט-38:347 Zohar, Vayetzei 38:347-359

So Jacob, in his desire to put himself right with that grade, "set the rods", that is, he removed all the influences of severity and force symbolised by the rods, and "placed them in the gutters", to wit, those four gutters i.e. the four Hayyoth, v. Ezek. 1, 5. that stand underneath "the well, which the princes digged" (Num. 21, 18), the well which was filled from those supernal rivers and fountains; for when water comes forth out of that sacred well, these four receive the whole of it, they being ...

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

42 יעקב היה בחור שבאבות

The Arizal's discussion of Leah and Rachel, cited by the Kehot notes for Yaakov's place among the Patriarchs.

עץ חיים ל"ח:ב' Sefer Etz Chaim 38:2

... ונחזור לענין כי ז"ה ויאהב יעקב את רחל כי היה אוהב ז"א את רחל יותר מלאה כי לזו נתן מוחין ממש ולזו הארה בעלמא ואע"פ שכפי האמת אם הכתוב מדבר בז"ל ויאהב ישראל את רחל כי ז"א הוא ישראל ואינו יעקב כנ"ל במקומו אבל הוא במה שנתבאר סבה אל משארז"ל כי יעקב הוא בחיר שבאבות. והטעם הוא כי בתחלה היה יעקב בסוד יעקב הנעשה מאחורי אבא כנ"ל שהם אחוריים דאבא שהוא עליון מאד ולא די זה אלא שאח"כ ע"י מעשיו עלה עוד ונמשך לו נשמה מן ז"א ממש ...

Sefer Etz Chaim (Public Domain)

43 מברית מן הקצה

The Zohar applies the middle bar to Yaakov, the middle line.

Zohar III, 186a, זח"ג קפו,

Zohar II, 175b, זח"ב קעה,

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"ג קפו, א. ראה זח"ב קעה, ב.

44 מברית מן הקצה

The middle bar of the Tabernacle ran from end to end; Yaakov is compared to it because he joins the two extremes.

שמות כ"ו:28 Exodus 26:28

והקברים התיכון בתוך הקצצה אלה הקצה:

and the middle bar in the midst of the boards, which shall pass through from end to end.

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ישע"י ב, כא.

PARAGRAPH 7

45 כי אתה אבינו

“For You are our father,” applied to Yitzchak in the future.

ישעיהו ס"ג:ט"ז: Isaiah 63:16

כִּי־אַתָּה אֲבִינוּ כִּי אֲבָרְהָם לֹא יָדְעֵנוּ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִפְרֹנוּ אֶתָּה ה' אֲבִינוּ
גִּאֲלֵנוּ מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמֶךָ:

For Thou art our Father; for Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us; Thou, O L-RD, art our Father, Our Redeemer from everlasting is Thy name.

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46 בלע המות לנצח

The promise that death will be swallowed up forever.

ישעיהו כ"ה:ח: Isaiah 25:8

בִּלְעַ הַמּוֹת לְנֶצַח וּמָחָה אֲדֹנָי ה' דִּמְעָה מֵעַל כָּל־פָּנִים וְחִרְפַּת עֲמוֹ יִסֹּר
מֵעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כִּי ה' דִּבֶּר:

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע"י כה, ח.

47 ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר

The promise to remove the spirit of impurity from the land.

זכריה י"ג:ב: Zechariah 13:2

וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נֹאֵם ה' צְבָאוֹת אֲכַרִּית אֶת־שְׁמוֹת הַעֲצָבִים מִן־הָאָרֶץ
וְלֹא יִזְכְּרוּ עוֹד וְגַם אֶת־הַנְּבִיאִים וְאֶת־רוּחַ הַטְּמָאָה אֲעַבִּיר מִן־הָאָרֶץ:

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.

48 לבא בנקרת הצורים

Isaiah says that when G-d arises to shake the earth, people will flee into the clefts of the rocks from the terror of Havayah. The maamar reads this “fear of Havayah” as the Fear of Yitzchak, awe and self-nullification, revealed below in the time to come.

ישעיהו כ"א:א: Isaiah 2:21

לְבֹא בְּנִקְרוֹת הָעֲרִים וּבְסַעֲפֵי הַסְּלָעִים מִפְּנֵי פֶחַד ה' וּמִהֲדָר גְּאוֹנוֹ בְּקוֹמוֹ
לְעֶרֶץ הָאֲרָץ:

To go into the clefts of the rocks, And into the crevices of the crags, From before the terror of the L-RD, And from the glory of His majesty, When he ariseth to shake mightily the earth.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

49

וראו כל בשר

Isaiah's promise: “And the glory of Havayah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see together.” The maamar uses it for the open revelation of G-dliness below in the time to come.

ישעיהו מ"ה:ו: Isaiah 40:5

וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה' וְרָאוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר וְיִחְדּוּ 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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PARAGRAPH 8

50 אלה תולדות יצחק בן אברהם. אברהם הוליד את יצחק

The verse names Avraham twice and Yitzchak twice.

בראשית כ"ה:י"ט: Genesis 25:19

וְאַלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם אֲבָרְהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִצְחָק:

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begot Isaac.

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51 אשה מזרעת תחלה

The Gemara teaches that if the woman emits seed first the child is male.

ברכות ס"א:י"ד: Berakhot 60a:14

ומי מהני רחמי? והאמר רב יצחק בריה דרב אמרי: איש מזריע תחלה — יולדת נקבה, אשה מזרעת תחלה — יולדת זכר. שנאמר: “אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר!” הכא במאי עסקינן — כגון שהזריעו שניהם בבת אחת.

But is it of any avail to pray [during the first forty days that it should be a male child]? For lo, R. Isaac b. R. Ammi has said : If it is the man who first emits seed his wife bears a daughter ; but if the woman first emits seed she gives birth to a son ; as it is said, "If a woman emits seed and bare a male child" (Lev. xii. 2)! With what are we here dealing ? For instance, if they both emit seed ...

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Niddah 31a:23-24 כ"ג-כ"ד:ג-כ"ד: Niddah 31a:23-24

אמר רבי יצחק, אמר רבי אמרי: אשה מזרעת תחילה — יולדת זכר, איש מזריע תחילה — יולדת נקבה, שנאמר: “אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר.” תנו רבנן: בראשונה היו אומרים — אשה מזרעת תחילה יולדת זכר, איש מזריע תחלה יולדת נקבה, ולא פירשו חכמים את הדבר, עד שבא רבי צדוק ופירשו: “אלה בני לאה אשר ילדה לעקב בפתן ארם ואת דינה בתו” — תלה הזכרים בנקבות ונקבות בזכרים.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ברכות ס, א. נדה לא, א. בהמשך תעריב כרך ג ע' אישג מציין לכאן.

PARAGRAPH 10

52 תולדות יצחק הוא בן אברהם כו'. ואח"כ אברהם הוליד את יצחק

The opening verse, now fully explained.

בראשית כ"ה:י"ט: Genesis 25:19

וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם אֲבִירָהּם הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִצְחָק:

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son:
Abraham begot Isaac.

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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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The Rebbe asked that the maamarim of the week's parsha, the "Chassidishe Parsha," be learned during that week, spread over its seven days (Sichah of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel 5725 · Toras Menachem vol. 42, pp. 306-309). Why learn it, and the Rebbe's brachos: likuteitorah.com/about/the-chassidishe-parsha/

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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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