

1. "Hearken to me, you stout-hearted"

There are people in our world who are hardhearted, stubborn, and set in their evil and selfish ways. The Zohar describes these people as refusing to change the negative aspects of their natures. They seek not to embrace the path of spiritual transformation and the Light of the Creator. All of us, to a certain degree, possess an aspect of these negative traits.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power available to us through these verses cleanses away negative qualities from our essence and being. The Light flowing through this portion helps to soften our resolve in situations where our stubbornness and ego prevents us from embracing spiritual change. The verses arouse a desire to seek a true connection to the Light of the Creator.

1. "Get you, out of your country..." (Beresheet 12:1). Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with THIS VERSE AND TO EXPLAIN THE REASON WHY AVRAHAM MERITED THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WOULD SAY THIS TO HIM RATHER THAN TO ANY OTHER PERSON OF HIS TIME. "Hearken to me, you stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness" (Yeshayah 46:12), MEANS how hard are the hearts of the wicked, who see the paths and the ways of Torah, yet do not observe them. THE PATHS ARE THE INTERNAL ASPECTS; THE WAYS ARE THE EXTERNAL ASPECTS. And the hearts of the wicked are stout, as they do not repent and turn back to their Master. THIS IS THE REASON WHY they are called stout-hearted. The verse, "that are far from righteousness," MEANS THAT they keep themselves far from Torah; THIS IS WHY THEY REMAIN "FAR FROM RIGHTEOUSNESS."

2. Rabbi Chizkiyah commented ON THE AFOREMENTIONED VERSE: "Since they draw themselves away from the Holy One, blessed be He, therefore they remain far away from Him. And because of this, BECAUSE THEY KEEP FAR AWAY FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, they are called stout-hearted. AND THE VERSE TEACHES US THAT they "are far from righteousness." FOR WHAT REASON? BECAUSE they do not wish to come closer to the Holy One, blessed be He, AS THEY ARE STOUT-HEARTED. And because of this, they "are far from righteousness." Because they are far from righteousness, they are also far from peace-they can have no peace. As it is written: "There is no peace, says Hashem, to the wicked" (Yeshayah 48:22). And why is that so? Because they "are far from righteousness," THEY HAVE NO PEACE!

3. Come and behold: Avraham indeed succeeded in his desire to get closer to the Holy One, blessed be He. As it is written: "You love righteousness and hate wickedness" (Tehilim 45:8). Because he loved righteousness and hated wickedness, he therefore came closer to righteousness. Therefore, it is written: "Avraham my beloved" (Yeshayah 41:8). Why IS HE "my beloved?" Because it has been said about him, "You love righteousness." This is the love toward the Holy One, blessed be He, whom Avraham loved more than anyone else of his generation, who were "stout-hearted" and "far from righteousness," as has already been explained.

1. לך לך מארצך וגו'. ר' אבא פתח ואמר, שמעו אלי אבירי לב הרחוקים מצדקה. שמעו אלי אבירי לב: כמה תקיפין לביהו דחייבא, דחמאן שבילי ואורחי דאורייתא, ולא מסתכלן בהו, ולביהו תקיפין, דלא מהדרין בתשובתא, לגבי מריהון, ואקרון אבירי לב. הרחוקים מצדקה: דמתרחקי מאורייתא.

2. רבי חזקיה אמר, דמתרחקי מקודשא בריך הוא, ואינן רחיקין מניה, ובגין כך, אקרון אבירי לב. הרחוקים מצדקה. דלא בעאן לקרבא לגבי קודשא בריך הוא. בגין כך, אינן רחוקים מצדקה. ביון דאינן רחוקים מצדקה, רחוקים אינן משלום. דלית לון שלום. דכתיב אין שלום אמר ה' לרשעים. מ"ט בגין דאינן רחוקים מצדקה.

3. תא חזי, אברהם בעי לקרבא לקודשא בריך הוא, ואתקרב. הה"ד אהבת צדק ותשנא רשע. בגין דאהב צדק, ושנא רשע, אתקרב לצדקה, ועל דא כתיב, אברהם אוהבי. מ"ט אוהבי, בגין דכתיב, אהבת צדק. רחימותא דקודשא בריך הוא, דרחים ליה אברהם, מפל בגי דריה, דהו אבירי לב, ואינן רחוקים מצדקה, כמה דאתמר.

2. Upon what the world exists

The Zohar discusses our ignorance concerning the pillars that sustain our world, the unseen spiritual forces that give rise to all existence. The Zohar then focuses on another concept concerning the power of midnight. Great importance is attached to spiritual study and work during the hours from midnight to sunrise, when the Light of the Creator is intensified in our physical realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

The increased spiritual power released into the cosmos during the intervening hours of midnight and morning, is made available to us by the words and wisdom that comprise this portion.

4. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion by saying: "How lovely are Your dwelling places, Hashem Tzva'ot" (Tehilim 84:2)1. How important it is for people to observe the works of the Holy One, blessed be He! All people do not observe and are not aware of what keeps the world in existence. Nor are they aware of what keeps them in existence! THESE TWO SUBJECTS ARE EXPLAINED HERE TO US. When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He made the heaven from fire and water. At first, these elements mingled together without freezing. Only later, by means of the Supernal Spirit, did they freeze and solidify. Then, THE HEAVENS, WHICH ARE ZEIR ANPIN, planted the world, THE NUKVA, to be established upon supports, THE THREE COLUMNS OF THE NUKVA. And the supports stand only by the help of the Spirit, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN BETWEEN THEM. When that Spirit is gone, the supports are loosened and they quake, and the world is shaken. This is the meaning of, "Who shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble" (Iyov 9:6). And everything is established upon Torah, for when Yisrael are busy with Torah, THEY ELEVATE MAYIN NUKVIN (LIT. 'FEMALE WATERS') TO ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, AND DRAW THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS TORAH. Then the world is established, and the pillars, THE THREE COLUMNS OF ZEIR ANPIN, and the supports, THE THREE COLUMNS OF THE NUKVA, are perfectly situated in their places.

5. Come and behold: When midnight is aroused, and the Holy One, blessed be He, enters the Garden of Eden to enjoy the company of the righteous, all the trees in the Garden of Eden sing and praise Him, as it is written: "Then shall the trees of the forest sing for joy at the presence of Hashem" (I Divrei Hayamim 16:33).

6. A crier comes forth and forcefully calls, "You, mighty, holy men! To him among you who has allowed the spirit to enter, and his ears to hear, who has eyes open to see and who has a heart that is open to know! BY THIS CRIER, THE RIGHTEOUS AWAKEN FROM THEIR SLEEP, DELVE TO THE STUDY OF TORAH, AND DRAW THE CENTRAL COLUMN. When the spirit, which is the source of all spirits, arouses the sweetness of the soul, a voice comes from there, which is the source of all voices, and disperses all forces to the four corners of the world.

7. One goes up to one side, TO THE RIGHT OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE SOUTH. THE SECOND one descends to the other side, TO THE LEFT SIDE OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE NORTH. Another enters in between the two, BECOMES THE CENTRAL COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE EAST. IN OTHER WORDS, ZEIR ANPIN IS PLACED BETWEEN THE TWO COLUMNS OF BINAH. AND THESE THREE DIRECTIONS, SOUTH, NORTH, AND EAST, ARE THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN. Two are crowned AND SHINE by BECOMING three, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET BY THE THIRD, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN THAT RECONCILES THEM. And three enter the one, BECAUSE THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF TIFERET, RECEIVES AND EXPANDS BY ITSELF TO THREE OTHER COLUMNS, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD. One, WHICH RECONCILES, NAMELY TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, produced colors. IN OTHER WORDS, FROM HIM EMANATED THE SFIROT OF THE NUKVA THAT ARE CALLED 'COLORS'. Six of them-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, descended to one side, NAMELY TO THE RIGHT, and another six-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, descended to the other side, NAMELY TO THE LEFT. SO all six-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD-become twelve SFIROT. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SIX SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN EXPANDED TO THE NUKVA AND BECAME TWELVE SFIROT, WITH SIX TO HER RIGHT AND SIX TO HER LEFT. The twelve SFIROT EXPAND AND become twenty-two

4. ר' יוסי פתח, מה ידירות משכנותיך ה' צבאות. כמה אית לון לבני נשא, לאסתכלא בפולחנא דקודשא בריך הוא. דהא כל בני נשא, לא ידעי ולא מסתכלי על מה קאים עלמא. ואינון על מה קיימין. דכד ברא קודשא בריך הוא עלמא, עבד שמיא, מאש וממים מתערבין כחדא, ולא הוו גלדי. ולבתר אגלדו, וקיימו ברוחא עלאה. ומתמן שתיל עלמא, לקיימא על סמכין. ואינון סמכין, לא קיימין, אלא בההוא רוחא. ובשעתא דההוא רוחא אסתלק, בלהו מרפפין וזעין, ועלמא ארתת. הה"ד המרגיז ארץ ממקומה ועמודיה יתפלצון. וכלא קאים על אורייתא, דכד ישראל משתדלי באורייתא, מתקיים עלמא, ואינון קיימין, וסמכין קיימין באתרייהו, בקיומא שלים.

5. תא חזי בשעתא דאתער פלגות ליליא, וקודשא בריך הוא עאל לגנתא דערן, לאשתעשעא עם צדיקיא. בלהו אילנין דבגנתא דערן, מזמרן ומשבחן קמיה. דכתיב, אז ירגנו עצי היער מלפני ה' וגו'.

6. וכרוזא קארי בחיל, ואמר, לכון אמרין קדישין עליונין, מאן מנכון, דעויל רוחא באורנו, למשמע. ועינוי פקחין למחמי. ולביה פתוח למנדע. בשעתא, דרוחא דכל רוחין, ארים בסימו דנשמתא, ומתמן, נמיק קלא דקליא, חילין אתבדר לארבע סטרי עלמא.

7. חד סליק, לסטר חד. חד נחית לההוא סטר. חד עייל, בין תרין. תרין מתעטרן בתלת. תלת עיילי בחד. חד אפיק גוונין. שית מנהון, לסטר חד. ושית מנהון, נחתי לההוא סטר. שית עיילי בתריסר. תריסר מתערין בעשרין ותריין. שית, כלילן בעשרה. עשרה קאים בחד.

SFIROT. THE six OF ZEIR ANPIN DO NOT BECOME TWELVE HERE, BUT are RATHER included within the ten. THIS IS BECAUSE the ten exist as one.

8. Woe to those who slumber as sleep covers their eyes sockets- THOSE WHO DO NOT AWAKE FROM THEIR SLEEP TO STUDY TORAH AND DRAW THE CENTRAL COLUMN. THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT COLUMN BLOCKS OFF THE LIGHT NECESSARY FOR THEIR EYESIGHT AND MAKES THEM DROWSY. AS A RESULT, THEY HAVE NO EYES, THAT IS, MOCHIN. THERE IS SLEEP IN THEIR EYE SOCKETS. They do not know and are unable to observe how and in what condition they shall awaken on the Day of Judgment, when they shall be visited upon to settle the account-when the body is defiled and the soul floats on the afternoon air, going up and down, but the gates do not open for it. They are thrown around like the pebbles in the hollow of a sling. Woe to them. Who shall ask about them when they shall not arise to this place of pleasure? In the place where the righteous have pleasure, they shall be missing. They shall be passed on to the angel Dumah, go down TO GEHENOM and not rise. They are described by the words, "As the cloud is consumed and vanishes away, so he who goes down to Sh'ol shall come up no more." (Iyov 7:9)

9. At that hour, THAT IS, MIDNIGHT, a flame is awakened from the North strikes the four corners of the world, SINCE THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT COLUMN, WHICH IS JUDGMENT, EXPANDS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. It descends and touches the cock between its wings, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF GAVRIEL. As the flame awakens it, it crows. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE CRIER MENTIONED BEFORE WITH THE WORDS, "A CRIER COMES FORTH AND FORCEFULLY ANNOUNCES..." But the only ones who awaken to the calling of the cock are the truly righteous, who delve to the study of Torah, DRAWING THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, together with all the righteous in the Garden of Eden, listen attentively to their voice. As it is written: "You who dwell in the gardens, the companions hearken to your voice: cause me to hear it" (Shir Hashirim 8:13).

3. "Now Hashem said to Avram"

There is a unique process of preparation that a soul undergoes prior to entering our physical realm. This process consists of promises and commitments made by the soul to the Creator. The soul pledges to embrace the spiritual path of change through Torah and Kabbalah during its lifetime. The specific Torah portion that relates to this passage of Zohar is Lech Lecha, which translates into Go You, Out of Your Country. The verse concerns God's call to Abraham to leave and go out from his homeland and enter into the Land of Israel. The story is a code and a metaphor concerning the journey of the soul as it leaves the Upper World on its sojourn into our earthly realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

The perpetual pull and tug of the material world is of such magnitude, we forget our true purpose in life as we succumb to the illusions of physical existence. Hence, we need the Light of this portion to reawaken our desire to remain true to our own soul's original commitment to pursue the spiritual path.

Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

10. We have learned that because of the strong desire of the King, WHO IS BINA, a great and strong tree, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, was planted. GREAT IS THE SECRET OF THE MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH, AND STRONG IS THE SECRET OF THE MOCHIN OF CHASSADIM. Among the supernal plants, WHICH ARE THE SFIROT OF BINA, this tree, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, is planted. It turns between twelve borders, and its leg expands to the four winds of the world.

11. Its journeys were measured at five hundred Persian miles. The desires of these Persian miles, REFERRING TO THEIR WAYS OF BESTOWING ABUNDANCE, come on Him, ON ZEIR ANPIN. So when He awakens, all awaken with Him, and no one is capable of diverting His will. After that, all are united and join His will.

8. וְזֶה לְאִינּוֹן דְּנִיּוּמֵי שִׁינָתָא בְּחֹרִיחוֹן, לֹא יָרְעִי וְלֹא מִסְתַּבְּלָאן אִיךְ יְקוּמוֹן בְּדִינָא, רְחוּשְׁבֵן אֲתַפְקֵד, בְּד אֶסְתָּאב גּוּפָא, וְנִשְׁמָתָא שְׁטִיָא, עַל אֲנָפִי דְאִוִּירָא דְטִיְהִירָא, וְסֻלְקָא וְנִחְתָא, וְתִרְעִין לֹא מִתְפַּתְחֵן, מִתְגַּלְגֵּלָן כְּאֲבָנִין בְּגוֹ קוֹסְפִיתָא. וְזֶה לֹון, מֵאן יִתְבַּע לֹון, דְלֹא יְקוּמוֹן בְּעֶדְוֹנָא דָא, בְּגוֹ דּוּכְתִי דְעֻנּוּגִי דְצִדִיקָיָא, אֲתַפְקֵדוֹן דּוּכְתִיָהּ. אֲתַמְסְרוֹן בִּידָא דְדוּמָה, נִחְתִי וְלֹא סֻלְקִי. עַלִיָהּ בְתִיב, כְּלָה עֵן וְיִלֵךְ בֶּן יוֹרֵד שְׁאוּל לֹא יַעֲלֶה.

9. בְּהֵיא שְׁעָתָא אֲתַעַר שְׁלֵהוּבָא חֹד מִסְטֵר צִפּוֹן, וּבִטְשׁ בְּאַרְבַּע סְטֵרֵי עֲלֵמָא, וְנִחִית וּמְטִי, בֵּין גְּדַפֵּי דְתִרְנֻגּוּלָא. וְאֲתַעַר הֵהוּא שְׁלֵהוּבָא בִיה, וְקִרִי. וְלִית מֵאן דְאֲתַעַר, בְּר אִינּוֹן זְכָאִי קְשׁוּט, דְקִיּוּמִי וְאֲתַעַרוּ בְּאוֹרִייתָא. וּכְדִין קוּדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, וְכָל אִינּוֹן צִדִיקָיָא, דְבְּגוֹ גִּנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן, צִיִּיתִי לְקִלְיָהּ. בְּד"א, הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּגַנִּים חֲבֵרִים מְקַשְׁיָבִים לְקוֹלֵךְ הַשְּׁמִיעִנִי.

סְטֵרֵי תוֹרָה

10. תָּאנָא. בְּתוּקְפָא דְהֶרְמֵנוּ דְמִלְכָּא, אֲנִצִּיב חֹד אִילָנָא רַבָּא וְתִקִּי. גּוֹ נְטִיעֵן עֲלָאִין, נְטִיעַ אִילָנָא דָא. בְּתִרְסֵר תַּחֲוּמִין, אֶסְתַּחֲר. בְּאַרְבַּע סְטֵרִין דְעֲלֵמָא, מְרִישָׁא רְגִלִּיהּ.

11. ת"ק פְּרָסִי מִטְלָנוּ, כָּל רְעוּתִין, דְאִינּוֹן פְּרָסִין, בִּיה תִּלְיִין. בְּד אֲתַעַר הָאִי, כְּלָהוּ מִתְעַרִּין בְּהִדְרִיהּ, לִית מֵאן דְנִפְקִי מִרְעוּתִיהּ. לְבַתֵּר, כְּלָהוּ בְרְעוּתָא חָדָא בְּהִדְרִיהּ.

12. He, ZEIRANPIN, arises from above, AFTER HE HAS RECEIVED MOCHIN FROM BINAH, and descends throughout His journeys to the sea, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. SO, HE GIVES HIS ABUNDANCE TO THE NUKVA. He fills the sea, as He is the source of all the lights that spring IN THE SEA. Underneath Him, all the waters of the Beginning of the Creation are divided. The watering of the Garden, WHICH IS MALCHUT, depends on Him, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN.

13. All souls of the world come forth from Him, FROM ZEIR ANPIN. These souls enter the Garden, THE NUKVA, and descend into this world IN ORDER TO BE ENCLOTHED IN A BODY. When a soul leaves THERE AND IS ON ITS WAY DOWN TO THIS WORLD, it receives seven blessings so that it may be a father to the body being rightly elevated. Thus, it is written: "Now Hashem said to Avram" (Beresheet 12:1). This is the divine supernal soul, WHICH IS CALLED AVRAM. IT CONSISTS OF TWO WORDS, AV (lit. 'FATHER') AND RAM (lit. 'SUPERNAL'). It is considered the father of the body and elevates to the level of the divine image, BY THE CHASSIDIM THAT ARE DRAWN AS IT ELEVATES AND REACHES ABA AND IMA.

14. When the soul is ready to descend to this world, the Holy One, blessed be He, makes it swear to perform the precepts of Torah and do His bidding. And He gives each soul one hundred keys of blessings for each and every day, so that it may complete the supernal grades, which reach the numerical value of Lech Lecha (lit. 'Get you out'), WHICH EQUALS ONE HUNDRED. All of them are given to it, TO THE SOUL, so that it may cultivate the Garden, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, to till it and to keep it. "Your country" is the Garden of Eden.

15. The verse, "and from your kindred" MEANS from the body, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, that is called 'the Tree of Life'. And it includes the twelve supernal tribes, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF THE TWELVE BORDERS. THIS PASSAGE INFORMS US THAT THE SOUL IS AN OFFSPRING OF ZEIR ANPIN AND COMES FORTH FROM HIM. THE VERSE "and from your father's house" refers to the Shechinah, WHICH IS CALLED THE HOUSE. "Your father" means the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN. As it is written: "He who steals from his father or his mother, and says it is no transgression..." (Mishlei 28:24). "His father" is none other than the Holy One, blessed be He, and "his mother" is none other than the Congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. The words, "to the land that I will show you," refer to this world, TO WHICH THE SOUL IS SENT.
(End of Sitrei Torah).

16. What is written before the verse, "Hashem said to Avram..."? The words: "And Haran died before his father Terach" (Beresheet 11:28). AND HE ASKS: Of what does he want to inform us BY SAYING "BEFORE" HIS FATHER, TERACH? IF YOU CLAIM THAT "BEFORE" MEANS DURING HIS FATHER'S LIFETIME, this cannot be, for had no other person until that day died during his father's lifetime beside Haran? NEVERTHELESS, IN ALL OTHER INCIDENTS, THE WORD "BEFORE" IS NOT USED. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN HEVEL DIED DURING THE LIFETIME OF ADAM, HIS FATHER, AND WHEN CHANOKH, WHO WAS TAKEN BY ELOHIM DURING THE LIFETIME OF YERED, HIS FATHER. AND HE EXPLAINS THAT When Avraham was thrown to the fire, Charan was killed. Because of this, they left UR CASDIM.

12. קם מלעילא, נחית במטלנוי לגו ימא. מניה ימא אתמליא. איהו מקורא דכל מיון דנבעין. תחותיה מתפלגין כל מימיו דבראשית. שקיו דגנתא, ביה תליין.

13. כל נשמתין דעלמא, מניה פרחין. נשמתין אלין עאלין בגנתא, לנחתא להאי עלמא. נשמתא בד נפקא, אתברכא בשבע ברכאן, למהוי אבא לגופא, בסליקו עלאה. הה"ד ויאמר ה' אל אברם. הא נשמתא עלאה אבא לגופא בסליקו דדיוקנא עלאה.

14. בד בעיא לנחתא להאי עלמא, אומי לה קודשא בריך הוא למיטר פקדי אורייתא, ולמעבד רעותיה. ומסר לה מאה מפתחאן דברכאן, דכל יומא, לאשלמא לדרגין עלאין, כחושבן לך לך. דהא בלהו אתמסר לה, בגין לאתקנא בהו לגנתא, ולמפלח לה ולנטרא לה. מארצך, דא גנתא דערן.

15. ומולדתך, דא גופא, דאתקרי אילנא דחיי, דאיהו תריסר שבטין עלאין. ומבית אביך, דא שכינתא. אביך, דא קודשא בריך הוא. שנאמר גוזל אביו ואמו ואומר אין פשע וגו', ואין אביו אלא קודשא בריך הוא. ואין אמו אלא בנסת ישראל. אל הארץ אשר אראך. דא איהו האי עלמא.
(עד כאן סתרי תורה)

16. ויאמר ה' אל אברם. מה כתיב לעילא וימת הרן על פני תרח אביו וגו'. מאי איריא הכא, אלא עד ההוא יומא, לא הוה בר נש, דמית בחיי אבוי, בר דא. דכד אתרמי אברם לנורא, אתקטיל הרן, ובגין דא, נפקו מתמן.

4. "...and they left with them from Ur Casdim"

The Zohar examines a flickering flame wedded to the wick of a lit candle. Interestingly, a simple wick is able to generate a dazzling flame. Likewise, a simple action on the part of mankind, a single desire to change our ways is all that is required to set aflame the Light of the Creator within our soul. When this Light burns brightly in our life, we draw the strength and power to thoroughly transform our nature.
The Relevance of this Passage

The wonderful analogy concerning the wick and a candle flame is presented by the Zohar to help us arouse the Light of the Creator, giving us the strength to make the necessary spiritual changes in our own life. "One simple action" includes reading these very words, along with the Aramaic text, which ignites resplendent flames of spiritual Light.

17. Come and behold, It is written: "And Terach took Avram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran...and they left with them from Ur Casdim" (Beresheet 11:31). HE ASKS: WHY IS IT WRITTEN: "And they left with them," when it should have been written: "with him," NAMELY WITH TERACH? If, as it is written: "And Terach took..." why IS IT THEN WRITTEN: "with them?" BECAUSE Terach and Lot left with Avraham and Sarah, who really wanted to depart from among the wicked. Only after Terach saw that Avraham his son was saved from the fire did he return to follow Avraham's wishes. As a result, Terach and Lot "left with them."

18. And when they left "to go to the land of Cna'an" it was because they desired to go there. From this we learn that whoever asks to be purified will be helped. Come and behold that this is so! Because the words, "to go to the land of Cna'an," are immediately followed by the words, "Now Hashem said to Avram, 'Get you out'." So before his desire TO GO TO THE LAND OF CNA'AN was awakened, it was not yet written: "Get you out." THEREFORE, HE WHO ASKS AND WAKES ON HIS OWN FROM BELOW IS HELPED FROM ABOVE, BECAUSE WITHOUT AWAKENING FROM BELOW THERE IS NO AWAKENING FROM ABOVE.

19. Come and see: Nothing is aroused above before it is first aroused below, so that what is aroused above rests upon it. The secret is that the black flame OF THE CANDLE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, does not hold on to the white flame OF THE CANDLE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, before it is aroused. As soon as it is aroused first, the white flame immediately rests upon it. THIS IS SO BECAUSE THE LOWER ONE HAS TO BE AROUSED FIRST.

20. Therefore it is written: "Do not keep silent, Elohim; do not hold your peace, and be still, El" (Tehilim 83:2), so that the white flame will never cease to exist in the world. BECAUSE ELOHIM IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE BLACK FLAME. SO IF IT DOES NOT HOLD ITS PEACE AND BE STILL AND IF IT NEVER CEASES TO BE AWAKENED FROM BELOW, THEN THE WHITE FLAME, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, SHALL ALWAYS REST UPON IT FROM ABOVE. "You who make mention of Hashem, take no rest" (Yeshayah 62:6) so that there will always be awakening from below on which that from above should come and rest upon it. Therefore, when a person first arouses the awakening from below, the awakening from above is aroused. Come and behold, It is written: "and they went out with them from Ur Casdim." Immediately, "Hashem said to Avram..." THIS MEANS THAT HE RECEIVED HELP FROM ABOVE. THE REASON IS THAT THE LIGHT NEEDS SOMETHING CRUDE FROM BELOW TO CLING ONTO AND THIS CRUDE OBJECT OR ACTION IS ENTIRELY IN THE HANDS OF THE LOWER WORLD.

5. "Get you out," for your sake

All the supernal forces that govern the various countries and cities of our world are brought to light by the Zohar. Avraham masters the knowledge concerning all these diverse metaphysical intelligences that rule and administer over the cosmos. However, the Creator tells him not to direct his mind towards these supernal matters. Rather, Avraham should focus upon his spiritual work in this physical realm, placing his trust in the Creator regarding the workings of the metaphysical dimension.

The Relevance of this Passage

The ability to trust the Creator above the level of our rational mind and logic, radiates throughout this passage. Often, we mistake the pursuance of otherworldly mystical knowledge for the real spiritual work in this mundane world. This truth is understood through a story concerning the great sage Hillel, who was asked to reveal all the supernal mysteries and secrets of the Torah in the short time that he can remain balanced on one leg.

17. תָּא חֲזִי, מַה בְּתִיב, וַיִּקַּח תֶּרַח אֶת אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ וְאֶת לוֹט בֶּן הָרָן וְגו'. וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים. וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם. אֹתוֹ מִפְּעֵי לֵיה. דְּהָא כְּתִיב וַיִּקַּח תֶּרַח וְגו'. מֵאִי, וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם. אֵלָּא, תֶּרַח וְלוֹט, עִם אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה נִפְקוּ, דְּאִינוּן הוּוּ עֲקָרָא לְמִיפָק מִגּוֹ אִינוּן חֲיִיבָא. דְּכִינוּן דְּחֵמָא תֶּרַח, דְּאַבְרָהָם בְּרִיה, אֲשֶׁתְּזִיב מִגּוֹ נוֹרָא, אֲתַהֲדֵר לְמַעְבַּד רְעוּתִיה דְּאַבְרָהָם, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם תֶּרַח וְלוֹט.

18. וּבְשַׁעְתָּא דְּנִפְקוּ, מַה בְּתִיב, לְלַכְתָּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן. דְּרַעוּתָא דְּלַהוּן הוּוּ לְמִיּהָר תַּמּוּן. מִכָּאן אוֹלִיפְנָא, כָּל מָאן דְּאֲתַעֲר לְאַתְדַּכָּא, מְסִייעִין לֵיה. תָּא חֲזִי דְּהִכִּי הוּא. דְּכִינוּן דְּכְתִיב, לְלַכְתָּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן, מִיָּד וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָהָם לֵךְ לָךְ, וְעַד דְּאִיהוּ אֲתַעֲר בְּקַדְמִיתָא, לֹא כְּתִיב לֵךְ לָךְ.

19. תָּא חֲזִי. מַלְּה דְּלַעֲיִלָּא לֹא אֲתַעֲר, עַד דְּאֲתַעֲר לְתַתָּא בְּקַדְמִיתָא, עַל מַה דְּתַשְׁרִי הֵהִיא דְּלַעֲיִלָּא. וְרָזָא דְּמַלְּה, נְהוּרָא אוּכְמָא, לֹא אֲתַאחִיד בְּנְהוּרָא חוּרָא. עַד דְּאִיהִי אֲתַעֲרִית בְּקַדְמִיתָא. כִּינוּן דְּאִיהִי אֲתַעֲרִית בְּקַדְמִיתָא. מִיָּד נְהוּרָא חוּרָא שְׂרִינָא עָלָה.

20. וְעַד בְּתִיב אֱלֹקִים אֵל דְּמִי לֵךְ אֵל תַּחֲרַשׁ וְאַל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל. בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִתְפַּסֵּק נְהוּרָא חוּרָא מְעַלְמָא, לְעַלְמִין. וְכֵן הַמְזִכִּירִים אֶת ה' אֵל דְּמִי לָכֶם. בְּגִין, לְאַתְעֲרָא לְתַתָּא, בְּמַה דִּישְׁרִי אֲתַעֲרוּתָא דְּלַעֲיִלָּא. וְכֵן כִּינוּן דְּאֲתַעֲר בְּרִנְשׁ, אֲתַעֲרוּתָא בְּקַדְמִיתָא, כְּדִין אֲתַעֲר, אֲתַעֲרוּתָא דְּלַעֲיִלָּא. תָּא חֲזִי, כִּינוּן דְּכְתִיב וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים וְגו', מִיָּד וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵל אַבְרָם וְגו'.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself. All the rest is commentary. Now and go and learn," the sage replied.

21. "Now Hashem said to Avram, Get you out (lit. 'go for you')..." According to Rabbi Elazar, the phrase "Go for you," means "for yourself." IN OTHER WORDS, go out for yourself, to fulfill yourself and complete your grade. "Get you out," for you must not stay here among the wicked.

22. The secret BEHIND THE WORDS "Get you out" is that the Holy One, blessed be He, inspired Avraham with the spirit of wisdom. He knew how to judge the spirits (also winds) of the civilized world. He observed them, weighed them in the scales, and knew how to connect them to the powers entrusted to govern the inhabited places on earth.

23. When he reached the middle point of civilization, he weighed it in the scales, but could not reach any conclusion. THIS MEANS THAT HE ELEVATED MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) IN ORDER TO DRAW DOWN THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM TO THAT PLACE, BUT DID NOT SUCCEED. He tried to see and to know what sort of power governed that place, but could not conceive it.

24. He weighed a few more times before realizing that the whole world sprouts from that place and is established upon it. He observed carefully, and measured, so as to understand the subject, and concluded that the supernal force above it could not be measured, that it is deep and hidden, and that it does not resemble the different parts of the inhabited land.

25. He watched attentively, weighed, and realized that the middle point of the inhabited world is the point from which the whole world moves out to all its corners, WHICH MEANS THAT THE POINT GOVERNS ALL THE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN AND ALL THE SFIROT OF NUKVA, WHICH ARE NAMED THE CORNERS OF THE WORLD, SINCE THE POINT IS PLACED ABOVE THEM. Similarly, he knew the power that now prevails over the point. AS A RESULT, all other powers that govern the corners of the world originate from that point and all THE SFIROT hold to it. Then "they went out with them from Ur Casdim, to go to the land of Cna'an."

26. He continued to observe, weigh, and examine in an effort to determine the nature of that place, but he was unable to understand it so as to cleave to it. He saw the strength of that place and realized that he could not understand it, and therefore immediately, "they came to Charan, and dwelt there." (Beresheet 11:31).

27. HE ASKS: Why did Avraham DELAY IN CHARAN AND NOT LEAVE THERE IMMEDIATELY, "TO GO TO THE LAND OF CNA'AN," AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND THEY DWELT THERE"? AND HE ANSWERS: Avraham knew and checked all the governors and rulers of the world that had dominion over the entire civilized world. And he was examining all those who govern and rule over the directions of the world's inhabited land, all those that have dominion over the stars and the constellations. He learned how they exercise their power over one another. In considering all the inhabited places in the world, he did well. But when he reached that place, THE POINT OF MALCHUT, he saw the force of the depths. And he could not withstand it.

21. וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם לֵךְ לְךָ. אָמַר ר' אֶלְעָזָר, לֵךְ לְךָ: לְגַרְמָךְ, לְאַתְקֵנָא גְרָמְךָ. לְאַתְקֵנָא דְרָגָא דִּילָךְ. לֵךְ לְךָ. לִית אַנְתָּ בְדָאי לְמִיקָם הָכָא, בֵּין חַיִּיבִין אֵלִין.

22. וְרָזָא דְמַלְהָ, לֵךְ לְךָ. דְהָא קוּדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, יְהִיב לִיה לְאַבְרָהָם, רוּחָא דְחֻכְמָתָא, וְהוּה יָדַע וּמְצָרָף סְטָרֵי דִּישׁוּבֵי עֲלָמָא, וְאַסְתַּכֵּל בְּהוּ. וְאַתְקֵל בְּתִיקְלָא, וְיָדַע חִילִין דִּי מִמֶּנּוּ עַל סְטָרֵי יִישׁוּבָא.

23. בְּדַ מְטָא לְגוּ נְקוּדָה דְאַמְצָעִיתָא דִּישׁוּבָא, תְּקִיל בְּתִיקְלָא וְלֹא הוּה סְלִיק בִּידֵיהּ, אֲשַׁגַּח לְמִנְדַּע חִילָא דִּי מִמֶּנָּא עֲלָה, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בְּרַעוּתֵיהּ.

24. תְּקִיל כַּמָּה זְמָנִין, וְחָמָא, דְהָא מִתְמָן אֲשַׁתִּיל כָּל עֲלָמָא. אֲשַׁגַּח וְצָרָף וְתַקֵּל לְמִנְדַּע, וְחָמָא, דְהָא חִילָא עֲלָהָה, דְעֲלָה לִית לִיה שְׁעוּרָא עִמִּיק וְסָתִים. וְלֹא אִיהוּ בְּגוּוֹנֵי דְסְטָרֵי דְרָגֵי דִישׁוּבָא.

25. אֲשַׁגַּח וְתְקִיל, וְיָדַע, דְהָא כַּמָּה דְמַהֲיָא נְקוּדָה אֲמְצָעִיתָא דִישׁוּבָא, מְנִיָּה אֲשַׁתִּיל כָּל עֲלָמָא, לְכָל סְטָרֵי. הָכִי נִמְי יָדַע, דְהָא חִילָא דְשָׂרֵי עֲלָה, מִתְמָן נִמְקוּ כָּל שָׂרֵי חִילִין, דְמִמֶּנּוּ עַל כָּל סְטָרֵי עֲלָמָא, וְכֻלְהוּ בִּיָּה אֲחִידִין. בְּדִין וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים לְלַכְתָּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן.

26. עוֹד אֲשַׁגַּח וְתְקִיל וְצָרִיף, לְמִיקָם עַל בְּרִירָא דְמַלְהָ, דְהָהוּא אֲתָר, וְלֹא הוּה יָדַע, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמִיקָם עֲלָה לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא. בֵּינָן דְחָמָא תּוֹקְפָא דְהָאֵי אֲתָר, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמִיקָם עֲלִיָּה, מִיָּד וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד חָרָן וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם.

27. מֵאֵי טַעְמָא דְאַבְרָהָם. אֵלָּא, דְאִיהוּ הוּה יָדַע וְצָרִיף בְּכָל אֵינוֹן שְׁלֹטָנִין מְדַבְּרֵי עֲלָמָא, בְּכָל סְטָרֵי דִישׁוּבָא. וְהוּה תְּקִיל וְצָרִיף אֵינוֹן דְשְׁלֹטִין בְּסְטָרֵי דִישׁוּבָא מְדַבְּרֵי כְכַבִּיָּא וּמִזְלֵיהוֹן, מֵאֵן אֵינוֹן תְּקִיפִין, אֵלִין עַל אֵלִין, וְהוּה תְּקִיל כָּל יִשׁוּבֵי דְעֲלָמָא, וְהוּה סְלִיק בִּידֵיו. בְּדַ מְטָא לְהָאֵי אֲתָר, חָמָא תְּקִיפּוּ דְעִמִּיקִין, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמִיקָם בִּיָּה.

28. As soon as the Holy One, blessed be He, noticed his awakening and his passion, He immediately revealed Himself to Avraham and said: "Get you out" in order to learn about and perfect yourself.

29. The words "Your country," AS USED WHEN HE SAID TO HIM, "GET YOU OUT," referred to that side of the inhabited world to which he was attached. THIS IS THE RIGHT SIDE ONLY; THE LEFT SIDE IS NOT INCLUDED. THE WORDS "and from your kindred," MEAN THAT HE TOLD HIM, "GET YOU OUT" from that Wisdom with which you study your horoscope, determined by watching and examining the moment, hour, and time of your birth, and the planet and the sign under which you were born. ALL OF THIS IS RELATED TO THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT SIDE AND IS NOT INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT.

30. The verse, "And from your father's house," MEANS THAT HE TOLD HIM "GET YOU OUT" and never look upon your father's house again, REFERRING TO CHARAN, AND NEVER SEEK TO DISCOVER if the root of your success in the world is from your father's house. Therefore, "Get you out" of this wisdom and this observance.

31. Come and behold: It is indeed so! Because they had already left Ur Casdim and were in Charan, why should He say to him, "Get you out of your country, and from your kindred?" FOR HE HAS ALREADY LEFT UR CASDIM, WHICH IS HIS COUNTRY AND FAMILY. Therefore, the main point has to be, as previously stated, THAT THE MEANING OF "YOUR COUNTRY" IS THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT WITHOUT THE LEFT, AND "YOUR KINDRED" IS THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT WITHOUT THE RIGHT. "To the land that I will show you" MEANS THAT "I will show you" what you were not able to conceive--BECAUSE OF THE JUDGMENTS OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT--and were not able to know about the power of that land, NAMELY MALCHUT, which is deep and hidden.

6. "And I will make of you a great nation" (A)

All the blessings that Avraham received are explained in the following section of the Zohar. Avraham received these blessings because he let go of his own ego and completely surrendered to the Creator.

The Relevance of this Passage

The intelligence of the body creates an illusion that we are in control of our lives. Nevertheless, anxiety, fear, emotional turmoil, and external chaos continue to be an affliction. When we let go of this illusion and relinquish control, we create a space for the Light of the Creator to enter our existence, removing all darkness. We acquire the power from the blessings that Avraham received, instilling us with the courage to entrust the Creator with control over our life.

32. "And I will make of you a great nation..." (Beresheet 12:2). "And I will make of you" is related to the verse, "Get you out." "And I will bless you" is related to the verse, "from your country." "And make your name great" is related to the verse, "and from your kindred." "And you shall be a blessing" is related to the verse, "and from your father's house."

28. בֵּינוֹן דְּחֵמָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֲתַעְרוּתָא דִּילִיָּהּ, וְתִיאובְתָּא דִּילִיָּהּ, מִיַּד אֲתַגְלִי עֲלֵיהּ, וְאָמַר לִיהּ, לֶךְ לֶךְ. לְמַנְדַּע לֶךְ, וּלְאַתְקֵנָא גְרַמְךָ.

29. מֵאַרְצֶךָ. מֵהָהוּא סֵטְרָא דִּישׁוּבָא דְהוּיָת מִתְדַבֵּק בֵּיהּ. וּמְמוֹלְדֶתְךָ מֵהָהוּא חֲכָמָה, דְּאֵת מִשְׁגַּח, וְתִקּוּל תּוֹלְדָתָא דִּילְךָ, וְרִגְעָא וְשַׁעֲתָא וְזִמְנָא, דְּאֲתִיּוּלִידָת בֵּיהּ, וּבִהָהוּא בּוֹכְבָא, וּבִהָהוּא מְזֻלָּא.

30. וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ. דִּלָּא תִשְׁגַּח בְּבֵיתָא דְאַבּוֹךָ. וְאִי אֵית לֶךְ שְׂרָשָׁא לְאַצְלָחָא בְּעֵלְמָא, מִבֵּיתָא דְאַבּוֹךָ, בְּגִין כֶּךָ לֶךְ לֶךְ, מִחֲכָמָה דָּא וּמֵאַשְׁגָּחוֹתָא דָּא.

31. תָּא חַיִּי. דְּהִכִּי הוּא, דְּהָא נִפְקוּ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים, וְהוּוּ בַּחֲרֹן, אֲמַאי יִימָא לִיהּ לֶךְ לֶךְ מֵאַרְצֶךָ וּמְמוֹלְדֶתְךָ. אֵלָא עֲקָרָא דְמַלְתָּא, כְּמָה דְּאֲתַמָּר. אֵל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאךָ. אֲרָאךָ, מָה דִּלָּא יְכִילַת לְמִיָּקָם עֲלֵיהּ, וְלֹא יְכִילַת לְמַנְדַּע חֵילָא דְּהָהוּא אֲרַעָא, דְּאִיהוּ עֵמִיק וְסֻתִּים.

32. וְאַעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְגוֹ'. וְאַעֲשֶׂךָ, בְּגִין דְּכִתִּיב, לֶךְ לֶךְ. וְאַבְרַכְךָ, בְּגִין דְּכִתִּיב, מֵאַרְצֶךָ. וְאַגְדִּלָּה שְׁמֶךָ, בְּגִין דְּכִתִּיב, וּמְמוֹלְדֶתְךָ. וְהִיָּה בְרָכָה, בְּגִין דְּכִתִּיב, וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ.

33. Rabbi Shimon DISAGREES, AND says that the verse, "And I will make of you a great nation," is THE ILLUMINATION OF the right side; that "and I will bless you" is THE ILLUMINATION OF the left side; that "and I will make your name great" is THE ILLUMINATION OF the Central Column; and that "and you shall be a blessing" is from the side of the Land of Yisrael, FROM THE SIDE OF THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED THE LAND OF YISRAEL. So here is a throne that has four legs, all of which were included in Avraham. THE THREE COLUMNS-CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET-ARE THREE LEGS, THE NUKVA IS THE FOURTH LEG. THESE ARE THE FOUR LEGS OF THE UPPER THRONE, WHICH IS BINAH. From here onward, the blessings are for the others who are replenished from here. THIS REFERS TO OTHERS WHO ARE BLESSED FOR HIS SAKE, as it is written: "And I will bless them that bless you and curse them that curse you, and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed."

7. "And from the wicked their light is withheld"

When one behaves in a negative manner, he immediately disconnects himself from the Light of the Creator. Moreover, negative deeds also block and prevent an individual from receiving any spiritual Light from the righteous souls who are in this world to share their Light with all mankind. The Relevance of this Passage

Every act of negative behavior can be likened to draping a layer of cloth over a lamp. Life grows progressively darker. We remove these veils from ourselves through the letters and lessons of this section so that we may receive all the Light that is ever-present from the devout souls who dwell among us in our generation.

34. Rabbi Elazar was sitting before his father, Rabbi Shimon, together with Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Yitzchak, and Rabbi Chizkiyah. Rabbi Elazar asked Rabbi Shimon why is it written: "Get you out of your country, and from your kindred" in the singular? Since they all left UR CASDIM to go to THE LAND OF CNA'AN, why was Avraham not told that they all should go?

35. Terach was an idol worshipper, but since his desire to leave with Avraham was truly aroused, and, as we have seen, the Holy One, blessed be He, desires that the wicked repent, as Terach started to leave with Avraham, why does it not say, "Go for yourself" in plural? Why does it say "Go for yourself" to Avraham alone?

36. Rabbi Shimon replied that Terach did not leave Ur Casdim because he wanted to repent and mend his ways, but only to save himself from all the people of his land, who wanted to kill him. Particularly after they saw that Avraham was saved FROM THE FURNACE OF FIRE, they said to Terach, 'You were the one who misled us with these idols,' AND WANTED TO KILL HIM. Because he feared them, Terach left. THEREFORE, when he reached Charan, he stayed, as it is written: "So Avram departed, as Hashem had spoken to him, and Lot went with him" (Beresheet 12:4). Terach is not mentioned in the verse!

33. רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹנָאֹמֶר, וְאֶעֱשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָדוֹל, מִסְטָרָא דִּימִינָא. וְאַבְרָכְךָ, מִסְטָרָא דְשְׁמָאֲלָא. וְאַגְדִּלְהָ שְׁמֶךָ, מִסְטָרָא דְאַמְצִיעִיתָא. וְהִיָּה בְרָכָה, מִסְטָרָא דְאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל. הָא הֵבָא בְרַסְיָא, דְאַרְבַּע סְמִכִין, דְכֻלְהוּ כְלִילִין בֵּיהּ בְּאַבְרָהָם. מִכָּאן וְלַהֲלָאָה, בְּרַכָּאן לְאַחֲרֵינִי, דִּמְתַּזְנִי מֵהֵכָא, דְכֻתִּיב, וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמִקְלָלְךָ אָאוּר וְנִבְרַכּוּ בְךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפְחוֹת הָאָדָמָה.

34. ר' אֶלְעָזָר, הוּא יְתִיב קָמִיָּה דְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹנָאֹבּוּי, וְהוּי עָמִיָּה, ר' יְהוּדָה, וְרַבִּי יִצְחָק, וְרַבִּי חִזְקִיָּה. אֲמַרְלוּר' אֶלְעָזָר לְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹנָאֹבּוּי, הָאִי דְכֻתִּיב, לָךְ לָךְ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלְדְתְךָ. בֵּינָן דְכֻלְהוּ נִפְקוּ לְמַהֲךָ, אֲמַאי לֹא אֲתָמֶר לִיָּה דְכֻלְהוּ יִפְקוּ.

35. דְּהָא אָף עַל גַּב דְתֵרַח הוּא פִּלַּח לַע"ז, בֵּינָן דְאַתְעֵר בְּאַתְעֵרוּתָא טַב לְמִיפֵק בְּהִדְיָה דְאַבְרָהָם, וְחִמִּינָן קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתָרְעִי בְּתִיּוּבְתָא דְחִיבִינָא, וְשָׂרָא לְמִיפֵק, אֲמַאי לֹא כְתִיב לָכוּ לָכֶם. אֲמַאי לְאַבְרָהָם בְּלַחֲדוּי לָךְ לָךְ.

36. אֲמַרְלוּרְבִי שְׁמַעוֹן, אִי תִימָא, דְתֵרַח כִּד נִפֵּק, מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים, בְּגִין לְאַהֲדָרָא בְּתִשׁוּבָה הוּא, לֹא הָבִי, אֶלָּא כִּד נִפֵּק, לְאַשְׁתַּזְבָּא נִפֵּק, דְהוּוּ כֻלְהוּ בְּנֵי אֲרַעִיָּה, בְּעָאן לְמִקְטִילָיָה. בֵּינָן דְחִזּוּ, דְאַשְׁתַּזְיִב אֲבְרָהָם, הוּוּ אֲמַרִי לִיָּה לְתֵרַח, אֲנִתְּ הוּא דְהוּיָת מִטְעִי לָךְ, בְּאַלִּין פְּסִילִין, וּמַגּוּ דְחֵלָא דְלֵהוּן, נִפֵּק תֵּרַח, בֵּינָן דְמִטָּא לְחָרָן, לֹא נִפֵּק מִתְמָן לְבִתְרָא, דְכֻתִּיב וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה' וַיֵּלֶךְ אֹתוֹ לוֹט. וַאֲילוּ תֵרַח לֹא כְתִיב.

37. He opened the discussion by saying: "And from the wicked their light is withheld, and the high arm shall be broken" (Iyov 38:16). This passage has already been explained. Nevertheless, "And from the wicked their light is withheld" applies to Nimrod and the people of his generation, whom Avraham left, since he was "their light"; "the high arm shall be broken" alludes to Nimrod.

38. Another explanation of the verse, "And from the wicked their light is withheld," is that it applies to Terach and his household, and "their light" is Avraham. The verse does not say 'the light,' but "their light," that was among them. THIS REFERS TO AVRAHAM WHO WAS AMONG THEM AND THEN LEFT. "And the high arm shall be broken" applies to Nimrod, who misled the whole world to following him. And this is why it is written: "Get you out," so that the light may shine for you and for all who will descend from now and henceforth.

39. Furthermore, RABBI SHIMON then discussed the verse, "And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds; but the wind passes, and cleanses them" (Iyov 37:21). "And now men see not the bright light": when DID THAT HAPPEN? At the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Avraham, "Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house." BECAUSE AFTER AVRAHAM HAD LEFT THEM, THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO SEE THE LIGHT ANYMORE. "The bright light which is in the clouds" ALLUDES TO AVRAHAM, because the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to attach Avraham to the supernal Light and have him shine there.

40. "And the wind passes, and cleanses them" refers to Terach and all the people of his town, all of whom afterwards repented. As it is written: "and the souls that they had made in Charan" (Beresheet 12:5), MEANING THAT THE PEOPLE OF CHARAN REPENTED. The verse, "And you shall come to your fathers in peace" (Beresheet 15:15), INDICATES THAT Terach HAD REPENTED, FOR THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WOULD NOT HAVE SAID THIS TO AVRAHAM OTHERWISE.

8. "And I will make of you a great nation" (B)

At every beginning, at every opening, within every seed-level moment, there are dark forces present whose sole objective is to taint, negatively influence, and curse all that will come after. The Zohar reveals the process by which we can break these curses and remove any negative factors. The Relevance of this Passage

New projects and new beginnings in our life start out with bountiful optimism and hope. Be that as it may, unseen negative forces often infect the seed level leading to broken dreams and unrealized goals. We receive the power to break our own negative nature and the negative forces around us that try to curse new beginnings in our life.

Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

41. THERE ARE SEVEN BLESSINGS THAT APPEAR IN THIS PASSAGE. One: "And I will make of you a great nation"; two: "and I will bless you"; three: "and make your name great"; four: "and you shall be a blessing"; five: "And I will bless them that bless you"; six: "and curse him that curses you"; and seven: "and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed." And after he received these seven blessings, it is written: "So Avram departed, as Hashem had spoken to him." THIS MEANS THAT HE WENT down to the world, as he was commanded to do.

37. פֶּתַח וְאָמַר, וַיִּמְנַע מִרְשָׁעִים אוֹרָם וַזְרוּעַ רָמָה תִּשְׁפֹּר. הָאִי קָרָא אוֹקְמוּהָ, אָבֵל, וַיִּמְנַע מִרְשָׁעִים אוֹרָם, דָּא נִמְרוֹד וּבְנֵי דְרִיָּה, דִּנְפֵק אַבְרָהָם מִנִּיְהוּ דִּהּוּה אוֹרָם. וַזְרוּעַ רָמָה תִּשְׁפֹּר, דָּא נִמְרוֹד.

38. דְּבַר אַחֲרֵי, וַיִּמְנַע מִרְשָׁעִים אוֹרָם, דָּא תֵּרַח וּבְנֵי בֵיתֵיהּ. אוֹרָם: דָּא אַבְרָהָם. הָאוֹר, לֹא כְּתִיב, אֶלָּא אוֹרָם, דִּהּוּה עֲמֵהוּן. וַזְרוּעַ רָמָה תִּשְׁפֹּר. דָּא נִמְרוֹד, דִּהּוּה מִטְעֵי אֲבֹתֵיהּ, כָּל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא. וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ כְּתִיב לֶךְ לֶךְ. בִּגִּין, לְאַנְהָרָא לֶךְ, וְלִכְל אִינוּן דִּינְפִקוֹן מִינֶךָ, מִכָּאן וְלֵהֲלָאָה.

39. תו פֶּתַח וְאָמַר. וְעֵתָה לֹא רָאוּ אוֹר בְּהִיר הוּא בְּשַׁחֲקִים וְרוּחַ עֲבָרָה וַתִּטְהֶרֶם. וְעֵתָה לֹא רָאוּ אוֹר, אִימַתִּי, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְאָמַר קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַבְרָהָם לֶךְ לֶךְ מֵאַרְצֶךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתֶּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ. בְּהִיר הוּא בְּשַׁחֲקִים. דִּבְעָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַבְרָהָם לִיה לְאַבְרָהָם, בְּהֵהוּא אוֹר דִּלְעִילָא, וְלְאַנְהָרָא תִּמְוֵן.

40. וְרוּחַ עֲבָרָה וַתִּטְהֶרֶם. דִּהּא לְבַתֵּר תָּבוּ בְּתִיּוֹבְתָא, תֵּרַח וְכָל בְּנֵי מֵאֲתִיָּה בְּנֵי מֵאֲתִיָּה, דְּכְתִיב, וְאַתְּ הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. תֵּרַח: דְּכְתִיב וְאַתָּה תָּבֵא אֶל אֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם וְגו'.

סְתְרֵי תוֹרָה

41. וְאֶעֱשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל, הָאִי בְּרִכְתָּא חֲדָא. וְאַבְרָכְךָ, תְּרִין. וְאַגְדִּלָּה שְׁמֶךָ, תִּלְתָּ. וְהִיָּה בְּרִכָּה, אַרְבַּע. וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ, חֲמִשָּׁה. וּמְקַלְלֶךָ אָאוּר, שִׁית. וְנִבְרַכּוּ כֶּךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה, הָא שְׁבַע. כִּיּוֹן דְּאַתְּבְּרַכּוּ בְּאֵלִין שְׁבַע בְּרִכָּאן, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיִּלֶּךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה' לְנַחֲתָא לְהָאִי עֲלָמָא, כְּמָה דְאַתְּפַקְדָּא.

42. Immediately, "Lot went with him." This is the serpent that was cursed and caused the world to be cursed. THE SCRIPTURES CALL THE SERPENT BY THE NAME LOT, BECAUSE LOT MEANS 'A CURSE' IN ARAMAIC. THE SERPENT WAS CURSED AND BROUGHT CURSES ON THE WORLD. SO HE ACCOMPANIES THE SOUL DURING ITS STAY IN THIS WORLD. And the serpent stands at the opening, in order to mislead the body, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "SIN CROUCHES AT THE DOOR" (BERESHEET 4:7). And this is why the soul will not start fulfilling the mission it was commanded to perform until it has completed thirteen years in this world. Because from the twelfth year onward, the soul is aroused to fulfill its task. Therefore, it is written: "and Avram was seventy five years old" (Beresheet 12:4)-SEVENTY IN REDUCED NUMERICAL VALUE EQUALS SEVEN, and seven and five equals twelve. THEN THE SOUL LEAVES CHARAN, WHICH IS THE KLIPOT, AND IS AROUSED TO SERVE HASHEM AND FULFILL ITS ALLOTTED TASK.

43. And then AFTER TWELVE YEARS, the soul can be seen in this world, because it comes from the "five years," which are the five hundred parasangs of the Tree of Life. IT IS THEN ACKNOWLEDGED AS AN OFFSPRING OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS CALLED THE TREE OF LIFE, WHICH IS FIVE HUNDRED PARASANGS WALK. "And seventy years" refers to the same tree, which is the seventh among the grades, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SEVENTH SFIRAH AMONG THE SEVEN SFIROT: CHESD, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT. AND THEN THE SOUL IS ACKNOWLEDGED AS THE OFFSPRING OF ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA.

44. Then the soul departs from the filth of the serpent and enters to the holy work. And so it is written: "when he departed out of Charan," from the wrath and aggression of the Satan, who until now had ruled over the body by deceiving it.

45. The Orlah (lit. 'foreskin') rules over the tree for three years, WHICH ARE CALLED THE "ORLAH YEARS." In the human being, the first thirteen years are called the "Orlah years." After the body has lived these years, the soul is aroused to fulfill its holy task. It then receives full control over the body and inspires the goodwill necessary to overcome the serpent. And then the serpent will not be able to control the body as it did before.

46. As it is written: "And Avram took Sarai his wife..." (Beresheet 12:5). "SARAI HIS WIFE" refers to the body, which in comparison to the soul is like the female toward the male. "And Lot his brother's son" refers to the serpent that does not completely leave the body EVEN AFTER THIRTEEN YEARS, because the clinging of the body is not entirely gone from it. Nevertheless, the arousal of the soul strikes it always, warns and reproves it, and forces it to obey so that it cannot take control any more.

42. מִיָּד וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ לוֹט. דָּא אִיהוּ נָחֵשׁ דְּאַתְלִטָּא, וְאַתְלִטָּא עֲלֵמָא בְּגִינִיָּה, דְּאִיהוּ קָאִים לְפִתְחָא, לְאַסְטָאָה לְגוּפָא, וְלֹא תַפְעוּל נִשְׁמַתָּא, פּוֹלְחָנָא דְאַתְפַּקְדָּת, עַד דִּיעֲבִרֹן עָלָה בְּהַאי עֲלֵמָא, וְיִגְשִׁין, דְּהָא מִתְרִיסַר שְׁנִין וְלַעִילָא, נִשְׁמַתָּא אֲתַעֲרַת, לְמַפְלַח פּוֹלְחָנָא דְאַתְפַּקְדָּת, הָה"ד וְאַבְרָם בֶּן חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה. שְׁבַע וְחָמֵשׁ תְּרִיסַר אֵינֻן.

43. וְכִדִּין אֲתַחֲזִיאת נִשְׁמַתָּא בְּהַאי עֲלֵמָא. דְּאִיהוּ אֲתִיא מִחֲמֵשׁ שָׁנִים, דְּאֵינֻן ת"ק פְּרָסֵי דְאֵילָנָא דְחַיִּי. וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה, דָּא אִיהוּ הָהוּא אֵילָנָא מִמֶּשׁ, דְּאִיהוּ שְׁבִיעָאָה לְדִרְגִין, וְשִׁבְעִין שָׁנָה אֲתַקְרִי.

44. כִּדִּין נִפְקַת מִהָהוּא זוּהֵמָא דְנָחֵשׁ, וְעָאלַת בְּפּוֹלְחָנָא קְדִישָׁא, הָה"ד, בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן, מִהָהוּא רִגְזָא וְתוֹקְפָא דְהָהוּא נָחֵשׁ, דְּהוּא אֲסִטִּי לִיהַ עַד הִשְׁתָּא לְגוּפָא, וְשִׁלְטָא עָלָיו.

45. בְּאֵילָנָא, שְׁלִטָּא עָרְלָה תַּלְת שְׁנִין. בְּבֵר נֶשׁ, תַּלְת סְרֵי שְׁנִין, דְּאֶקְרוּן שְׁנֵי עָרְלָה, כִּיּוֹן דְּאֶעֱבְרוּ עַל גּוּפָא אֵינֻן שְׁנִין, וְאַתְעֲבֵרַת נִשְׁמַתָּא, לְמַפְלַח פּוֹלְחָנָא קְדִישָׁא, פְּקִידַת לְגוּפָא, לְרַעוּתָא טְבָא, לְכַפּוֹף לְהָהוּא נָחֵשׁ, דְּהָא לֹא יָכִיל לְשִׁלְטָאָה כְּמָה דְּהוּי.

46. דְּכִתִּיב, וַיִּקַּח אֲבְרָם אֶת שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְגו', דָּא גּוּפָא, דְּאִיהוּ לְגַבֵּי נִשְׁמַתָּא, כְּנוֹקְבָא לְגַבֵּי דְכוּרָא. וְאַת לוֹט בֶּן אַחִיו, דָּא נָחֵשׁ, דְּלֹא אֶעֱדִי כָל כֶּךָ מִן גּוּפָא, בְּגִין דְּרַבְּקוּתָא דְּגוּפָא, לֹא אֶעֱדִיו כָּל כֶּךָ מִנִּיהַ, אֲבָל אֲתַעֲרוּתָא דְּנִשְׁמַתָּא אֶלְקִי לִיהַ תְּדִיר, וְאַתְרֵי בִיָּה, וְאוֹכַח לִיהַ, וְכַפִּיף לִיהַ, עַל כְּרַחֲמֵהּ, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְשִׁלְטָאָה.

47. "And all their substance that they had gathered..." refers to the good deeds that a person performs in this world because of the awakening of the soul. "And the souls (Nefesh) that they had made in Charan..." REFERS TO that Nefesh, which at first was attached to the foreskin of the body and clung to it and which later was amended BY THE NESHAMAH. IT IS DESCRIBED BY THE WORDS, "AND THE NEFESH THAT THEY HAD MADE IN CHARAN," WHICH REFER TO THE CRAVING NEFESH, WHICH FEELS GREAT ATTACHMENT TO THE LUST OF THE BODY AND THE KLIPOT. So after thirteen years, when the Neshamah is aroused to amend the body, both THE NESHAMAH AND THE BODY amend that Nefesh that participated in the harsh JUDGMENTS of the serpent and its evil desires. As it is written: "and the Nefesh that they had made in Charan..." THE REASON WHY "THEY HAD MADE" IS WRITTEN IN THE PLURAL IS BECAUSE IT REFERS TO THE NESHAMAH AND THE BODY, WHICH TOGETHER AMEND THE NEFESH-THE NESHAMAH BY AWAKENING THE BODY, AND THE BODY BY ITS GOOD DEEDS.

48. With all of this, the Neshamah continues to attack the serpent in order to break it, so that it will surrender and be enslaved under the influence of repentance. Therefore, it is written: "And Avram passed through the land to the place of Shchem" (Beresheet 12:6), BECAUSE SHCHEM IS THE DWELLING PLACE OF THE SHECHINAH. AND THAT IS BECAUSE THE POWER OF THE SERPENT HAS ALREADY BEEN COMPLETELY BROKEN BY THE NESHAMAH. (End of Sitrei Torah)

9. "So Avram departed, as Hashem had spoken to him..."

It's explained that every man has angels who accompany him everywhere, recording every single action and deed, large and small. The Final Day of Judgment is then spelled out by the Zohar: The angels come forth during this time and present a list of all our actions, positive and negative, so that we can acknowledge them. The Zohar goes on to declare that no matter how negative a person's actions might become, we should never cast them aside and disregard them.

The Relevance of this Passage

Mankind's nature is to disregard or justify its insensitive and intolerant behavior. Regardless, we are eventually held accountable for all of our actions. An awareness of the gravity and severity of our negative behavior, even the most minute behavioral actions, is imbued into our consciousness by virtue of this passage. This will inspire us to treat others with the same compassion and tolerance that we desire.

49. Rabbi Elazar said, Come and behold, It is not written: "So Avram left, as Hashem had spoken to him," but rather that Avram "departed (lit. 'went') (Heb. vayelech)," as it is written: "Get you out" (Heb. lech lecha). This is so written because they had already left, as it is written: "and they went out with them from Ur Casdim to go to the land of Cna'an." Therefore, it is written: "departed" rather than "left."

50. "As Hashem had spoken to him..." THIS MEANS according to all the promises He gave him. The words, "and Lot went with him," mean that Lot accompanied Avraham to learn from his behavior. Even so, Lot did not learn much. Rabbi Elazar said: Happy are the righteous who study the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, in order to follow them and be in awe of Him-in awe of that day of judgment when man will have to account for his deeds before the Holy one, blessed be He.

47. וְאֵת כָּל רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ, אֵלֶּיךָ עֹבְדִין טְבִין דְּעִבִּיד בְּרַ נֶשׁ, בְּהַאי עֲלָמָא, בְּאַתְעָרוּתָא דְנִשְׁמָתָא. וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בַחֲרִין. הֵהוּא נֶפֶשׁ, דְּהוּת בְּקִדְמִיתָא בְּדִבְקוּתָא בַּחֲבֵרוּתָא דְהֵיָא עֲרָלָה, בְּהֵי גּוּפָא, וְאַתְקִין לָהּ לְבָתָר, דְּהָא לְבָתָר דְּתִלְסַר שָׁנִין וְלַעִילָא, דְנִשְׁמָתָא אֲתַעֲרָת, לְאַתְקֵנָא לְגּוּפָא, תְּרוּוּיָהּ מִתְקַנֵּן לְהֵהוּא נֶפֶשׁ, דְּמִשְׁתַּתְּמָא בְּתוּקְמָא דְנַחֲשׁ, וְתַאֲוַבְתִּיה בְּיֹשָׁא, הֵה־ר וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בַחֲרִין.

48. וְעַם כָּל דָּא, נִשְׁמָתָא אֲתַקִּיפַת בֵּיהּ, בְּהֵהוּא נַחֲשׁ, לְתַבְרָא לִיהּ, בְּתוּקְמָא בְּשַׁעֲבוּרָא דְתִשְׁוּבָה, הֵדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב וַיַּעֲבֹר. (עַד כֵּאן סִתְרֵי תוֹרָה)

49. וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם בְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה'. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, תָּא חֲזִי, דְּהָא לֹא כְּתִיב וַיֵּצֵא אַבְרָם בְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה'. אֶלָּא וַיֵּלֶךְ. כִּד"א לֶךְ לָךְ. דְּהָא יֵצִיָּא בְּקִדְמִיתָא עֲבָדוּ, דְכְּתִיב, וַיֵּצְאוּ אִתָּם מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים לְלַכְתָּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן. וְהִשְׁתָּא כְּתִיב וַיֵּלֶךְ, וְלֹא כְּתִיב וַיֵּצֵא.

50. בְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה'. דְּאַבְטַח לִיהּ בְּכֻלָּהּ הַבְּטָחוֹת. וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ לוֹט, דְּאַתְחַבֵּר עִמֵּיהּ, בְּגִין לְמִילָף מִעֹבְדֵי, וְעַם כָּל דָּא לֹא אוֹלִיף בּוֹלִי הָאִי. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר זַבְּאִין אֵינּוֹן צְדִיקָיָא, דְּאוֹלְפִי אַרְחוּי דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִין לְמִיָּהֵךְ בְּהוּ, וְלִדְחָלָא מִנִּיהּ, מִהֵהוּא יוֹמָא דְדִינָא, דְּזִמִּין בְּרַ נֶשׁ לְמִיָּהֵב דִּינָא וְחוּשְׁבָנָא לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

51. He opened the discussion, saying: "He seals up the hand of every man; that all men whom He has made may know His work." (Iyov 37:7). This passage has already been explained. But come and behold: When the days of man are over and he is about to leave this world, on that day when the body is broken and the soul has to leave it, then that person is permitted to see what he has not been able to see when the body was in control, and he understands things completely.

52. Three messengers stand over him and take an account of his days and his sins and all that he has done in this world. And he openly admits everything, and after that he signs it, THE ACCOUNT, with his hand. As it is written: "He seals up the hand of every man..."

53. And all DEEDS AND SINS are signed with his hand, so a man can be judged for all of his actions in this world, the early and the recent, the old and the new-not even one of them is forgotten. Therefore, it is written: "that all men whom He has made may know His work." JUST AS all of the actions he committed in this world WERE together in body and in spirit, so he must account FOR THEM WHILE HE IS STILL together in body and spirit, before he leaves this world.

54. Come and behold: Just as the sinners are stiff-necked in this world, so are they stiff-necked when they are about to leave this world. Therefore, blessed is that person who studies the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, while in this world, so that he may follow them. But the wicked person, even though he sees these righteous people, stiffens his neck and refuses to learn from them.

55. This is why the righteous man must hold on to him and not let go, even though the wicked person "stiffens his neck." The righteous man should hold him tight by the hand and not leave him alone, because if he lets him go, the wicked person will go and destroy the world.

56. Come and behold: We see examples in the case of Elisha who thrust away Gehazi, and in the case of Avraham and Lot. As long as Lot was with Avraham, Lot did not associate with the wicked. But as soon as he left him, it is written: "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Yarden (Jordan)...and pitched his tent toward Sdom" (Beresheet 13:11-12), followed by "And the men of Sdom were wicked and sinners before Hashem exceedingly" (Ibid. 13). SO WE SEE THAT HE DID JOIN THE WICKED!

51. פָּתַח וְאָמַר, בְּיַד כָּל אָדָם יִחְתָּמוּ לְדַעַת כָּל אָנָשִׁי מַעֲשָׂהוּ. הָאִי קָרָא אוֹקְמוּהָ. אֲבָל תָּא חַזִּי, בְּהוּא יוֹמָא, דְּאִשְׁלִימוּ יוֹמוֹי דְּבֵר נָשׁ לְאַמְקָא מַעֲלָמָא, הָהוּא יוֹמָא, דְּגוּפָא אֲתַבֵּר, וְנַפְשָׁא בַּעֲיָא לְאַתְפָּרְשָׁא מִנִּיהָ. כְּדִין, אֲתִיְהִיב רִשּׁוֹ לְבָר נָשׁ לְמַחְמִי, מַה דְּלֹא הָוָה לֵיהּ רִשּׁוֹ לְמַחְמִי, בְּזִמְנָא דְּגוּפָא שְׁלֵטָא, וְקָאִים עַל בּוֹרִייהָ.

52. וּכְדִין קִיּוּמֵי עָלִיהּ תַּלְתָּ שְׁלִיחִין, וְחֲשָׁבֵי יוֹמוֹי וְחוּבוֹי, וְכָל מַה דְּעֵבֵר בְּהָאִי עֲלָמָא, וְהוּא אוֹרִי עַל כָּלָא בְּפֻמִּיהָ. וּלְבַתֵּר הוּא חֲתִים עָלִיהּ בְּיָדֵיהּ. הָדָא הוּא דְכִתְיֵב, בְּיַד כָּל אָדָם יִחְתָּמוּ.

53. וּבִידֵיהּ כָּלְהוּ חֲתִימִין לְמִידָן לֵיהּ, בְּהָאִי עֲלָמָא, עַל קְדָמָאִי, וְעַל בִּתְרָאִי, עַל חֲדָתִי וְעַל עֲתִיקִי. לֹא אֲתַנְשִׁי חֵד מִיּוֹנִיָּהּ, הֵה"ד לְדַעַת כָּל אָנָשִׁי מַעֲשָׂהוּ. וְכָל אִינוּן עוֹבְדִין דְּעֵבֵר בְּהָאִי עֲלָמָא, בְּגוּפָא וְרוּחָא. הֵכִי נָמִי יְהִיב חוּשְׁבָּנָא בְּגוּפָא וְרוּחָא, עַד לֹא יְפּוֹק מַעֲלָמָא.

54. תָּא חַזִּי, כְּמַה דְּחִיבָאִי, אֲקָשִׁי קְדָל בְּהָאִי עֲלָמָא, ה"נ, אֲפִילוּ בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּבַעֲי לְנַמְקָא מֵהָאִי עֲלָמָא, אֲקָשִׁי קְדָל. בְּגִין כְּרֻזְכָּא הוּא בֵּר נָשׁ, דִּילִיף בְּהָאִי עֲלָמָא אֲרוּחֵי דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִין לְמִיהָרָ בְּהוּ. וְחִיבָא, אִף עַל גְּבֻדָּאֲסִתְכֵּל בְּהִנֵּי צְדִיקָאִי, אֲקָשִׁי קְדָל, וְלֹא בַּעֲי לְמִילָּהּ.

55. וּבְגִין כְּרָאִית לֵיהּ לְצַדִּיקָא, לְמַתְקָא בִּיהּ, וְאִף עַל גֵּב דְּחִיבָאִי אֲקָשִׁי קְדָל הוּא, לֹא יִשְׁבּוֹק לֵיהּ, וְאִית לֵיהּ לְאַתְקַמָּא בִּידֵיהּ, וְלֹא יִשְׁבּוֹק לֵיהּ, דָּאִי יִשְׁבּוֹק לֵיהּ יֵהָר וְיִחְרִיב עֲלָמָא.

56. תָּא חַזִּי, מִן אֱלִישָׁע דְּרַחָה לְגַחְזִי. וְכֵן בְּאַבְרָהָם כָּל זִמְנָא דְּהָוָה לוֹט בְּהָרִיָּה, לֹא אֲתַחֲבֵר בְּהָרִי רְשִׁיעֵאִי, כִּיּוֹן דְּאַתְפָּרֵשׁ מִנִּיהּ, מַה כְּתִיב וַיִּבְחָר לוֹ לוֹט אֶת כָּל כְּכַר הַיַּרְדֵּן, וְכְתִיב וַיֵּאָהֵל עַד סְדוֹם. מַה כְּתִיב בְּתַרְיָה, וְאָנָשִׁי סְדוֹם רָעִים וְחָטָאִים לָהּ מְאֹד.

57. Rabbi Aba said TO RABBI ELAZAR: You noted that it is written: "Avram went," rather than 'Avram left,' BECAUSE THEY HAD ALREADY LEFT. This is well but at the end of the verse, it is written: "when he departed out of Charan..." SO THE VERSE DOES MENTION LEAVING--EVEN THOUGH HE HAD ALREADY LEFT. Rabbi Elazar responded that it is written "out of Charan," but the main departure was that from the land of his birthplace, which had already occurred. THIS IS NOT THE SAME AS THE DEPARTURE FROM CHARAN THAT IS MENTIONED TOGETHER WITH "GET YOU OUT." SO WE MAY SAY HERE "WHEN HE LEFT CHARAN."

57. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, הָאִי דְאִמְרַת וְיִלְךְ אַבְרָם, וְלֹא כְתִיב וַיֵּצֵא אַבְרָם, שְׁמִיר הוּא. אֲבָל, סוּפָא דְקָרָא, מַה כְּתִיב, בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן. אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר, מִחָרָן כְּתִיב, וְהָיָא יֵצִיָּא מֵאַרְץ מוֹלְדֵתוֹ הוּא בְּקִדְמִיתָא.

10. "And Avram took Sarai his wife..."

When a person influences another individual in a positive way, that measure of positive influence is credited for all eternity. Moreover, when the second individual utilizes that same positive influence to then affect others, the positive energy generated is also accrued to the original person. This same principle holds true with all of our negative actions.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our inability to perceive the far-reaching implications of our actions, allows us to behave wantonly and with disregard for others. These verses give us the understanding and enlightenment to foresee all the repercussions associated with our behavior, motivating us to constantly improve our ways through continued spiritual development.

58. "And Avraham took Sarai his wife" (Beresheet 12:5). IN THIS VERSE, THE WORD "took" means that Avraham persuaded her to come with soft words, because a man cannot take his wife to another country without her agreement. Similarly, it is written: "Take Aharon" (Bemidbar 20:25) and "Take the Levites" (Bemidbar 3:45). This is why "And Avram took" MEANS THAT he persuaded her with words, telling her how evil were the ways of their generation. Therefore it is written: "And Avram took Sarai his wife."

58. וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת שְׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ. מִהוּ וַיִּקַּח, אֵלָא, אֲמַשִּׁיךְ לָהּ בְּמַלִּי מַעֲלִייתָא, בְּגִין דְּלִית לִיהּ רִשׁוּ לִבָּ"נָא לְאַפְקָא אֶתְתִּיהּ, לְמִיָּהּ בְּאַרְעָא אַחְרָא בְּלֹא רְעוּתָא דִּילָהּ. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר קַח אֶת אֶהְרֹן. קַח אֶת הַלְוִיִּם. וּבְגִין כְּרוּיִקַּח אַבְרָם. מִשִּׁיךְ לָהּ בְּמַלִּין, וְאוֹדַע לָהּ אֶרְחִיהוֹן דְּאִינוּן בְּנֵי דְרָא, כִּמְה בִּישִׁין. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת שְׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ.

59. Of the verse, "And Lot his brother's son," HE ASKS: What did Avraham see that made him take Lot with him? AND HE REPLIES: He foresaw through the Holy Spirit that David shall issue from him in the future. The words, "and the souls that they had made in Charan," refer to the male and female converts whose souls they amended. Avraham converted the men, while Sarah converted the women. FOR THIS REASON, the verse is written as if they had "made" them.

59. וְאֵת לוֹט בֶּן אָחִיו. מַה חֲמָא אַבְרָהָם לְדַבְקָא עִמֵּיהּ לוֹט. אֵלָא בְּגִין דְּצִפְפָּה בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, דִּזְמִין לְמִיפָק מִנִּיהּ דָּוִד. וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. אֵלִין גִּרִּים וְגִיטוֹת דְּאֶתְקִינוּ נַפְשֵׁיהוּ, אַבְרָהָם מְגִיטֵי גוֹבְרִין, וְשָׂרָה מְגִיטֵי נָשִׁין. וּמַעֲלָה עֲלִיהוֹן כְּאֵלוּ עֲבָדוּ לָהוֹן.

60. Rabbi Aba said: If so, then there were a lot of people-- REFERRING TO THE CONVERTS. HOW can we say that they all left with him? Rabbi Elazar responded: Indeed so! And because of this, all the people who went with him are called "the people of the Elohim of Avraham" (Tehilim 47:10). And he traveled through the country with no fear, as it is written: "And Avram passed through the land."

60. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא אִי הָכִי, כִּמְה בְּנֵי נָשָׂא הוּא, אִי תִימָא דְכָלְהוּ אָזְלוּ עִמֵּיהּ. אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר אֵין. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ כָּלְהוּ בְּנֵי נָשָׂא, דְּהוּוּ אֲזִלִּין עִמֵּיהּ, כָּלְהוּ אֶקְרוּן עַם אֱלֹקֵי אַבְרָהָם. וְהוּא מַעְבֵּר בְּאַרְעָא, וְלֹא הָוָה דְּחִיל. דְּכְתִיב וַיַּעְבֵּר אַבְרָם בְּאַרְץ.

61. Rabbi Aba said to him: If it had been written, 'and souls that they had made in Charan,' then he would have agreed THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR GREAT NUMBERS AVRAHAM HAD NO FEAR WHEN PASSING THROUGH THE LAND. But, he said, it is written: "and the (Heb. et) souls", in which the particle Et serves as an addition to the merits of those souls that went along with him. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT AVRAHAM WAS ABLE TO PASS THROUGH THE LAND WITH NO FEAR. Because he who leads his friend to meritorious conduct benefits always from that conduct and the benefit never leaves him. How do we know this? Because it is written: "And the souls that they had made in Charan." The merit of these souls accompanied Avraham.

61. אָמַר לוֹר' אַבָּא, אִי הָוָה כְּתִיב, וְהַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. הָוָה אֲמִינָא הָכִי, אֵלָא, וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ כְּתִיב, אֵת לְאַסְגָּא, זְכוּתָא דְכָלְהוּ נַפְשָׁן, דְּהוּוּ אֲזִלִּין עִמֵּיהּ, דְּכָל מֵאן דְּמִזְכֵּה לְאַחְרָא, הָהוּא זְכוּתָא תְּלִיָא בֵּיהּ, וְלֹא אַעֲרִי מִנִּיהּ. מְנָלָן, דְּכְתִיב, וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. זְכוּתָא דְּאִינוּן נַפְשָׁן הָוָה אֲזִיל עִמֵּיהּ דְּאַבְרָהָם.

62. Of the words "Get you out," Rabbi Shimon asked, when the Holy One, blessed be He, first revealed himself to Avraham, why did He start with 'Get you out'? Until that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, had not spoken with Avraham. Therefore, why did He start with "Go for yourself"? Because the Hebrew words for "Go for yourself," which are lech lecha, have a numerical value of 100. By using these words, the Holy One, blessed by He, gave Avraham a hint that he would have a son in his hundredth year.

63. But come and behold: All that the Holy One, blessed be He, performs on earth is done according to Wisdom. Because Avraham was not yet attached to the Holy One, blessed be He, properly, He said to him "Go for yourself." This is a hint for that place and position that Avraham was expected to reach and that would bring him closer to the Holy One, blessed be He. This is why it is written: "Go for yourself." And that is the first grade that Avraham was to attain in coming to the Holy One, blessed be He.

64. But Avraham could not reach that grade and hold on to it until he entered the land of Yisrael, because that is where this level is achieved. It was similar with David, about whom it is written: "David inquired of Hashem, saying: Shall I go up to any of the cities of Yehuda? And Hashem said to him, 'Go up.' And David said: Where shall I go up? And Hashem said: 'to Chevron'" (II Shmuel 2:1). Since Shaul had died, and David was fit to receive the kingship, why then did he not receive the kingship over Yisrael immediately? WHY DID HE HAVE TO EXERCISE HIS RULERSHIP FOR SEVEN YEARS IN CHEVRON?

65. Everything, however, occurs by the secret of Wisdom. David was not ready to receive the kingship until he had connected himself to the Patriarchs buried in Chevron, through whom he was to receive the kingship. Therefore, he remained IN CHEVRON for seven years, until he was fit to receive the kingship properly. Thus, everything occurred by the secret of Wisdom so that his kingship would be properly established! The same applies to Avraham; he did not achieve complete fulfillment with the Holy One, blessed be He, until he entered the land of Yisrael.

66. See, it is written: "And Avram passed through the land." HE ASKS: WHY DOES THE VERSE READ "passed through (Heb. vaya'avor)" instead of 'went'? This is an allusion to the Holy Name-- by which the world is sealed --that contains 72 engraved letters, all of which are within that name. VAYA'AVOR (VAV-YUD-AYIN-BET-VAV-RESH) CONSISTS OF TWO PARTS-RESH-YUD-VAV (NUMERICALLY=216) AND AYIN-BET (=72)-THAT REFER TO THE 216 LETTERS AND 72 NAMES. Thus, it is written in one place, "And... passed through," while it is written in another, "And Hashem passed by (Heb. vaya'avor) before him and proclaimed..." (Shemot 34:6) -- JUST AS THERE IT IS SPEAKING OF THE HOLY NAME OF AYIN-BET (72), SO TOO VAYA'AVOR HERE IS A REFERENCE TO THE HOLY NAME OF AYIN-BET (72).

62. לָךְ לָךְ. אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, מֵאִי טַעְמָא דְגָלוּיָא קְדָמָא, דְּאִתְגַּלִּי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲלֵיהּ דְּאַבְרָהָם, פֶּתַח בְּלָךְ לָךְ, דִּהָא עַד הָכָא, לֹא מִלִּיל עֲמִיּה קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מ"ט פֶּתַח לָךְ לָךְ. אֱלָא, הָא קְאָמְרוּ, דְּרָמִזוּ בְּחוּשְׁפָּנִיה מָאָה, דִּהָא לְמָאָה שְׁנִין אֲתִינְלִיד לִיהּ בֵּר.

63. אֲבָל תָּא חַזִּי, כָּל מַה דְּעֵבִיד קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּאַרְעָא, כֹּלָא רְזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא אִיהוּ, בְּגִין דְּאַבְרָהָם לֹא הוּוּ דְּבִיק בִּיהּ בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כְּדִין כְּדָקָא חַזִּי. אָמַר לִיהּ לָךְ לָךְ, וְדָא רָמִז לְהֵוּא אֲתֵר דְּבִעֵי לְאַתְקַרְבָּא בְּהַדִּיָּה דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְאִיהוּ דְּרָגָא קְדָמָא לְאַעֲלָא לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִין כֵּן לָךְ לָךְ.

64. וְהָאִי דְּרָגָא לֹא יָכִיל אַבְרָהָם לְאַתְאַחֲדָא בִּיהּ, עַד דְּיִיעוּל לְאַרְעָא דְּתַמָּן יִקְבַּל לִיהּ לְהֵוּא דְּרָגָא. כְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא כְּתִיב וַיִּשְׁאַל דָּוִד בַּה' לֵאמֹר הֲאֶעֱלֶה בְּאַחַת מִעָרֵי יְהוּדָה, וַיֹּאמֶר ה' עֲלֶה. וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֶעֱלֶה, וַיֹּאמֶר חֲבֻרֹנָה. וְכִי בֵּינוֹן דְּמִית שְׁאוּל, וּמַלְכוּתָא אֲתַחֲזִי לְדָוִד, אֲמַאי לֹא קָבִיל מַלְכוּתָא מִיַּד עַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

65. אֱלָא כֹּלָא רְזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא אִיהוּ, בְּגִין דְּדָוִד לִית לִיהּ לְקַבְּלָא מַלְכוּתָא, אֱלָא עַד דְּיִתְחַבֵּר בְּאַבְהֹן, דְּאִינוּן בְּחֻבְרוֹן, וְכְדִין בַּהּ יִקְבַּל מַלְכוּתָא. וְעַל דְּאֲתַעֲכַב תַּמָּן שְׁבַע שְׁנִין, בְּגִין דְּיִקְבַּל מַלְכוּתָא כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, וְכֹלָא בְּרָזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא וּבְגִין דְּיִתְקַן מַלְכוּתִיהּ. כְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא, אַבְרָהָם לֹא עָאֵל בְּקִיּוּמָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, עַד דְּעָאֵל לְאַרְעָא.

66. חַמִּי מַה כְּתִיב וַיַּעֲבֵר אַבְרָם בְּאַרְץ. וַיַּעֲבֵר, וַיִּלָּךְ מִבְּעֵי לִיהּ, אֱלָא, הָכָא הוּא רָמִז שְׁמָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּאִתְחַתֵּים בִּיהּ עֲלָמָא, בַּע"ב אֲתוּוֹן, גְּלִימָן דְּכִלְהוּ בְּשָׂמָא דָּא. כְּתִיב הָכָא וַיַּעֲבֵר, וְכְתִיב הָתֵם וַיַּעֲבֵר ה' עַל פָּנָיו וַיִּקְרָא.

11. "And Avram passed through the land..."

The Zohar reveals a hidden mystery concerning all the travels of Avraham that are recorded in the Torah. The journeys are not concerned with geographical locations on Earth, but rather with the numerous spiritual levels to which our souls can ascend through personal transformation. The

many difficulties associated with battling the angel Satan and the dark side of our nature, are discussed by the Zohar-all of life's processes up to the point of death.

The Relevance of this Passage

Throughout the journey of life, we often veer off the positive track into negativity as we submit to the self-indulgent whims of the physical body and the dark side of our nature. The power of this passage lies in its ability to put us back on a spiritual path, connecting us to the will of our soul.

67. In the book of Rabbi Yesa Saba (the elder), it states: It is written, "And Avram passed through the land," while elsewhere it is written: "I will make all My goodness pass before you" (Shemot 33:19). JUST AS THERE IT IMPLIES THE ENTIRE GOODNESS OF THE SUPERNAL PLACE, WHICH IS BINAH, SO THE IMPLICATION IS THE SAME HERE- it gives a hint about the holiness of the land, which emanates from a supernal place in all its proper GOODNESS. THIS REFERS TO MALCHUT THAT ENCLOSES BINAH PROPERLY AND RECEIVES ITS LIGHTS.

68. "To the place of Shchem to the plain of Moreh" MEANS from one side to the other side, as was befitting. "And the Can'ani were then in the land," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE EVIL SERPENT. It has been explained that at that time the curse of the evil serpent dominated the land, and the world was cursed. As it is written: "Cursed be Cna'an; a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren" (Beresheet 9:25), and also "you are cursed above all cattle" (Beresheet 3:14). When Avraham came close to the Holy One, blessed be He, it is written: "And Hashem appeared to Avram" (Beresheet 12:7). Now was revealed to him that which he did not know, because of the profound force that governed the land. Thus appeared to him what had been concealed from him, and he was able to understand it.

69. Then "he built an altar to Hashem, who had appeared to him." Why were the words "who had appeared to him" added? Because here the grade, which was in dominion over the land, appeared to him. He entered it, rose through it, and was established in it.

70. "And he moved from there to the mountain" (Beresheet 12:8), where he recognized the mountain of Hashem and all the grades planted on that place. "And pitched his tent," (Heb. ohaloh) WHICH ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA, AS 'OHALOH' IS NOT SPELLED WITH A VAV BUT WITH A HEI. Thus he spread a curtain and received the kingdom of heaven, along with all the grades that come from it. He then knew that the Holy One, blessed be He, rules over all, and he built an altar.

71. There were actually two altars, because here the Holy One, blessed be He, appeared to him as the ruler over all. He now acquired knowledge of the supernal wisdom, which he had not previously attained. He therefore built two altars-one for the grade that appeared WORLD, and one ALTAR to the grade still hidden. Come and behold: It is written first, "and there he built an altar to Hashem, who had appeared to him", and later just "and there he built an altar to Hashem," without adding "who appeared to him." And all this is according to the secret of Wisdom.

67. בְּסִפְרָא דְר' יֵסָא סָבָא, כְּתִיב הָכָא וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאַרְץ. וְכְתִיב הָתָם אֲנִי אֶעֱבִיר כָּל טוֹבִי. וְהוּא רְמֵז לְקְרוֹשָׁה דְאַרְעָא, דְּאֵתִי מֵאַתֵּר עֲלָאָה, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי.

68. עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֵם עַד אֵלּוֹן מוֹרֶה. מְסִטְרָא דָא לְסִטְרָא דָא, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי וְהַכְנַעְנִי אֹז בְּאַרְץ. הָא אֲתָמֵר, דְּעַד בְּרִין, שְׁלֵטָא חוּיָא בִישָׁא דְאַתְלִטְנָא, וְאִיִּיתִי לְוֹטִין עַל עֲלָמָא, דְּכְתִיב אֲרוּר כְּנַעַן עֶבֶד עֲבָדִים יִהְיֶה לְאַחִיו. וְכְתִיב אֲרוּר אֲתָה מְכַל הַבְּהֵמָה וְגו'. וְתַמֵּן אֲתַקְרִיב אַבְרָהָם לְגַבִּי קְדָשָׁא בְרִין הוּא, מֶה כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אַבְרָם. הָכָא אֲתַגְלִי לִיה, מֶה דְלֵא הוּא יָדַע, הֵהוּא חִילָא עֲמִיקָא לְשִׁלְטָא עַל אֲרַעָא. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ וַיֵּרָא, מֶה דְהוּא מִתְכַּסִּי מִנִּיה.

69. וְכִדִּין וַיִּבֶן שֵׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' הִנֵּרְאָה אֱלֹהֵי, בִּיּוֹן דְּאֲמַר לַה', מֶהוּ הִנֵּרְאָה אֱלֹהֵי. אֵלָא הָכָא אֲתַגְלִי לִיה, הֵהוּא דְרָגָא, דְּשִׁלְטָא עַל אֲרַעָא, וְעָאֵל בֵּיה, וְאַתְקִינִים בֵּיה.

70. וַיַּעֲתֵק מִשֵּׁם הַהִרָה, מִתַּמֵּן יָדַע הִר ה'. וְכִלְהוּ דְרָגִין דְּנִטְעִין בְּהָאֵי אֲתֵר, וַיֵּט אֶהְלָה. בְּה"א כְּתִיב, פְּרִישׁ פְּרִישׁוֹ, וְקִבִּיל מַלְכוּ שְׁמִיָּא, בְּכִלְהוּ דְרָגִין דְּאֲחִידִין בֵּיה. וְכִדִּין יָדַע דְּקְדָשָׁא בְרִין הוּא שְׁלִיט עַל כֻּלָּא. וְכִדִּין בְּנָה מִזְבֵּחַ.

71. וְתִרִין מִדְּבַחֵן הוּו, בְּגִין דְּהָכָא אֲתַגְלִי לִיה, דְּהָא קְדָשָׁא בְרִין הוּא שְׁלִיט עַל כֻּלָּא. וַיָּדַע חֲכָמָה עֲלָאָה, מֶה דְלֵא הוּא יָדַע מִקְדָּמַת דִּנָּא. וּבְנָה תִרִין מִדְּבַחֵן, חֵד לְדִרְגָא דְאַתְגְּלִיָּא וְחֵד לְדִרְגָא דְאַתְכַּסְיָּא, תָּא חֲזִי, דְּהָכִי הוּא, בְּקְדָמִיתָא כְּתִיב, וַיִּבֶן שֵׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' הִנֵּרְאָה אֱלֹהֵי וְגו'. וְלִבְתֵּר כְּתִיב, וַיִּבֶן שֵׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' סִתָּם, וְלֵא כְּתִיב הִנֵּרְאָה אֱלֹהֵי. וְכֻלָּא רְזָא דְחֲכָמָתָא אִיהוּ.

72. Avraham was then crowned from grade to grade, until he ascended to his own grade. This is the meaning of "And Avram journeyed, going on still toward the Negev." This is the south, BECAUSE HE WANTED TO ATTAIN THE GRADE OF CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED SOUTH, Avraham's portion. THIS MEANS HE WAS DESTINED TO BECOME A CHARIOT TO THE SFIRAH OF CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN, AND HENCE HE IS "going on still," grade after grade, until he reached the south, where he was properly attached, NAMELY, HE FIXED HIMSELF, SO HE COULD HOLD TO THE GRADE OF CHESED PERMANENTLY. HE THEN ascended to the south's grade, THAT IS, HE DESERVED TO BE A CHARIOT OF CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'SOUTH.'

73. After Avraham was crowned with his grades in the Holy Land-- THE SECRET OF THE MOCHIN FROM THE REVEALED WORLD, RACHEL, CALLED 'THE HOLY LAND'--and entered the holy grade-- THAT IS, THE GRADE OF CHESED, AND THE ASPECT OF THE HIDDEN WORLD, LEAH-- then it is written: "And there was famine in the land" (Beresheet 12:10), WHICH MEANS THAT they were not sure how to approach the Holy One, blessed be He, AS IN THE SECRET OF THE VERSE "NOT A FAMINE FOR BREAD, NOR A THIRST FOR WATER, BUT FOR HEARING THE WORDS OF HASHEM" (AMOS 8:11).

74. "And there was famine in the land" because until then the power ruling over the land did not supply the land with strength and nourishment. This occurred because THE NUKVA was not completely built and not PROPERLY established. When Avraham saw that the power appointed over the land did not supply it with might and holy strength as it merited, then "Avram went down to Egypt to sojourn there" (Beresheet 12:10).

75. IT IS ASKED: How did Avraham know THAT THE LAND, THE NUKVA, WAS STILL LACKING CORRECTION? From the verse, "To your seed I will give this land." IT DID NOT SAY, 'TO YOU AND YOUR SEED WILL I GIVE THIS LAND.' Avraham then knew that the only way to amend the land was through the holy grades of his descendants. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN: "TO YOUR SEED I WILL GIVE THIS LAND," AND NOT TO HIMSELF. Avraham then understood the secret of Wisdom, WHEREFORE the land will not be properly mended in holiness, except as we have said. HE THEREFORE WENT DOWN TO EGYPT, FROM THERE TO CORRECT THAT WHICH WAS LACKING. Gilayon (Interpolation)

76. The Holy One, blessed be He, alluded to the supernal Wisdom through Avraham and Yitzchak; Avraham is the Neshamah of Neshamah, NAMELY THE LIGHT OF CHAYAH. Sarah is the Neshamah, and Lot is the serpent, the spouse of Samael. The holy Ruach is Yitzchak; the Holy Nefesh is Rivkah. The Evil Inclination is the bestial Nefesh. And concerning this King Solomon said in his wisdom, "Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upwards, and the spirit of the beast goes downwards" (Kohelet 3:21). The bestial Nefesh is the Nefesh that comes from the side of the Evil Inclination.

72. וכדין אתעטר אברהם מדרגא לדרגא, עד דסליק לדרגיה, הה"ד ויסע אברם הלוך ונסוע הנגבה. דא דרום, דהוא חולקיה דאברהם. הלוך ונסוע. דרגא בתר דרגא עד דסליק לדרום, ותמן אתקשר בדקא נאות, וסליק לדרגיה לדרום.

73. כיון דאתעטר אברהם בדרגוי, בארעא קדישא, ועאל בדרגא קדישא, כדין מה כתיב, ויהי רעב בארץ. דלא הוו ידעי ידיעה, לקרבא לגבי דקודשא בריך הוא.

74. ויהי רעב בארץ. דער כען לא הוה חילא דעל ארעא, יהיב תוקפא ומזונא על ארעא, בגין דער לא אתקדשת ולא קיימא בקיומא. כיון דחמא אברהם, דהא ההוא חילא דממנא על ארעא, לא יהיב תוקפא וחילא קדישא בדקחוי, כדין ויירד אברם מצרימה לגור שם.

75. מנא ידע אברהם. דכתיב לזרעך נתתי את הארץ הזאת. כדין ידע אברהם, דהא ארעא לא אתתקנא בתקונא קדישא, אלא בדרגין קדישין, דיפקון מניה. וכדין ידע אברהם, דזא דחכמתא, דארעא לא תתקן בקדושה, אלא בדאמרן.

גליון

76. קדשא בריך הוארמיז חכמתא עלאה, באברהם וביצחק. אברהם דא נשמטא לנשמטא, ואיהי נשמה דא היא שרה. לוט דא הוא נחש, ובת זוגיה דההוא סמא"ל. רוח קדישא דא יצחק. נפש קדישא דא רבקה. יצר הרע, דא רוח הבהמה, ועל דאמר שלמה בחכמתיה, מי יודע רוח בני האדם העולה היא וגו'. נפש הבהמית, דא נפש מסטרא דיצר הרע.

77. And this is what they meant by saying that the Neshamah of Neshamah rests upon a person who feels awe and has Wisdom, MEANING THAT IT IS RECEIVED FROM THE SFIRAH OF CHOCHMAH WITH WISDOM AND AWE. The Neshamah reaches a person in Binah, as it is written: "And to man He said: Behold the fear of Hashem, that is wisdom (Heb. Chochmah)" (Iyov 28:28). THEREFORE THE NESHAMAH OF NESHAMAH COMES TO A PERSON ONLY THROUGH AWE AND WISDOM. The Neshamah comes to a person through repentance, which is called 'Binah' and 'Sarah'. The Ruach is called 'the voice', and is also called 'Da'at.' And this is drawn down to a person who raises his voice in Torah. THE RUACH IS also called the written Torah, and all the positive deeds come from the mental Nefesh.

78. In a similar way, the Holy One, blessed be He, created the body from the four elements--namely, Fire, Air, Earth and Water, which correspond to the Neshamah of Neshamah, the Neshamah, the Ruach, and the Nefesh. SO THE NESHAMAH OF NESHAMAH IS THE SECRET OF WATER; THE NESHAMAH IS THE SECRET OF FIRE; THE RUACH IS THE SECRET OF AIR; AND THE NEFESH IS THE SECRET OF EARTH. Water- which is the aspect of the male-REFERS TO THE NESHAMAH OF NESHAMAH THAT COMES FROM CHOCHMAH AND refers to the sweet waters of holiness. The contrasting bitter waters represent the Evil Inclination, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF SAMAEL. The holy fire-which is the aspect of the female-REFERS TO THE NESHAMAH THAT COMES FROM BINAH. IN CONTRAST, there is the foreign fire, to which the words "that he come not at all times to the holy place" (Vayikra 16:2) apply. And this is the female of the Evil Inclination, NAMELY THE SERPENT, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF SAMAEL. The holy Ruach is the aspect of the Male-SIMILAR TO THE RUACH THAT COMES FROM THE SFIRAH OF DA'AT. IT CONTRASTS WITH the unholy Ruach, which is the Evil Inclination. As it is written: "for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a viper" (Yeshayah 14:29). THIS REFERS TO THE BESTIAL RUACH, WHICH IS CALLED A 'VIPER', AND IS AN OFFSPRING OF THE SERPENT OF THE UNHOLY SIDE, NAMELY BINAH OF THE UNHOLINESS. THIS IS WHY THE VERSE SAYS: "OUT OF THE SERPENT'S ROOT SHALL COME FORTH A VIPER." There is holy Earth, SIMILAR TO THE NEFESH THAT COMES FROM THE LEFT SIDE OF DA'AT. AND IN CONTRAST, there is an Unholy Earth, NAMELY THE BESTIAL NEFESH, WHICH COMES FROM THE EVIL INCLINATION.

79. Therefore, the Neshamah, which is repentance-NAMELY BINAH-attacks and overcomes the serpent by the power of enslavement that belongs to repentance. And it drags the serpent to the synagogue and the learning academies. And the four elements THAT ARE THE FOUR ASPECTS OF CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT, expand to 22 letters, THAT COME FROM THE FIVE POINTS OF ARTICULATION OF THE MOUTH Aleph-Chet-Hei-Ayin FROM THE THROAT; Bet-Vav-Mem-Pe FROM THE LIPS; Gimel-Yud-Caf-Kuf FROM THE PALATE; Dalet-Tet-Lamed-Nun-Tav FROM THE TONGUE; AND Zayin-Samech-Shin-Resh-Tzadik FROM THE TEETH. THESE FIVE POINTS OF ARTICULATION OF THE MOUTH ARE EQUIVALENT TO KETER, CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT, WHICH ARE THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF WATER FIRE, AIR, AND EARTH. THIS IS WHY HE SAYS THAT THE FOUR ELEMENTS, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF THE FIVE POINTS OF ARTICULATION OF THE MOUTH, EXPAND TO 22 LETTERS.

(End of the Gilayon)

Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

77. וְעַל דָּא אָמְרוּ דְּאִיְהִי נִשְׁמָתָא לְנִשְׁמָתָא, אֲתַעֲרָא לְגַבְרָא בִּירָאָה וּבְחֻכְמָתָא. נִשְׁמָתָא אֲתַעֲרָא לְאִינִישׁ בְּבִינָה. הֵה"ד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָדָם הֵן יִרְאֵת ה' הִיא חֻכְמָה וְגו'. נִשְׁמָתָא אֲתַעֲרִי בְתִשְׁבּוּבָה, דְּאֲתַקְרִי בִּינָה, וְאֶקְרִי שָׂרָה. וְרוּחַ הוּא הַקּוֹל וְאֲתַקְרִי דַּעַת, וְאֲתַעֲרִי לְאִינִישׁ דִּי סָלִיק קְלִיָּה בְּאוּרִייתָא וְאֲתַקְרִי תוֹרָה שְׂבֻכְתָּב, וְנִפְשׁ הַשְּׂכָלִית אֲתַעֲרִי מִנִּיהּ עוֹבְדִין טְבִין.

78. וּבְדוּגְמָא דָּא, בְּרָא גּוּפָא, מֵאַרְבַּע יְסוּדוֹת: אֵשׁ, וְרוּחַ, וְעֶפֶר, וּמַיִם. כְּגִוּוֹנָא דְּהוּא נִשְׁמָתָא לְנִשְׁמָתָא, נִשְׁמָה, וְרוּחַ, וְנִפְשׁ. מַיִם דָּא דְּכֵר, וְדָא הוּא מַיִם מְתִיקִי דְּקְדוּשָׁה, וְאִית מַיִם הַמְּאַרְרִים, דְּאִינוּן יֵצֶר הָרַע. אִית אִשָּׁא קְדִישָׁא נּוֹקְבָא, וְאִית אִשָּׁא נּוֹכְרָאָה, אֵשׁ זָרָה. וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב, וְאֵל יָבֹא בְּכָל עֵת אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ. דְּאִיְהִי נּוֹקְבָתָא מִן יֵצֶר הָרַע. רּוּחַ קְדִישָׁא אִיהוּ דְּכֵר, אִית רּוּחַ מְסֻבָּא, דָּא יֵצֶר הָרַע, שְׂנֵאֲמֵר כִּי מִשְׁרַשׁ נִחַשׁ יֵצֵא צִמְעָה. אִית עֶפֶר קְדִישָׁא, וְאִית עֶפֶר מְסֻבָּא.

79. וְעַל דָּא, נִשְׁמָתָא דְּאִיְהִי תִשְׁבּוּבָה, דְּתַקִּימַת בֵּיהּ בְּהוּא נִחַשׁ, לְתַבְרָא לִיָּה, בְּשַׁעֲבוּרָא דְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה, וְאִמְשִׁיךְ לִיָּה לְבָתֵּי כְּנִסְיוֹת וּלְבָתֵּי מְדִרְשׁוֹת וְאִינוּן אַרְבַּע יְסוּדֵי מִתְפַּשְׁטִין לְכ"ב אֲתוּוֹן, אַחַה"ע, בּוּמ"ף, גִּיכ"ק, דְּטַלְנ"ת, זִסְשֵׁר"ץ. עַד כָּאן גְּלִיוֹן.

80. The verse, "And Avram passed through the land to the place of Shchem," alludes to the synagogue, the place where the Shechinah resides. As it is written: "Moreover I have given to you one portion (Heb. shchem)" (Beresheet 48:22), SO SHCHEM is the Shechinah, which is fit for YOSEF, as he is called 'righteous.' Because righteousness, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, does not reside anywhere else but in the righteous, WHO IS YOSEF. This is the meaning of "to the place of Shchem," REFERRING THE PLACE OF THE SHECHINAH-TO THE SYNAGOGUE. "To the plain of Moreh" alludes to Torah-learning academies, where they teach and instruct Torah to the public.

81. "And the Cna'ani was then in the land" means that the Evil Inclination was sweetened and amended in spite of itself, in the body WHICH IS CALLED THE LAND. DO NOT BE SURPRISED THAT THE EVIL INCLINATION IS CALLED 'CNA'ANI', because it has many names. "Was then in the land" is certainly against its will, AS IT IS STILL IN THE BODY, WHEN THE SOUL, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF AVRAM, SHINES THROUGH IT. The serpent is not yet completely removed from the body. Therefore, because the body is still attached TO THE SERPENT, the "Cna'ani was then in the land." Why is it called the "Cna'ani?" Because it surrounds (Aramaic aschar) the body with evil judgments. AS THE WORD CNA'ANI MEANS A MERCHANT (HEB. SOCHER), AS IT IS WRITTEN: "HIS TRUTH SHALL BE YOUR SHIELD AND BUCKLER (HEB. SOCHERAH)" (TEHILIM 91:4).

82. The soul is properly established in this world, so that we can merit receiving it after it leaves the world. If a soul has merit, it returns to the place from whence it came. As it is written: "To the place of the altar, which he had made there in the beginning" (Beresheet 13:4), and "to the place where his tent (Heb. ohaloh) had been at the beginning..." (Ibid. 3). Ohaloh is spelled with an additional Hei, WHICH REPRESENTS THE SHECHINAH.

83. Now, IN THIS WORLD, it is LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE-between rising upward TO THE PLACE FROM WHENCE IT CAME, and descending downward TO THE PLACE OF PUNISHMENTS. IN OTHER WORDS, between Bet-El, WHICH IS UP, and Ay, WHICH IS DOWN AT THE PLACE OF PUNISHMENTS. If it has merit, it will rise up "to the place of the altar, which he had made..." SO ACCORDING TO THIS, HE ASKS: Who is 'he' who 'had made,' and what is 'the altar'? AND HE REPLIES: "...he had made there" applies to the Holy One, blessed be He, who had made that altar, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, and established it upon twelve stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Ya'akov, to whom the word of Hashem came, saying, Yisrael shall be your name" (I Melachim 18:31), for sure.

84. And this altar, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, "he had made there at first," when the upper world, which is concealed from all other worlds, was created. And Michael-THE ANGEL, the High Priest-stands high and sacrifices upon it the offerings of the souls OF THE RIGHTEOUS. And since the soul ascends there and rises up AS AN OFFERING, it is written: "and there Avram called in the name of Hashem" (Beresheet 13:4). The soul calls there IN THE NAME OF HASHEM and is attached to the bundle of life.

סְתֵרֵי תוֹרָה

80. וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שָׁכֶם. דָּא בִּי כְּנִישְׁתָּא, אַתְר דְּדִינוּרָא דְשְׁכִינְתָּא תַּמָּן, בְּד"א וְאַנִּי נִתְתִּי לֶךְ שָׁכֶם אַחֲרָה. דָּא שְׁכִינְתָּא דְאַתְחַזִּי לִיהָ, הוֹאִיל וְאַתְקֵרִי צְדִיק, דְּהָא צְדִיק לָאו דִּינוּרָא אֱלָא בְּהַדִּי צְדִיק, וְדָא הוּא עַד מְקוֹם שָׁכֶם. עַד אֱלוֹן מוֹרָה. אֱלוֹ בְּתֵי מִדְרָשׁוֹת, דְּאוּלְפִין וּמוֹרִים תַּמָּן תוֹרָה בְּרַבִּים.

81. וְהַכְנַעְנִי אִז בְּאֶרֶץ. בְּדִין אַתְבָּסָם וְאַתְתַּקֵּן יֶצֶר הָרַע בְּגוּפָא בְּעַל כְּרַחֲיָה. דְּסְגִיָּאִין שְׁמָהּ אִית לִיהָ, וּבְגִיָּי כֶךְ אֲדַכֵּר בְּשְׁמָהּ סְגִיָּאִין. אִז בְּאֶרֶץ. וְדָאִי וְאַתְכַּפִּיָּא בְּהָאִי, בְּגִין דְּכְדִין אִיהוּ גוּפָא, בְּזִמְנָא דְלֹא אַתְעֵבֵר מִנִּיהָ הֵהוּא נַחֲשׁ כָּל כֶּךְ, בְּגִין דְּבִקּוּתָא דְגוּפָא, בְּדִין הַכְנַעְנִי אִז בְּאֶרֶץ. אֲמָאִי אֲקָרִי כְּנַעְנִי, דְּאַסְחָר גוּפָא לְדִינִין בִּישׁוּן.

82. וְנִשְׁמַתָּא קִיּוּמָא בְּהָאִי עֲלֵמָא כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, בְּגִין לְמִזְבֵּי בְּהָ לְבַתֵּר כְּדִ נִפְקַת מֵהָאִי עֲלֵמָא, אִי זְכָאת סְלָקָא לְאַתְרָהּ דְנִפְקַת מִתַּמָּן, דְּכְתִיב אֵל מְקוֹם הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה שָׁם בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה, וְכְתִיב אֵל הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיָה שָׁם אֵהְלָה בְּתַחֲלָה. אֵהְלָה בְּה"א.

83. וְהִשְׁתָּא אִיהִי קִיּוּמָא בֵּין לְסְלָקָא לְעִילָא, וּבֵין לְנִחְתָא לְתַתָּא. בֵּין בֵּית אֵל וּבֵין הָעִי. אִי זְכָאת, סְלָקָא אֵל מְקוֹם הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה שָׁם וּגו'. מֵאֵן עָשָׂה, וּמֵאֵן מִזְבֵּחַ. אֱלָא, אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה שָׁם, דָּא קְדִשָּׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. דְּאִיהוּ עֵבֶד תַּמָּן הָאִי מִזְבֵּחַ, וְאַתְקִין לָהּ עַל תְּרִיסַר אַבְנִין, לְמַסְפַּר שְׁבִטֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָיָה דְּבַר ה' אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהִי שְׁמִךְ וְדָאִי.

84. וּמִזְבֵּחַ דָּא עָשָׂה שָׁם בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה, כְּדִ אַתְבָּרִי עֲלֵמָא עֲלָאָה טְמִירָא לְכָל עֲלָמִין, וּמִיכָאֵל כְּהֵנָּא רַבָּא, קָאִים וּמְקָרִיב עֲלָהּ, קְרַבְנִין דְנִשְׁמַתִּין. בֵּיוֹן דְנִשְׁמַתָּא סְלָקָא תַּמָּן מֵה כְּתִיב, וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם אַבְרָם בְּשֵׁם ה'. נִשְׁמַתָּא קָאֲרִי תַּמָּן, וְאַצְרִירָא בְּצִרוּרָא דְחַיִּי.

85. All this happens if THE SOUL merited to amend the body in this world and overcome the power of that cursed being, NAMELY THE EVIL INCLINATION THAT IS CALLED LOT, until it is separated from it. As it is written: "And there was strife between the herdsmen of Avram's cattle (WHICH IS THE SOUL) and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle, (WHICH IS THE EVIL INCLINATION)" (Beresheet 13:7). Because in this world, on each and every day, those camps and rulers from the side of the soul are in strife with the camps and rulers from the side of the body, and they fight with each other--while all the parts of the body are trapped in agony between them, between the soul and the serpent, between those forces that fight each other every day.

86. Thus it is written: "And Avram said to Lot" (Beresheet 13:8) that the soul answered the Evil Inclination, "Let there be no strife, I pray you, between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen." IN OTHER WORDS, between my camps and your camps "for we are brethren"; because the Good Inclination and the Evil Inclination are close to each other, the one to man's right and the other to his left. THE EVIL INCLINATION IS TO HIS LEFT AND THE GOOD INCLINATION TO HIS RIGHT.

87. "Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself, pray you, from me..." (Ibid. 9). There are a lot of wicked men in the world; go and chase after them and leave me alone. "If you will go to the left, then I will go to the right..."; it reproves and annoys it with many fights and arguments every day, until, as it is written: "and they separated themselves the one from the other" (Ibid. 11).

88. Since they have separated themselves from each other, it is written: "Avram dwelt in the land of Cna'an" (Beresheet 13:12), WHICH MEANS THAT the soul has settled among the righteous in a good and peaceful settlement. "And Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain" MEANS THAT the cursed adversary went to prosecute and join the wicked in their dwellings. As it is written: "and pitched his tent toward Sdom," followed by: "And the men of Sdom were wicked and were sinners before Hashem exceedingly" (Beresheet 13:13). There he dwelt and set his residence among them; he joined them, so that he could deceive them and destroy them by evil deeds.

89. As the adversary leaves the soul and the body is purified from that defilement, the Holy One, blessed be He, immediately takes up residence beside him, and he inherits the upper and lower portion and is delighted among the righteous. While that cursed one--REFERRING TO LOT--is among the wicked and they sin together with him until finally they cannot be redeemed from their sins.

85. וְכָל דָּא אֵי זָכָא בְּהָא עֲלָמָא, לְאַתְקְנָא גּוּפָא בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, וּלְאַכְפִּיָּא תּוֹקְפָא דְּהֵהוּא לְטוּיָא, עַד דְּאַתְפָּרְשָׁא מִנִּיהּ. מַה בְּתִיב, וַיְהִי רִיב בֵּין רוּעֵי מִקְנֵה אַבְרָם וּבֵין רוּעֵי מִקְנֵה לוֹט. דְּבִכָּל יוֹמָא וַיּוֹמָא, בְּהָא עֲלָמָא, אֵינּוּן סִיעֵן וּמִנְהִיגִין דְּנִשְׁמַתָּא, וְאֵינּוּן סִיעֵן וּמִנְהִיגִין דִּיצַר הָרַע, אֵינּוּן בְּקִטְרוּגָא, מְקִטְרִגִין אֲלִין בְּאֲלִין, וְכָל שְׂיִיפִין דְּגּוּפָא בְּצַעְרָא בִּינִיּוּהוּ, בֵּין נִשְׁמַתָּא, וְהֵהוּא נָחַשׁ, דְּקָא מְגִיחוּן קֶרְבָּא בְּכָל יוֹמָא.

86. מַה בְּתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל לוֹט. נִשְׁמַתָּא אֶהְדְּרָא לְגַבֵּי יִצַר הָרַע, וְאֹמֵר לִיהּ אֵל נָא תְּהִי מְרִיבָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶיךָ וּבֵין רוּעֵי וּבֵין רוּעֵיךָ, סְטָרִין דִּילִי וּסְטָרִין דִּילָךְ. כִּי אֲנָשִׁים אַחִים אֲנַחְנוּ. יִצַר טוֹב וַיִּצֶה ר' קְרִיבִין דָּא בְּדָא, דָּא לִימִינָא וְדָא לְשְׂמָאלָא.

87. הֲלֹא כָּל הָאָרֶץ לִפְנֵיךָ הִפְרָד נָא מֵעָלַי. סְגִיאוּן חַיִּיבָא אֵינּוּן בְּעֲלָמָא, זֵיל וּשְׁוֹט אַבְתְּרִיּוּהוּ, וְאַתְפָּרֶשׁ מֵעָמִי. אִם הִשְׁמָאל וְאִימִינָהּ וּגו'. וְאוֹכַח לִיהּ, וְאַעִּיק לִיהּ, בְּכַמָּה קְרִבִין דְּעָבִיד בְּהִדְיָה בְּכָל יוֹמָא, עַד דְּכְתִיב וַיִּפְרְדוּ אִישׁ מֵעַל אָחִיו.

88. בֵּינּוּן דְּמִתְפָּרְשִׁין דָּא מִן דָּא, מַה בְּתִיב, אַבְרָם יֹשֵׁב בְּאָרֶץ כְּנָעַן. אֲתִישְׁבֵּת נִשְׁמַתָּא בְּאֵינּוּן צְדִיקָיוּא, בִּישׁוּבָא טַב בְּשָׁלָם. וְלוֹט יֹשֵׁב בְּעָרֵי הַכְּפֹר, הֵהוּא לְטִיָּא מְקִטְרָגָא, אֲזִיל לְקִטְרָגָא, וְלֹאֲתַחְפְּרָא בְּאַתֵּר דְּחַיִּיבָא תַּמָּן. דְּכְתִיב וַיֵּאָהֵל עַד סְדוֹם. מַה בְּתִיב בְּתִרְיָה, וְאֲנָשֵׁי סְדוֹם רָעִים וְחָטָאִים לָהּ מְאֹד. תַּמָּן שְׂרִיָּא וְשׁוּי דִּינּוּרִיָּה בִּינִיּוּהוּ, לֹאֲתַחְפְּרָא בְּהוּ, לְאַסְטָאָה לוֹן וּלְאוֹכְדָא לוֹן, בְּעוֹבְדִין בִּישׁוּן.

89. בֵּינּוּן דְּאַשְׁתָּאֲרֵת נִשְׁמַתָּא בְּלֹא מְקִטְרָגָא, וְאַתְדַּכֵּי גּוּפָא מֵהֵהוּא זוּהָמָא, מִדֵּר קִרְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאֲאֲשֵׁרִי דִּינּוּרִיָּה בְּהִדְיָה, וַיְרִית אַחְסַנְתָּא עֲלָאָה וְתַתָּאָה, וְאִית לִיהּ נִיּוּחָא בֵּין צְדִיקָיוּא, וְהֵהוּא לְטִיָּא בֵּין אֵינּוּן רְשִׁיעִיּוּא, חָטָאן בְּהִדְיָה עַד דְּלֹא הָוָה פּוֹרְקָנָא לְחוּבִיּוּהוּ.

90. It is then written: "And when Avram heard that his brother was taken captive..." (Beresheet 14:14). "And when Avram heard" refers to the soul which remained purified in the body. "That his brother was taken captive" refers to the Evil Inclination, which was taken captive among the wicked by their innumerable sins. "And he armed his trained servants, born in his own house," means the righteous men who learn Torah and are the limbs of the body. THE LIMBS OF THE BODY ARE LIKENED TO RIGHTEOUS MEN WHO LEARN THE TORAH, armed to join him. They number three hundred and eighteen-248 limbs of the body and 70 that belong to the secret of the soul. THESE CORRESPOND TO THE SEVEN SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN, IN WHICH EACH ONE IS THE NUMBER TEN. The soul comes from THE SEVEN SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN. SO 248 PLUS SEVENTY EQUALS THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN. He was armed with all these to confront those sinners-to make them repent and atone for their sins.

91. Then, it is written: "and pursued them to Dan (also, judge)." This means he pursued them and told them about the judgment of the World of Truth and the punishment of Gehenom. And he did not allow his eyes to sleep, neither during the day nor at night, until he reproved the sinners and brought them to atone and ask for forgiveness from the Holy One, blessed be He. It is written: "And he brought back all the goods..." (Beresheet 13:16), because he brought them to atone completely for their sins!

92. The words "And also brought again his brother Lot" mean that he even attacked that Evil Inclination, WHICH IS CALLED LOT, until he overcame it by force against its will and weakened it, as should be. He brought them all to wholeheartedly atone for their sins, as should properly be. He reproved and reprimanded them day and night for every single sin they performed, until they repented completely.

93. Let us return to the first subject of this passage, where it is written: "The watchmen that go about the city found me..." (Shir Hashirim 5:7). We have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, constructed the celestial Jerusalem, NAMELY BINAH, TO BE just like the terrestrial Jerusalem; NAMELY MALCHUT, with walls, towers, and open gates. And those walls there-THE WALLS IN BINAH AND MALCHUT-have guards stationed upon them. As it is written: "I have set watchmen upon your walls, Jerusalem..." (Yeshayah 62:6). And Michael, the High Priest, is the highest of the gate watchmen.

94. When the soul leaves this world, MEANING AS A PERSON DIES, if that person has merit, the soul enters the earthly Garden of Eden, which the Holy One, blessed be He, planted for the spirits of the righteous MEN OF EARTH, WHICH IS MALCHUT. Similarly, He created the Garden of Eden on high, WHICH IS BINAH, where all the righteous people of the world dwell.

90. מֵה בְּתִיב וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו. וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם, דָּא נִשְׁמַתָּא, דְּאַשְׁתָּאֲרַת בְּרַכּוֹ בְּגוּפָא. כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו, דָּא יֵצֵר הָרַע, דְּנִשְׁבָּה בֵּין אֵינּוֹן חַיִּיבֵי אַחֲוֵי סְגִיָּאִין. וַיִּרְק אֶת חֲנִיכּוֹ יְלִידֵי בֵּיתוֹ. אֵלֶּיִן אֵינּוֹן צְדִיקָא דְּלַעָאן בְּאוֹרֵייתָא דְּאֵינּוֹן שְׂוִיפִי דְּגוּפָא, זְרִיזִין לְמִיָּהֵר בְּהִדְיָה י"ח וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת, אֵלֶּיִן רַמ"ח שְׁוִיפִין דְּגוּפָא, וּשְׁבַעִין דְּרִזָּא דְּנִשְׁמַתָּא, דְּנִפְקָא מִתַּמָּן. בְּכָל אֲזֵרָו לְמַהֵר תַּמָּן, לְגַבֵּי אֵינּוֹן חַיִּיבֵי, לְאַתְבָּא לֹון מַחֲבִיָּהוֹן.

91. מֵה בְּתִיב, וַיִּרְדֵּף עַד דָּן. רְדִיף אֲבַתְרִיָּהוּ, וְאוֹדַע לֹון דִּינָא דִּהֵהוּא עֲלֵמָא, וְעוֹנָשׁ דְּגִיָּהֲנָם, וְלֹא יְהִיב דְּמִיכּוֹ לְעֵינִיָּה, בִּימָמָא וּבְלֵילִיָּא, עַד דְּאוֹכַח לֹון לְאֵינּוֹן חַיִּיבִין, וְאַתִּיב לֹון בְּתִיבָתָא לְגַבֵּי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. מֵה בְּתִיב וַיִּשָּׁב אֶת כָּל הָרֶכֶשׁ, אֲתִיב לֹון בְּתִיבָתָא שְׁלִימָא בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת.

92. וְגַם אֶת לוֹט אָחִיו וְגו', אֲפִילוּ לִהְיוֹא יֵצֵר הָרַע אֲתִיקֵף בְּהִדְיָה, עַד דְּאַכְפִּיָּיָה בַּעַל כְּרִחִיָּה וְאַמְתִּיק לִיָּה, בְּדָקָא חַוִּי. כָּלֹא אֲתִיב בְּתִיבָתָא שְׁלִימָתָא בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, בְּגִין דְּלֹא אֲשַׁתְּכֵךְ יִמָּמָא וּלֵילִיָּא, עַד דְּאוֹכַח לֹון וַיִּרְדֵּף לֹון עַל הֵהוּא חוֹבָא דְּחָאבוּ, עַד דְּתֵאבוּ בְּתִיבָתָא שְׁלִימָתָא בְּדָקָחוּ.

93. אֲהִדְרִנָּא לְמַלִּי קִדְמָאי דְּפִרְשָׁתָא. בְּתִיב מִצְאוֹנֵי הַשּׁוֹמְרִים הַסּוֹכְבִים בְּעִיר וְגו', תִּנּוּן, עֶבֶד קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעִילָא, כְּגוּנָא דִּירוּשָׁלַם דְּלִתָּתָא, בְּשׁוּרִין, וּמַגְדָּלִין, וּפְתִיחִין פְּתִיחִין. וְאֵינּוֹן חוֹמוֹת דְּתַמָּן, אֵית עֲלֵיהוּ נְטִרִין, דְּנְטִרֵי תַרְעֵי דְּאֵינּוֹן חוֹמוֹת, דְּכְתִיב עַל חוֹמוֹתֶיךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם הַפְּקִדְתִּי שׁוֹמְרִים וְגו'. וּמִיכָאֵל כְּהֵנָּא רַבָּא, עֲלָאָה מְכַלְהוּ נְטִרֵי תַרְעֵי דְּאֵינּוֹן חוֹמוֹת.

94. נִשְׁמָה בְּר נִפְקַת מֵהַאי עֲלֵמָא, אִי זָכָאָת, עֲאֵלַת בְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֵדֶן דְּאַרְעָא, דְּנִטַּע קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְרוּחֵיהוֹן דְּצְדִיקָיָא, כְּגוּנָא דִּהֵהוּא גִנְתָּא דְּעֵדֶן דְּלְעִילָא, וְתַמָּן כָּל צְדִיקָא דְּעֲלֵמָא.

95. So when the soul leaves this world, it FIRST enters the cave of Machpelah, where the opening leading to the Garden of Eden is located. Then it meets Adam and the Patriarchs who are there. If the soul is meritorious, they rejoice with it and open all the openings so the soul can enter them. If not, it is pushed outside. If it has merit it enters the Garden and sits there, it clothes itself with a garment in the image of this world and enjoys itself.

95. וְכִּדְ נִשְׁמָתָא נִפְקֵת מֵהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, עֲלֵילָת בְּמַעֲרֵתָא דְכַפְלֵתָא, דְתַמְנָן אִיהִי פְתִיחָא דְגֵן עֵדֶן. פְּגִיעַת בְּאָדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן, וּבְאִינוֹן אֲבֵהֶן דְתַמְנָן, אִי זָכָאת אִיהִי, חֲדָאן בָּהּ, וּפְתִיחִין לָהּ פְתִיחִין, וְעֲלֵילָת. וְאִי לֹא, דְחִינִין לָהּ לִבְר. וְאִי זָכָאת, עֵיילָת לְגִנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן, כִּינֵן דְעֵיילָת, יִתְבָּא תַמְנָן בְּגִנְתָּא, וְאִתְלַבְּשַׁת תַמְנָן, בְּלְבוּשָׁא דְרִיוּקָנָא דְהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, וְאִתְעַדְנַת תַמְנָן.

12. The three levels: Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah

There are three levels of soul that we can learn to achieve throughout life. We are born into this world with the lowest level of soul. The next two higher levels are attained by way of spiritual accomplishments that we achieve in the course of life.

The Relevance of this Passage

Left to his own devices, man would remain enslaved to the primal urges and impulses of the body, the lowest level of soul. Therefore, the energy of this passage infuses us with the strength to help us climb towards the next level of soul.

96. The secret of all secrets is passed on to those who are wise in their hearts. There are three levels that are attached to each other, and they are Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah. Nefesh is the force from which the body is built. When a man is aroused in this world to mate with his wife, all parts of the body agree on this and are prepared to receive enjoyment from it. Then the Nefesh and the desire of the person indulge willingly in that act. The Nefesh is drawn down and enters the sperm that comes forth.

96. סֵתְרָא דְסִתְרִין, לְחֻכְיָא לְבָא אֲתַמְסֵר, תִּלְתּ דְרִגִּין אִינוֹן, דְאַחֲרִין דָּא בְּדָא, וְאֵלִין אִינוֹן: נֶפֶשׁ, רוּחַ, וְנִשְׁמָה. נֶפֶשׁ, אִיהוּ חֵילָא, דְגּוּפָא אֲתַבְּנִי מִנִּיהּ. דְכִד בְּר נֶשׁ אֲתַעֵר בְּהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, לְאִזְדוּגָא בְּנוֹקְבִיָּה, כָּל שְׂוִיפֵי מִסְתַּבְּמִי וּמִתְתַּקְנִי לְאִתְהַנָּה תַמְנָן, וְהָהוּא נֶפֶשׁ וְרַעוּתָא דִּילֵיהּ, אֲסַתְבֵּם בֵּיהּ בְּהָהוּא עוֹבְדָא, וּמִשִּׁיךְ לֵיהּ לְהָהוּא נֶפֶשׁ, וְאֵעִיל לֵיהּ תַמְנָן בְּהָהוּא זֶרְעָא דְאֻשִׁיד.

97. From the combination of that desire and the Nefesh, another power is drawn from the levels of the angels, who are called Ishim (people). They all enter as the sperm flows, and the body is then built and constructed of them. This is the first and lowest power of the three levels.

97. וּמִגּוֹ רַעוּתָא וּמִשִּׁיכוֹ דְנֶפֶשָׁא, דְמִשִּׁיךְ תַמְנָן, אֲתַמְשֵׁךְ חֵילָא אוּחְרָא תַמְנָן, מֵאִינוֹן דְרִגִּין דְאַתְקִרוּן אִישִׁים. וְעֹאֵל כָּלָא בְּמִשִּׁיכוֹ דְהָהוּא זֶרְעָא, וְאִתְבְּנִי מִנִּיהּ גּוּפָא. וְדָא אִיהוּ חֵילָא קְדָמָא תַתָּא, דְאִינוֹן תִּלְתּ.

98. And because the Nefesh offers a sacrifice by attaching itself to the foundation of the body, which is offered as a sacrifice to atone for the Neshamah, then part of it is offered to those grades that are considered as Ishim. Because part of the Nefesh, THE RUACH OF THE NEFESH, is drawn down from them. As it is written: "My offering and my bread for my fire (Heb. ishai)..." (Bemidbar 28:2), WHICH MEANS TO THE ISHIM. So, because it is an offering THAT COMES FROM THE POWER of the Nefesh, the Ishim take their part as well. THEIR SHARE IS DETERMINED BY THE AMOUNT ENCLOSED IN THE NEFESH THAT OFFERS THE SACRIFICE. And when one leaves this world, that Nefesh never leaves the grave. And because of the power OF THIS NEFESH THAT REMAINS IN THE GRAVE, the dead know and talk with each other.

98. וּבְגִין דְהָאֵי נֶפֶשׁ אֲקָרִיב, בְּדְבָקוּתָא וִיסוּדָא דְגּוּפָא, קְרַבְנָא, דְאַתְקָרִיב לְכַפָּרָא עַל נִשְׁמָתָא, אֲתִיְהִיבַת חוּלְקָא לְאִינוֹן דְרִגִּין דְאִישִׁים. וּבְגִין דְמִשִּׁיכוֹ דְחוּלְקָא דְהָהוּא נֶפֶשׁ אֲתִי מִנִּיהּ. וְהֵינּוּ דְכְתִיב אֶת קְרַבְנִי לְחֻמִּי לְאִשִּׁי. בְּגִין דְהוּא כַפָּרָה דְנֶפֶשׁ, נְטִילִי חוּלְקִיהוֹן. וְכִד מִית בְּר נֶשׁ בְּהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, הָהִיא נֶפֶשׁ לֹא אֲתַעֲדִי מִן קְבָרָא לְעֲלָמִין. וּבְחֵילָא דָּא, יִדְעִי מִתִּיָּא וּמִשְׁתַּעוּ דָּא עִם דָּא.

99. Ruach gives existence to the Nefesh in this world, AS IT DRAWS DOWN THE ABUNDANCE OF LIFE AND PASSES IT ON TO THE NEFESH. THIS IS THE MIDDLE LEVEL OF THE THREE. It is drawn by the arousal of the Nukva OF ATZILUT toward the male OF ATZILUT, when they are in a state of united passion, NAMELY, DURING THE ACT OF MATING. The female is aroused toward the male because of her passion to receive from him the LIGHT OF Ruach, just like a woman in this world who is inseminated by the power of her passion to RECEIVE FROM the man. And this is the secret of the words, "and the spirit (Ruach) shall return to the Elohim who gave it" (Kohelet 12:7). THIS MEANS THAT IT RETURNS TO THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED BY THE NAME OF ELOHIM. AND EVEN THOUGH THE RUACH IS DRAWN FROM ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS CALLED YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE IT IS THE RESULT OF THE AROUSAL OF THE FEMALE, SHE IS THEN CONSIDERED TO BE THE ROOT CAUSE OF IT. SO AFTER DEATH AND DEPARTURE FROM THE BODY, IT RETURNS TO HER.

100. And this Ruach, AFTER A PERSON'S DEATH, leaves this world and is separated from the Nefesh, WHICH REMAINS HOVERING OVER THE GRAVE, and it enters the Garden of Eden of this world. There, it clothes itself with the air of the Garden of Eden, just as the supernal angels do when they come down to this world. Then, they clothe and cover themselves with the air of this world, because they were created from that spirit (Ruach), as it is written: "Who makes the winds (also: spirits) his angels" (Tehilim 104:4).

101. And in the midst of the Garden, there stands a pillar embroidered with many colors. And when that Ruach wishes to rise up TO THE WORLD OF ATZILUT, it disrobes from that clothing, FROM THE AIR OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, enters to the pillar, and ascends until it reaches the place from where it came, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ATZILUT. As it is written: "and the spirit (Ruach) shall return TO THE ELOHIM, WHO GAVE IT."

102. And then, Michael, the High Priest, takes THE RUACH and offers it as a sacrifice of sweet savor to the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN. And it remains there, IN ZEIR ANPIN OF ATZILUT, and enjoys the delicacies of the bundle of Life, WHICH IS DESCRIBED BY THE VERSE, "no eye had ever seen an Elohim, beside You..." (Yeshayah 64:3). Afterwards, it goes down from there and returns to the earthly Garden of Eden. There, it enjoys all the delicacies, clothes itself again with that same clothing, THAT IS, WITH THE AIR OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, and dwells there crowned with a crown twice as big as the one that it had possessed before IT ROSE UP TO MALE AND FEMALE OF ATZILUT.

103. The Neshamah is a supernal power high above the other two, NAMELY, THE NEFESH AND THE RUACH. It originates from the power of the male, which is the Tree of Life. THAT IS, ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'THE TREE OF LIFE,' DRAWS IT FROM BINAH OF ATZILUT, AND BECAUSE HE DOES SO, HE IS CONSIDERED TO BE ITS ROOT. THIS IS JUST LIKE THE RUACH, WHICH THE NUKVA DRAWS FROM ZEIR ANPIN, AND IS THUS CONSIDERED ITS ROOT. INDEED, THE LIGHT OF ZEIR ANPIN IS CALLED RUACH AND THE LIGHT OF BINAH IS CALLED NESHAMAH. THE NESHAMAH, AFTER MAN'S DEMISE, ascends immediately. IT DOES NOT COME FIRST TO THE EARTHLY GARDEN OF EDEN, AS DOES THE RUACH. RATHER, IT ASCENDS TO ITS ROOT IMMEDIATELY, NAMELY, TO ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS ITS ROOT WITH NO REGARD TO ITS DRAWING IT. And these three levels-NEFESH, RUACH, AND NESHAMAH-are attached to one another. When they leave THE BODY, they all rise up and return to the places from which they came.

99. רוח, אִיהוּ דְּמַקְיִים לְנֶפֶשׁ בְּהַאי עֲלָמָא. וְאִיהוּ מְשִׁיכוּ דְּאַתְעָרוּתָא דְּנוּקְבָא לְגַבֵּי דְכוּרָא, כִּד אִינוּן בְּתִיאובְתָּא חָדָא, וּכְדִין אַתְעָרַת לְגַבֵּי דְכוּרָא בְּתִיאובְתָּא דִּילָהּ, לְהַאי רוּחַ. כְּגִוּוּנָא דְנוּקְבָא דִלְתַתָּא אֲשֵׁדִיאַת זֶרְעָא בְּתִיאובְתָּא לְגַבֵּי דְכוּרָא. וְסִתְרָא דָּא וְהָרוּחַ תְּשׁוּבָא אֶל הָאֱלֹקִים אֲשֶׁר נָתַנָּהּ.

100. וְהַאי רוּחַ נִמְקָא מֵהַאי עֲלָמָא, וְאַתְפָּרֶשֶׁת מִנֶּפֶשׁ, עָאֵל לְגִנְתָּא דְּעֵדֶן, דְּבְּהַאי עֲלָמָא, וְאַתְלַבֵּשׁ תַּמָּן גּוֹ אֲוִירָא דְּגִנְתָּא. כְּמָה דְּמִתְלַבְּשִׁי מִלְּאֲבִי עֲלָאִי, כִּד נִחְתִּין לְהַאי עֲלָמָא, בְּגִין דְּאִינוּן מֵהֵוּא רוּחַ הוּא, דְּכִתִּיב עוֹשֶׂה מִלְּאֲכִיו רוּחוֹת וְגו'.

101. וּבְמַצִּיעוֹת גִּנְתָּא, אֵית עֲמוּדָא חָדָא, מִרְקָמָא בְּכָל גְּוּוּנִין. וְהֵוּא רוּחַ, כִּד בְּעָא לְסַלְקָא, אַתְפַּשֵּׁט תַּמָּן מֵהֵוּא לְבוּשָׁא, וְעָאֵל גּוֹ הֵוּא עֲמוּדָא וְסַלִּיק לְעִילָא, גּוֹ הֵוּא אַתְר דְּנִפְקַת מִנִּיהּ, כִּדְכִתִּיב וְהָרוּחַ תְּשׁוּבָא וְגו'.

102. וְנָטִיל לָהּ מִיכָאֵל בְּהֵנָּא רַבָּא, וּמִקְרִיב לָהּ קִרְבָּן בּוֹסְמִין, קָמִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, וְיִתְבָּא תַּמָּן וּמִתְעַדְנָא, בְּהֵוּא צְרוּרָא דְּחַיִּי, דְּעִין לֹא רָאָתָה אֱלֹקִים זּוֹלָתָךְ וְגו'. לְבָתֵּר נִחְתָּא לְגוֹ גִּנְתָּא דְּאַרְעָא, וּמִתְעַדְנָא בְּכָל עֲדוּנִין, וְאַתְלַבֵּשֶׁת בְּהֵוּא לְבוּשָׁא, וְיִתְבָּא תַּמָּן בְּעֶטוּרָא, עַל חַד תְּרִין מְכֻמָּה דִּהּוֹת בְּקִדְמִיתָא.

103. נִשְׁמָה, הִיא חֵילָא עֲלָאָה עַל כָּל אֱלִין, וְאִיהוּ מִחֵילָא דְּדְכוּרָא, רְזָא דְּאִילָנָא דְּחַיִּי. וְדָא סַלְקָא לְעִילָא מִיָּד. וְכָל הַיּוֹ תֵּלֶת דְּרָגִין מִתְקַשְּׂרִין בְּחָדָא דָּא בְּדָא. וְכִד מִתְפָּרֶשֶׁן, כְּלָהוּ סַלְקִין, וְתִבִּין לְהֵוּא אַתְר דְּנִפְקוּ מִנִּיהּ.

104. When the Ruach leaves this world and enters the cave of Adam and the Patriarchs, they give it a letter as a sign. Then it goes to the Garden of Eden. When it arrives there, it meets the cherubs and the flame of the revolving sword. If it is meritorious, then they see the letter, which is the sign, and open the gate for it to enter. If they do not see the letter, they reject it and do not allow it to enter.

105. And it dwells there some time, sitting and clothing itself in the image of this world. And on the first day of the month and on Shabbat, when it wants to rise TO THE UPPER GARDEN OF EDEN, the righteous men who are in the Garden of Eden give it a letter as a sign. And it ascends through that same pillar, WHICH IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LOWER GARDEN OF EDEN, where it meets the watchmen of the walls of Jerusalem. If it is meritorious, they open the gate and it enters. If not, they take the letter away and throw it out. As it is written: "The watchmen that go about the city found me... the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me" (Shir Hashirim 5:7). THE VEIL is the letter given as a sign, which has been taken away from it, by the watchmen of the walls of Jerusalem.
End of Sitrei Torah

104. כִּד הָאֵי רוּחָא נִמְקַת מֵהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, וְעָלַת בְּגוּ
מַעְרְתָא דְאָדָם וְאַבְהֵן תַּמָּן, אֵינוֹן יְהִיבִין לָהּ פִּנְקָס
סִימְנָא, וְעָלַת לְגַבֵּי גִנְתָא דְעֵדֶן. קְרִיבַת תַּמָּן
וְאַשְׁכַּחַת כְּרוּבִים וְהָהוּא לֵהֵט הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת. אִי
זָכָא, חֲמָן פִּנְקָס סִימְנָא, וּפְתִיחִין לָהּ פֶּתַח, וְעָלַת.
וְאִי לֹא, דְחִינִין לָהּ לְבַר.

105. וַיִּתְבָּא תַּמָּן כָּל הָהוּא זְמָנָא דִּיתְבָּא, מִתְלַבֵּשׂ
תַּמָּן בְּדִיוקְנָא דְהָאֵי עֲלָמָא. וּבְרִישׁ יְרֵחִי וּשְׁבִתִּי, כִּד
בָּעָאֵת לְסַלְקָא, צְדִיקֵינָא דְבִגְנִתָא דְעֵדֶן, יְהִיבִין לָהּ
פִּנְקָס סִימְנָא, וְסַלְקַת בְּהָהוּא עֲמוּדָא, וּפְגַעַת בְּאֵינוֹן
נְטְרֵי חוּמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם, אִי זָכָא, פֶּתַחִין לָהּ פֶּתַח
וְעָלַת. וְאִי לֹא, נְטִלִין מִינָהּ הָהוּא פִּנְקָס וְדְחִינִין לָהּ
לְבַר. תְּבַת לְגִנְתָא, וְאַמְרָה מִצְאוֹנֵי הַשּׁוּמְרִים
הַסּוֹבְבִים בְּעִיר וְגו'. נִשְׂאוּ אֶת רִדְדֵי מַעְלִי. דָּא
אִיהוּ פִּנְקָס סִימְנָא, דְנִטְלִי מִנֵּיהּ, שׁוּמְרֵי הַחוּמוֹת,
אֵלִין אֵינוֹן נְטְרֵי חוּמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם.
(עַד כָּאן סִתְרֵי תוֹרָה).

13. "And Avram went down to Egypt"

The Torah presents a story that concerns the patriarch Avraham entering into the land of Egypt. The Zohar reveals that Egypt is a code word pertaining to the depths of man's own negativity into which divine sparks of Light have fallen. The great spiritual leaders of history often descended into these negative regions to retrieve and elevate the sparks trapped within the dark recesses of our being.

The Relevance of this Passage

It goes against the grain of man's nature to look inward and reflect upon one's own amoral attributes. Our five senses are steadfastly tuned towards the external environment around us. The introspection and self-scrutiny performed by the sages, serves as a timeless repository of energy available to us through the letters and lessons contained herein. We acquire the inner strength to go deep into one's self and expel the hardhearted qualities from our character.

106. "And Avram went down to Egypt to sojourn there" (Beresheet 12:10). Why did he go down to Egypt? Because it looked like the garden of Hashem, NAMELY THE GARDEN OF EDEN. As it is written: "like the garden of Hashem, like the land of Egypt..." (Beresheet 13:10). Because a river flows down on the right, as it is written: "The name of the first is Pishon; that is it which encompasses the whole land of Chavilah, where there is gold" (Beresheet 2:11).

106. וַיֵּרֶד אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִםהָ לְגוּר שָׁם. מִ"ט לְמִצְרַיִם.
אֶלָּא, בְּגִין דְשָׁקִיל לְגֵן ה'. דְכָתִיב, בְּגֵן ה' כְּאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם, דְתַמָּן שָׁקִיל וְנַחִית חֵד נִהְרָא, דְאִיהוּ
לְיִמִּינָא, דְכָתִיב שָׁם הָאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן הוּא הַסּוֹבֵב אֶת
כָּל אֶרֶץ הַחוּלָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁם הַזָּהָב.

107. So Avraham achieved knowledge and complete faith, WHICH REFERS TO THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS CALLED FAITH. IT WAS CALLED COMPLETE FAITH AFTER IT HAD BEEN COMPLETED BY THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, FROM THE ASPECT OF BINAH THAT RETURNED TO CHOCHMAH. Avraham then wanted to become familiar with all the grades that are attached below. THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THOSE WHO CAN PASS ON THE ABUNDANCE FROM ABOVE DOWNWARDS, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH OF THE RIGHT COLUMN. And Egypt came from the right; FROM THE ASPECT OF THE RIVER OF PISHON, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH OF THE RIGHT COLUMN. Because of this, he went down to Egypt TO COLLECT ALL THE HOLY SPARKS, FROM THE ASPECT OF CHOCHMAH OF THE RIGHT COLUMN AND GET THEM OUT OF THERE. AFTER ACCOMPLISHING THIS, HE RETURNED TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL. THUS HE WAS FULL AND COMPLETED BY THE MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH. Come and behold: famine only comes to the land when Mercy leaves Judgment. THIS

107. וְאַבְרָהָם, בֵּינוֹן הִידַע, וְעָלַל בְּהִימְנוּתָא
שְׁלִימְתָא, בָּעָא לְמַגְדַּע כָּל אֵינוֹן דְרֵגִין, דְאִתְאַחֲדִין
לְתַתָּא. וּמִצְרַיִם הוּא נְטִיל מִיִּמִּינָא, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, נַחַת
לְמִצְרַיִם. וְתָא חֲזִי, כַּפְנָא לֹא אֲשַׁתְּכַח בְּאַרְעָא, אֶלָּא
כִּד מִסְתַּלְקֵי רַחֲמֵי מִן דִּינָא.

MEANS WHEN ZEIR ANPIN, WHO IS THE SECRET OF MERCY, DEPARTS FROM THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF JUDGMENT. BECAUSE THEN THE MATING OF THE MALE AND FEMALE IS DISTURBED, AND FAMINE IS FELT IN THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED THE LAND.

108. "And it came to pass, when he came (lit. 'caused to come') near to enter to Egypt..." (Beresheet 12:11). Rabbi Elazar said that THE VERSE STATES, "when he caused to come near," whereas it should have stated, 'When he came near.' Why does it say, "when he caused to come near?" This is similar to the verse, "And Pharaoh caused to come close..." (Shemot 14:10), WHICH MEANS that he brought Yisrael to come near to repentance. The same applies here, so "caused to come near" MEANS THAT he brought himself to come near to the Holy One, blessed be He, as should properly be. "To enter to Egypt," MEANS to observe those grades, LOCATED IN EGYPT, and keep his distance from them, as well as to keep his distance from the worshippers of Egypt.

109. Rabbi Yehuda said, Come and behold: Since he went down to Egypt without consent, his offspring were enslaved in Egypt for four hundred years. As it is written: "and Avram went down to Egypt." It does not say THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, TOLD HIM, 'Go down to Egypt!' THEREFORE, he was in misery all that night because of Sarah.

110. "And he said to Sarah his wife: 'Behold now, I know that you are a fair woman to look upon'" (Beresheet 12:11). AND HE ASKS: Could it be that until then Avraham did not know that she was a "fair woman to look upon"? AND HE REPLIES: This has already been explained-that until then he did not look upon the image of Sarah, because of their excessive modesty with each other. But when he "came near to enter to Egypt," she revealed herself, and he saw her.

111. Another explanation for why he knew ONLY THEN THAT SHE WAS A FAIR WOMAN TO LOOK UPON is that most people are affected by the hardship of the journey, but Sarah remained beautiful and her appearance did not change. THIS IS HOW HE KNEW MORE THAN EVER THAT SHE IS A FAIR WOMAN TO LOOK UPON. Another explanation of the words, "Behold, now I know..." is that Avraham saw the Shechinah accompanying Sarah, WHICH MEANS THAT HE HAD THE MERIT OF THE REVELATION OF THE SHECHINAH. For this reason, Avraham felt confident and said: "She is my sister."

112. The phrase, "MY SISTER," has two meanings. The first is literal- NAMELY, THAT YOU ARE MY SISTER. The second is figurative, as in the verse, "Say to wisdom; You are my sister." (Mishlei 7:4). It also is written: "Say, I pray you, you are my sister" (Beresheet 12:13). THE WORD 'YOU' ALLUDES TO THE SHECHINAH. And it is also written: "speak you to us" (Devarim 5:24), WHICH ALSO ALLUDES TO THE SHECHINAH. In addressing the Shechinah, he said: "That it may be well with me for your sake," WHICH MEANS FOR THE SAKE OF THE SHECHINAH, and also "my soul shall live because of you," because, as a result of this, REFERRING TO THE MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH, a person is elevated up to the path of life, SINCE THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH IS CALLED THE LIGHT OF CHAYAH, AS IS ALREADY KNOWN!

108. וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבֹא מִצְרַיִם. אָמַר ר"א, כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב, כַּאֲשֶׁר קָרַב, מִבְּעֵי לֵיָּהּ, מֵאִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב. אֲלֵא כְּדִכְתִּיב, וּפְרַעֲה הִקְרִיב, דִּאִיְהוּ אִקְרִיב לְהוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, לְתִיּוֹבְתָא. אוֹף הִכָּא הִקְרִיב, דִּאִקְרִיב גְּרַמִּיָּה לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כְּדָקָא יָאוּת. לְבֹא מִצְרַיִם. לְאַשְׁחָא בְּאִינוֹן דְּרִגִּין, וְלֹא תִרְחָקָא מִנֵּיהּ, וְלֹא תִרְחָקָא מֵעוֹבְדֵי מִצְרַיִם.

109. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, תָּא חֲזִי, בְּגִין דְּנִחַת אַבְרָהָם לְמִצְרַיִם בְּלֹא רְשׁוֹ, אֲשֶׁתַּעֲבִידוּ בְּנוֹי בְּמִצְרַיִם, אַרְבַּע מֵאָה שָׁנִין, דִּהָא כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרֶד אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִם. וְלֹא כְּתִיב רֹד מִצְרַיִם, וְאַצְטַעַר כָּל הָהוּא לִילֵיא בְּגִינָה דְשָׂרָה.

110. וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתּוֹ הִנֵּה נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְתַּ מְרֹאָה אַתְּ. וְכִי עַד הָיָא שַׁעְתָּא לֹא הָוָה יָדַע אַבְרָהָם, דִּאִשָּׁה יִפְתַּ מְרֹאָה הוּת. אֲלֵא, הָא אוֹקְמוּהּ, דְּעַד הָיָא שַׁעְתָּא, לֹא אֲסַתְּבַל בְּדִיוֹקְנָא דְשָׂרָה, בְּסִגְיָאוֹת צְנִיעוּתָא דִּהוּת בִּינִיּהוֹן, וְכַד קָרִיב לְמִצְרַיִם, אֲתַגְלִיָּא אִיְהִי, וְחָמָא בָּהּ.

111. דְּבַר אַחֲרַבְמָה יָדַע. אֲלֵא עַל יְדָא דְטוֹרַח אוֹרְחָא, בְּרַ נְשִׁמְתַּבּוּזָּה, וְהִיא קִיּוּמָא בְּשִׁפּוּרוֹ דִּילָּהּ, וְלֹא אֲשֶׁתַּנִּי. דְּבַר אַחֲרַהֲנָה נָא יָדַעְתִּי, דְּחָמָא עָמָה שְׂכִינְתָּא. וּבְגִין כֵּן, אֲתִרְחֹץ אַבְרָהָם, וְאָמַר אַחֲוֵי הִיא.

112. וּמִלָּה דָּא אֲסַתְּלַק, לְתַרִּי גּוֹזִינִין. חַד בְּמִשְׁמַעוֹ. וְחַד כְּדִכְתִּיב אָמַר לְחַכְמָה אַחֲתִי אַתְּ. וְכְּתִיב אָמַרִי נָא אַחֲתִי אַתְּ. וְכְּתִיב וְאַתְּ תְּדַבֵּר אֵלַיִנוּ. לְמַעַן יִיטֵב לִי בְּעִבּוּרִךְ, כְּלָמִי שְׂכִינָה אָמַר, בְּעִבּוּרִךְ יִיטֵב לִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. וְחִיתָה נִמְשִׁי בְּגִלְלֶךְ. בְּגִין דְּבָרָא יִסְתַּלַּק בְּרַ נֶשׁ, וַיִּזְכֶּה לְאַסְתַּלְקָא לְאוֹרְחָא דְחַיִּי.

113. "Say, I pray you, you are my sister..." Rabbi Yesa said: Avraham knew that all the Egyptians are lecherous. Since he knew this, how come he was not afraid for his wife and did not return back from this journey and refrain from entering there? AND HE REPLIES: Because he saw that she was accompanied by the Shechinah; THEREFORE HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN HER AND HAD NO FEAR!

113. אֲמַרְי נָא אַחֹותִי וגו'. ר' יוֹסֵא אָמַר, יָדַע הָיָה אַבְרָהָם דְּכָלֵהוּ מִצְרָאִי שְׁטִיפִין אֵינֹון בְּזִמָּה, וְכִיּוֹן דְּכָל הָאִי יָדַע, אֲמַאי לֹא דְחִיל עַל אֶתְתִּיהּ, דְּלֹא אֶהְדֵּר מֵאַרְחָא, וְלֹא יִיעוּל לְתַמָּן. אֲלֹא בְּגִין דְּחֻמָּא שְׂכִינְתָּא עִמָּה.

14. "And it came to pass, when Avram came to Egypt"

The Zohar explores the Biblical story in which Sarah, the wife of the patriarch Avraham, is abducted by the King of Egypt. Avraham and Sarah are able to take control over the King, utilizing the tools of the Torah. This event held cosmic significance for future generations. This action of gaining control over the King of Egypt and the negative cosmic forces that he represents, created the means that would be utilized again, five generations later, when the Israelites were freed from bondage in Egypt. The Zohar is demonstrating how man often fails to perceive all the influences and effects that unfold as a result every action we perform.

The Relevance of this Passage

In reality, hardships in life are merely minor interference patterns in comparison to the eternal fulfillment and reality that is ours after we complete our spiritual transformation. We gain the ability to perceive the larger picture when obstacles and difficulties arise in our life. An appreciation for the inevitable consequences that are attached to all of our actions is stimulated within our consciousness.

114. "And it came to pass, when Avram came to Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair" (Beresheet 12:14). Rabbi Yehuda said: He brought her to Egypt in a closed carriage. And the Egyptians opened the carriage to collect taxes from it. But as the carriage was opened, there was light resembling the light of the sun. THIS MEANS THAT THE LIGHT OF SARAH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE MOON, WAS AS STRONG AS THE LIGHT OF THE SUN, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE "TWO GREAT LIGHTS!" And this is why it is written: "that she was very fair."

114. וַיְהִי כְּבֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיִּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם אֶת הָאִשָּׁה כִּי יָפָה הִיא מְאֹד. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, בְּתִיבָה אֲעִיל לָהּ, וּפְתַחוּ לָהּ, לְמִיסַב מִנָּה קוֹסְטוֹנָא. כִּיּוֹן דְּאֶתְפַּתַּח, הָיָה נְהוּרָא, כְּנְהוּרָא דְּשִׁמְשָׁא, הֵה"ד כִּי יָפָה הִיא מְאֹד.

115. AND HE ASKS: What DOES THE VERSE ALLUDE TO BY USING THE WORD 'very'? AND HE REPLIES THAT THE EGYPTIANS saw in the carriage a different light. They took her out OF THE CARRIAGE, and they saw that she remained as fair as before, AS FAIR AS SHE WAS IN THE CARRIAGE. THIS MEANS THAT THE ACTION OF THE EGYPTIANS DID NOT DO HER ANY DAMAGE. HER BEAUTY WAS NOT CORRUPTED; IT REMAINED AS BEFORE, AS WHEN SHE WAS IN THE CARRIAGE. Therefore it is written: "The ministers of Pharaoh saw her." AND SO HE ASKS: Since it is written that 'the Egyptians beheld the woman,' why do I read, 'The ministers of Pharaoh saw her,' AS THEY TOO WERE EGYPTIANS? AND HE REPLIES: Because they took her out OF THE CARRIAGE; and saw that she remained AS FAIR as before-THAT IS, AS SHE WAS IN THE CARRIAGE. And then they "commended her before Pharaoh, and the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house."

115. מַאי מְאֹד. אֲלֹא, דְּחֻמוֹ בְּתִיבָה נְהוּרָא אַחְרָא, אֲפִיקוּ לָהּ וְחֻמוֹ לָהּ, כְּמִלְקַדְמִין, הֵה"ד וַיִּרְאוּ אוֹתָהּ שְׂרֵי פְרַעָה, כִּיּוֹן דְּכִתִּיב, וַיִּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם אֶת הָאִשָּׁה. מַאי וַיִּרְאוּ אוֹתָהּ שְׂרֵי פְרַעָה. אֲלֹא דְּאֲפִיקוּ לָהּ, וְחֻמוֹ לָהּ, כְּמִלְקַדְמִין. וְכִדְרִין וַיְהִלְלוּ אוֹתָהּ אֶל פְּרַעָה וגו'.

116. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Woe to those wicked people of the world, as they do not know and do not observe IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND that everything that exists in the world comes from the Holy One, blessed be He. THIS MEANS THAT HE ALONE HAS DONE, CONTINUES DOING, AND SHALL DO ALL THE ACTIONS IN THE WORLD. And that He knew from the beginning what the end shall be, as it is written: "Declaring the end from the beginning..." (Yeshayah 46:10). And He watches and performs the actions from the beginning, so that they can later be repeated TO COMPLETION.

116. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק. ווִי לְאֵינֹון חַיִּיבֵיָא דְּעֵלְמָא, דְּלֹא יָדְעִין וְלֹא מְשַׁגְּחִין בְּעֵבִידְתִּיהּ דְּקֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְאֵנֹון לֹא מְסַתְּפְלִי דְּכָל מַה דְּהוּי בְּעֵלְמָא, מִעַם קֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אִיהוּ, דְּאִיהוּ יָדַע בְּקִדְמִיתָא, מַה דְּלְהוּי בְּסוּפָא, דְּכִתִּיב מְגִיד מִרְאשִׁית אַחֲרִית. וְאִיהוּ אֲסַתְּכִי וְעֵבִיד עֵבִידִן בְּקִדְמִיתָא, בְּגִין לְסַלְקָא לֹון, לְבַתֵּר יוֹמִין.

117. Come and behold: Had Sarah not been taken to Pharaoh, he would not have been plagued. And the result of Pharaoh's plague was another plague, so the Egyptians suffered great plagues AS YISRAEL LEFT EGYPT. As it is written: "great plagues" in this passage, and, AS YISRAEL LEFT EGYPT, it is written: "And Hashem showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt" (Devarim 6:22). HE MAKES AN ANALOGY BETWEEN THE TWO TIMES WHEN THE WORD "GREAT" IS USED. Because there were ten plagues, PHARAOH ALSO SUFFERED ten plagues here. And just as the Holy One, blessed be He, performed miracles and showed His great might during the night, so here as well, the Holy One, blessed be He, performed miracles and mighty deeds at night. SO, AS HE WAS INFLICTING THE PLAGUES UPON PHARAOH, FOR THE SAKE OF SARAH, HE WAS WATCHING AND OBSERVING THE WAY HE WAS GOING TO REPEAT THEM TO PERFECTION DURING THE EXODUS OF YISRAEL FROM EGYPT.

118. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion by saying: "But you, Hashem, are a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head" (Tehilim 3:4). David said: Even if all the people of the world come and make war with me, THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OVERCOME ME, BECAUSE "You, Hashem, are a shield for me." Come and behold: It is written: "a shield for me." David said to the Holy One, blessed be He, Master of the Universe, why is there no blessing that ends with my name, as there is for Avraham, of whom it is written: "I am your shield" (Beresheet 15:1) and therefore it is said: 'the shield of Avraham.' SO WHY DO THEY NOT CONCLUDE A BLESSING WITH MY NAME, 'THE PROTECTOR OF DAVID'?

119. So the Holy One, blessed be He, answered David, "As for Avraham, I have already tried and tested him, and he resisted THE TEST and was found before me to be wholly steadfast." David said to Him, "Examine me, Hashem, and prove me, purify my kidneys and my heart!" (Tehilim 26:2). But when he became involved in the matter of Bat-Sheva, David remembered what he had said to the Holy One, blessed be He, and said: "You have proved my heart, You have visited it in the night. You have tried me, but You did find nothing; Let no presumptuous thought pass my lips" (Tehilim 17:3).

120. He said: I said, "Examine me, Hashem, and prove me," and 'You have examined my heart' BY BAT-SHEVA; I said, 'purify my kidneys' and "You have tried me, but You did find nothing." "Let no presumptuous thought pass my lips"; How I wish that the thoughts of my mind would not have been uttered with my mouth AND I WOULD NOT HAVE PROCLAIMED, "EXAMINE ME, HASHEM, AND PROVE ME."

121. But nevertheless, there is a blessing that concludes with the words, "the Shield of David." For this reason, David said: "But you, Hashem, are a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter of my head." THIS MEANS THAT HE SAID, "This grade OF 'SHIELD' is certainly 'my glory' by which I am crowned."

122. "And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away..." (Beresheet 21:20). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, is the protector of the righteous, who shields them from being ruled by other people. So the Holy One, blessed be He, protected Avraham, so no one could harm him or his wife.

117. תָּא חֲזִי, אֱלֹמֶלֶא דְאַנְסִיבַת שְׂרֵי לְגַבִּי פְרַעָה, לֹא אֱלֹקֵי הוּא, וְאַלְקָאוּתָא דָּא גְרִים אֱלֹקָאוּתָא לְבִתָּר בֶּן, דִּילְקוֹן מִצְרִים בְּנִגְעִים גְּדוּלִים, כְּתִיב הֵכָא נִגְעִים גְּדוּלִים, וְכְתִיב הֵתָם וַיִּתֵּן ה' אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים גְּדוּלִים וְרָעִים בְּמִצְרַיִם, מַה לְהֵלֵךְ עֶשֶׂר מִכּוֹת, אִף כָּאן עֶשֶׂר מִכּוֹת. כְּמַה דְּעֵבִיד קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲנִסִּין וּגְבוּרָן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לִילֵיא, אוֹף הֵכָא עֵבֵד לָהּ קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְשֶׁרָה נָסִין וּגְבוּרָן לִילֵיא.

118. ר' יוֹסִי פִתַּח וְאָמַר, וְאַתָּה ה' מִגֵּן בְּעֵדִי כְבוֹדִי וּמִרִים רֵאשִׁי. אָמַר דָּוִד אִף עַל גְּבֻרָתְךָ בְּנִי עֲלֵמָא, וַיִּתֵּן לְאַנְחָא בִּי קִרְבָּא, וְאַתָּה ה' מִגֵּן בְּעֵדִי. תָּא חֲזִי, כְּתִיב מִגֵּן בְּעֵדִי. אָמַר דָּוִד לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, מִפְּנֵי מַה לֹּא עֵבִיד בִּי חֲתִימָה דְּבִרְכָּה, כְּמַה דְּחֲתִמִּי בְּרָכָה בְּאַבְרָהָם, דְּכְתִיב אֲנֹכִי מִגֵּן לָךְ, וְאָמַרִי מִגֵּן אֲבָרָהָם.

119. אָמַר לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְדָוִד, אֲבָרָהָם כְּבִר בְּחֻנְתִּי וְצִרְפְּתִי, וְקָאִים קִמָּאִי בְּקִיּוּמָא שְׁלִים. אָמַר לְדָוִד, אֵ"ה בְּחֻנְנִי ה' וְנִסְנִי צִרְפָּה כְּלִיּוֹתִי וְלִבִּי. בֵּינָן דְּעֵבֵד הָיִיא מְלָה דְּבַת שְׁבַע, אֲדָכֵר דָּוִד קִמָּיָה, עַל מַה דְּאָמַר, אָמַר בְּחֻנְתָּ לִבִּי פְקֻדָּתָ לִילָה צִרְפְּתִנִּי בַּל תִּמְצָא זְמוּתִי בַּל יַעֲבֹר פִּי.

120. אָמַר, אֲנָא אֲמִינָא, בְּחֻנְנִי ה' וְנִסְנִי, וְאַנְתָּ בְּחֻנְתָּ לִבִּי. אֲנָא אֲמִינָא צִרְפָּה כְּלִיּוֹתִי, וְאַתָּ צִרְפְּתִנִּי, בַּל תִּמְצָא, לֹא אֲשַׁכַּחְתָּ לִּי בְּדָקָא וְאוֹת. זְמוּתִי בַּל יַעֲבֹר פִּי. מֵאן יִתֵּן וְהָיִי מְלָה דְּחֲשְׁבִית, דִּלָּא יַעֲבֹר לִי פּוּמָאִי.

121. וְעַם כָּל דָּא, חֲתִמִּין בֵּיהּ בְּרָכָה, דְּקָאֲמֵרן מִגֵּן דָּוִד. וּבִגִּין כְּרָאֲמַר דָּוִד וְאַתָּה ה' מִגֵּן בְּעֵדִי כְבוֹדִי וּמִרִים רֵאשִׁי, וְדָאִי דְרָגָא דָּא יִקְרָא דִּילִי, דְּאֲנָא מִתְעַטְרָנָא בֵּיהּ.

122. וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו פְּרַעָה אֲנָשִׁים וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ אוֹתוֹ. תָּא חֲזִי, קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֵיהּ מִגֵּן לְצַדִּיקָיָא, דִּלָּא יִשְׁלֹטוּן בְּהוּ בְּנֵי נָשָׂא, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֵיגִין עַל אֲבָרָהָם דִּלָּא יִשְׁלֹטוּן בֵּיהּ וּבְאַתְתָּיהּ.

123. Come and behold: The Shechinah did not leave Sarah at all during that night. When Pharaoh approached her, an angel came and hit him. And whenever Sarah said, "Hit," he hit. All the while Avraham was begging his Master through his prayers, not to allow anyone to harm her. Therefore it is written: "but the righteous are bold (trusting) as a lion" (Mishlei 28:1). Here was a trial by which Hashem tested Avraham, but Avraham had no doubts about the Holy One, blessed be He.

124. Rabbi Yitzchak said, Come and behold: It is because of this that the Holy One, blessed be He, did not command him to go to Egypt. But he went on his own initiative, so that the people of the world would have no reason to say that THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, told him to go down to Egypt, and then he was pained for his wife.

125. Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion by saying, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, he shall grow like the cedar in Levanon" (Tehilim 92:13). AND HE ASKS: Why are the righteous compared to a palm tree? AND HE ANSWERS: Just as a palm tree, if it is cut down, needs a long time to grow again-AS LONG AS SEVENTY YEARS--So if the world loses a righteous man, it will take a very long time until another takes his place-AGAIN AS LONG AS SEVENTY YEARS. THESE SEVENTY YEARS ARE THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT, EACH OF WHICH EQUALS TEN.

126. The words "shall flourish like the palm tree" TEACH US THAT just as a palm tree does not grow unless except as male and female, neither does the righteous person. He does not flourish except as male and female. The male is righteous and the female is righteous, just as Avraham and Sarah were. THEREFORE HE IS COMPLETED AND REACHES PERFECTION ONLY AFTER SEVENTY YEARS HAVE ELAPSED.

127. "...he shall grow like the cedar in Levanon" means that just as a cedar rises high above all the other trees, so the righteous man is above all others, who are situated under him-IN OTHER WORDS, THEY EXIST BECAUSE OF HIM. And the world, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, is supported upon one righteous man, as it is written: "the righteous is the foundation of the world" (Mishlei 10:25). So the world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, rests and is supported by him and is planted on him; BECAUSE OF HIM IT IS WELL SUPPORTED. THIS MEANS THAT HE BESTOWS HIS THREE COLUMNS UPON IT. 'RESTS' IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT COLUMN; 'SUPPORTED' IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT COLUMN; AND 'PLANTED' IS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN.

128. Rabbi Yehuda said: But we have already learned that the world stands upon seven pillars; WHICH ARE CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT, AND NOT UPON ONE RIGHTEOUS ALONE, AS RABBI YITZCHAK HAS STATED. As it is written: "she has hewn out her seven pillars" (Mishlei 9:1). Rabbi Yosi told him, It is certainly so! But all the other pillars stand erect because of the seventh pillar, which supports the whole world, and he is CALLED 'the righteous,' NAMELY YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. And he refreshes and replenishes the world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and nourishes all THE WORLDS. And he is described by the verse, "Say you to the righteous, that it shall be well (also: 'that he is good') with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (Yeshayah 3:10). And, it is also written: "Hashem is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Tehilim 145:9).

123. תָּא חֲזִי, שְׁכִינְתָּא לֹא אֶתְעִי מִינָה דְשָׂרָה, כֹּל הָהוּא לִילִיָּא, אֶתָּא פְּרַעָה לְמַקְרַב בְּהֵדָה, אֶתָּא מִלֵּאךְ וְאַלְקֵי לִיה, כֹּל אֵימַת דְּאִמְרָה שָׂרָה אֲלֵקִי, הוּא מַלְקִי, וְאַבְרָהָם הָוָה מִתְקִיף בְּמֵאֲרִיָּה, דְּהָא שָׂרָה לֹא יְכַלִּין לְשַׁלְטָאָה עָלָהּ, הָהִ"ד וְצַדִּיקִים כְּכַפִּיר יִבְטַח. וְהֵכָא נִסְיוֹנָא הוּא, דְּלֹא הִרְהֵר אֲבַתְרִיָּה דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

124. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, תָּא חֲזִי, דְּבִגִּין כֵּךְ לֹא פְקִיד קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְנַחֲתָא לְמַצְרִים, אֲלֵא הוּא עֲצֻמוּ מִגְרָמִיָּה נַחַת, בִּגִּין דְּלֹא יֵהָא פְתַחוֹן פֶּה לְבָנִי עֲלֵמָא, דְּאָמַר לִיה כֵּן, וּלְבַתָּר אֲצַטְעֵר עַל אֶתְתִּיָּה.

125. ר' יִצְחָק פִּתַּח וְאָמַר צַדִּיק בְּתִמְרָ יִפְרַח בְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשָּׁא צַדִּיק בְּתִמְרָ יִפְרַח. מִפְּנֵי מָה אֲקִישׁ צַדִּיק לְתִמְרָ. מָה תִּמְרָ, בֵּינוֹן דְּגִזְרִין לִיה לֹא סְלִיק עַד זְמַן סְגִיָּא, אוֹף הֵכִי צַדִּיק, בֵּינוֹן דְּאֶתְאָבִיד מִעֲלֵמָא, לֹא סְלִיק אַחֲרֵי תַּחוּתוֹי עַד זְמַן סְגִיָּא.

126. בְּתִמְרָ יִפְרַח, מָה תִּמְרָ לֹא סְלִיק אֲלֵא דְכֵר וְנוֹקְבָא. אוֹף הֵכִי צַדִּיק, לֹא סְלִיק אֲלֵא דְכֵר וְנוֹקְבָא, דְכֵר צַדִּיק, וְנוֹקְבָא צַדִּיקָת, כְּגוּוֹנָא דְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה.

127. בְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשָּׁא. מָה אֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן עֲלָאָה עַל כֹּלָא, וְכֹלָא יִתְבִּי תַּחוּתוֹי, אוֹף הֵכִי צַדִּיק, הוּא עֲלָאָה עַל כֹּלָא, וְכֹלָא יִתְבִּי תַּחוּתוֹי. וְעֲלֵמָא לֹא קִיּוּמָא אֲלֵא עַל צַדִּיק חַד, דְּכֵתִיב וְצַדִּיק יִסֹּד עוֹלָם. וְעֲלִיָּה קָאִים עֲלֵמָא, וּבִגִּינִיָּה אֶסְתַּמִּין, וְעֲלִיָּה אֶשְׁתִּיל.

128. ר' יְהוּדָה אָמַר, וְהָא תַנִּינִן, דְּעַל שְׁבַעָה סְמִכִין עֲלֵמָא קִיּוּמָא, דְּכֵתִיב חֲצָבָה עֲמוּדִיָּה שְׁבַעָה. אֲמַרְלוּר' יוֹסִי, הֵכִי הוּא וְדָאִי, אֲבָל כֹּלָהוּ אַחֲרָנִין בְּשִׁבְעָאָה קִיּוּמִי, דְּאִיְהוּ סְמִכָא דְעֲלֵמָא וְאִיְהוּ צַדִּיק. וְדָא אֶשְׁקִי וְרוֹי עֲלֵמָא וְזֶן כֹּלָא. וְעֲלִיָּה בְּתִיב אֲמַרו צַדִּיק כִּי טוֹב כִּי פְרִי מַעֲלִיָּהֶם יֵאכְלוּ. וְכֵתִיב טוֹב ה' לְכֹל וּרְחַמָּיו עַל כֹּל מַעֲשָׂיו.

129. Rabbi Yitzchak said: But it is written: "and a river went out of Eden to water the garden," (Beresheet 2:10) WHICH REFERS TO YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH COMES FORTH FROM BINAH THAT RETURNED TO CHOCHMAH, WHICH IS CALLED EDEN. And this is the pillar upon which the world rests; it is the one that waters the garden, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. And the garden is irrigated by it and bears fruits, WHICH ARE THE SOULS OF HUMAN BEINGS. And all the fruits blossom in this world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and they maintain of the world and maintain the Torah. AND HE ASKS: Who are THESE FRUITS? AND HE SAYS: They are the souls of the righteous, who are the fruit of the handiwork of the Holy One, blessed be He.

129. אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק, הָא כְּתִיב וְנָהַר יוֹצֵא מַעַרְן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת הַגֶּן. דָּא הוּא סְמִכָא דְעֵלְמָא קָאִים עֲלֵיהּ, וְאִיהוּ אֲשֵׁקִי לְגִנְתָּא, וְגִנְתָּא אֲשֵׁתִּי מְנִיָּה, וּמְנִיָּה עֲבִידָא פִּירִין. וְכֻלְהוּ פִּירִין פְּרָחִין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאִינוּן קִיּוּמָא דְעֵלְמָא, קִיּוּמָא דְאֹרִייתָא, וּמֵאן גִּינְהוּ, נִשְׁמַתְהוּן דְּצִדִּיקוּיָא, דְּאִינוּן פְּרִי עוֹבְדוּי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא.

15. The Holy One, blessed be He, delights Himself with the souls of the righteous
The power of Midnight gives the souls of the living the ability to connect to the righteous souls who have departed our realm and who now dwell in the Garden of Eden. The Creator comes to be with both groups during these mystical hours of the night.

The Relevance of this Passage

Whereas the Torah is an instrument designed for our physical world, the Zohar is a product of the spiritual realm, above the physical elements of time, space, and motion. Accordingly, we can always access the energy aroused during midnight through the sacred words that tell of these mystical secrets.

130. Because of this, BECAUSE THE SOULS ARE THE FRUIT OF THE HANDIWORK OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, on each and every night, the souls of the righteous rise up TO THE GARDEN OF EDEN. And at midnight, the Holy one, blessed be He, comes to the Garden of Eden to delight Himself with them. With whom DOES HE DELIGHT HIMSELF? IS IT WITH THE SOULS OF THE LIVING OR THE DECEASED? Rabbi Yosi answers: With them all! With those who dwell in that World OF TRUTH, and with those who dwell in this world. Together, with them all, the Holy One, blessed be He, finds delight at midnight in the Garden of Eden.

130. וּבְגִין כֵּן בְּכָל לַיְלָא וּלְיָלָא, נִשְׁמַתְהוּן דְּצִדִּיקוּיָא סֻלְקִין, וְכֵד אֶתְפְּלַג לַיְלָא, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא אֲתִי לְגִנְתָּא דְּעַרְן לְאַשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע בָּהּ. בְּמֵאן. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי בְּכֻלְהוּ. בֵּין אִינוּן דְּמִדּוּרֵיהוּן בְּהוּא עֵלְמָא, בֵּין אִינוּן דִּיתְבִּי בְּמִדּוּרֵיהוּן בְּהֵאֵי עֵלְמָא, בְּכֻלְהוּ מִשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע בָּהּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, בְּפִלְגוֹת לַיְלָא.

131. Come and see: The upper world needs to be aroused by the lower world. When the souls of the righteous leave this world and rise up TO THE GARDEN OF EDEN, they are all clothed by the Supernal Light-by a splendid figure. And the Holy One, blessed be He, delights Himself with them and longs for them because they are the fruit of His handiwork. Therefore Yisrael are called "children to the Holy One, blessed be He," because they have acquired holy souls. As it is written: "You are the children of Hashem your Elohim" (Devarim 14:1). Because THE SOULS are definitely the "children"-the fruit-of His Handiwork.

131. תָּא חֲזִי, עֵלְמָא דְּלַעֲיֵלָא, אֲצַטְרִין לְאַתְעֵרוּתָא דְּעֵלְמָא תַּתָּא, וְכֵד נִשְׁמַתְהוּן דְּצִדִּיקוּיָא נִפְקִי מֵהֵאֵי עֵלְמָא, וְסֻלְקִי לַעֲיֵלָא, כְּלָהוּ מִתְּלַבְשִׁי בְּנִהוּרָא דְּלַעֲיֵלָא, בְּדִיוקְנָא יָקָר, וּבָהּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא מִשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע, וְתַאיב לֹון, דָּאנְהוּ פְּרִי עוֹבְדוּי. וְעַל דְּאֶאֱקֵרוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל, דָּאִית לֹון נִשְׁמַתִּין קְדִישִׁין, בְּגִין לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, כְּדָא בְּנִים אֲתָם לֵה אֱלֹקֵיכֶם, בְּנִים וְדָאִי, אִיבָא דְּעוֹבְדוּי.

132. Rabbi Yesa said: YOU SAY THAT HE even delights himself with those SOULS of this world. How can that be? He replied, Because at midnight, all the truly righteous people awaken to study Torah and recite all the praises of Torah. And we have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, together with all the righteous who are in the Garden of Eden, all listen attentively to their voices. And during the day, a thread of grace is woven around them. As it is written: "Yet Hashem will command his loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night, His song shall be with me..." (Tehilim 42:9). BECAUSE OF THE SONG AT NIGHT, THEY MERIT HIS LOVING KINDNESS DURING THE DAY.

132. אָמַר ר' יֵיסָא, וְאַפִּילוּ אִינוּן דְּבִהֵאֵי עֵלְמָא. הֵאִין אָמְרִלוּ, בְּגִין דְּבִפְלָגוֹת לַיְלָא, כָּל אִינוּן זָכְאֵי קְשׁוּט, כְּלָהוּ מִתְעַרִּי לְמַקְרֵי בְּאֹרִייתָא, וְלִמְשַׁמַּע תוֹשְׁבָחָן דְּאֹרִייתָא, וְהָא אֲתָמַר, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא וְכָל אִינוּן צִדִּיקָא דְּבָגוּ גִנְתָּא דְּעַרְן, כְּלָהוּ צִייתִין לְקִלְיָהוּן, וְחוּטָא דְּחֶסֶד אֲתַמְשֵׁךְ עֲלֵיהוּ בִּימָמָא, דְּכְתִיב יוֹמָם יִצְוָה ה' חֲסִדוֹ וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי.

133. Therefore, the praises that rise up before the Holy One, blessed be He, at night, are the most complete. Come and behold: When Yisrael were shut in their houses, while the Holy One, blessed be He, was slaying the first borns of the Egyptians, they were reciting these praises and psalms before the Holy One, blessed be He.

133. ועל דא תושבֿחן דסלקין בליליא קמיה, דא תושבֿחֿתא שלים. תא חזי, בשעתא דישראל הוו סגירין בבתייהון, כד קטל קדשא ברין הוא בכוריהון דמצראי, הוו אמרי הלילא ותשבֿחן קמיה.

134. Come and behold: King David used to wake up at midnight. And if you might say that he sat or lay down on his bed while reciting these songs and praises, it is not so! Rather, it is as written: "At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You" (Tehilim 119:62). "I will rise" definitely means he stood upright as he was occupied with the songs and praises of Torah.

134. תא חזי דדוד מלכא, הוה קם בפלגות ליליא, דאי תימא דהוה יתיב או שכיב בערסיה, והוה אמר שירין ותשבֿחן, לא, אלא כמה דכתיב חצות לילה אקום להודות לך. אקום: ודאי בעמידה, לאתעסקא בשירין ותשבֿחן דאורייתא.

135. And because of to this, BECAUSE HE DELVED TO THE SONGS AND PRAISES OF TORAH, King David lives on forever. Even during the Days of King Mashiach, he still remains the king. For we have learned that if Mashiach shall be from among the living, David will be his name. And if he shall be from among THE RESURRECTED SOULS OF the deceased, David shall be his name. And he shall arouse the dawn before he arrives. It is written: "Awake, my glory; awake the harp and the lyre; I will awake the dawn" (Tehilim 57:9), BECAUSE HE ALWAYS AROSE TO STUDY TORAH BEFORE THE BREAK OF DAWN!

135. ובגין כך, דוד מלכא, חי לעלמין, ואפילו ביומי מלכא משיחא, איהו מלכא. דהא תנן מלכא משיחא, אי מן חיוא הוא, דוד שמייה, ואי מן מתיוא הוא, דוד שמייה, ואיהו הוה אתער בצפרא עד לא ויתי, דכתיב עורה כבודי עורה הנבל וכנור אעירה שחר.

16. "And Hashem plagued Pharaoh"

As the Zohar recounts the story of the King of Egypt's abduction and attempted violation of Sarah, we learn that the angels protected her from his amoral advances. Moreover, it is revealed that the Torah story of Avraham's journey into the land of Egypt is a metaphor for battling the highest degrees of negativity and the strongest selfish desires inherent in our nature. Unlike Adam and Noah, who were enticed by the serpent and succumbed to temptation, Avraham faced and overcame the greatest tests of human nature.

The Relevance of this Passage

Avraham's positive action and spiritual strength opened a cosmic window for all mankind. These words open that window in our own lives, allowing Avraham's power and energy to enter.

136. Come and behold: Throughout the night that Sarah was with Pharaoh, the supernal angels came to chant songs and praises before the Holy One, blessed be He. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to them, Go all of you and inflict great plagues upon Egypt, so that these plagues will be a sign and an omen of what I will do in the future. As it is written: "And Hashem plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues" (Beresheet 12:17).

136. תא חזי, כל ההוא ליליא, דשרה הות לגביה דפרעה, אתו מלאכי עלאי, לזמרא ליה לקדשא ברין הוא, בשירין ותושבֿחן, אמרלוקדשא ברין הוא, פלכו זילו ועבידו מכתשין רברבין במצרים, רשימו למאן דאנא זמין למעבד לבתר. מה כתיב וינגע ה' את פרעה נגעים גדולים וגו'.

137. Come and behold, It is written: "And Pharaoh called Avram" (Beresheet 12:18). HE ASKS: How did he know THAT SARAH IS AVRAM'S WIFE; it is not written here as it is about Avimelech, "Now therefore restore the man's wife, for he is a prophet" (Beresheet 20:7). Here, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, said nothing to Pharaoh!

137. תא חזי, מה כתיב, ויקרא פרעה לאברם וגו'. מנא הוה ידע, דהא לא כתיב הכא, כמה דאתמר באבימלך, דכתיב, ועתה השב אשת האיש כי נביא הוא וגו', והכא לא אמר ליה מדי.

138. Rabbi Yitzchak said: But it is written, "because of Sarai, Avram's wife." For so THE ANGELS said 'because of Sarai, Avram's wife.' Because THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, did not speak with him as he did with Avimelech. So only these words were said and no more: This plague is "because of Sarai, Avram's wife." And even this was not said by THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BUT BY THE ANGELS WHO SMOTE HIM. And then he knew that she was Avraham's wife, so it is written: "And Pharaoh called Avram."

139. "And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him." HE ASKS: Why did he do so? AND HE SAYS: So that nobody would come near them and harm them. "And they sent him away" means that they prepared an escort, to accompany him through Egypt. The Holy One, blessed be He, said TO PHARAOH, This is what you shall do in the future to his children; you shall escort them out of your land. As it is written: "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh let the people go" (Shemot 13:17)-meaning that he escorted them throughout his entire country."

140. Rabbi Aba asked, Why did this happen to Avraham? For what reason did he have to go through it all? AND HE SAID: "So that Avraham and Sarah would achieve great fame in the eyes of the world. So that even in Egypt, which has the greatest magicians from whom nobody can be saved, Avraham was still able to rise high and be elevated. Therefore, it is written: "And Avram went up out of Egypt" (Beresheet 13:1). Where to? "To the Negev," THAT IS, TO HIS PREVIOUS LEVEL.

141. Rabbi Shimon said, Come and behold: Everything is in accordance with the secret of Wisdom. The verse here alludes to Chochmah (Wisdom) and grades below--REFERRING TO THE GRADES OF THE EGYPTIANS, WHO DRAW DOWN CHOCHMAH. And Avraham went down to these great depths and knew them all, but did not attach himself to them. Rather, he returned to his Master.

142. And he was not enticed by them, as was Adam, who, when he reached that same level, was enticed by the serpent and brought death upon the whole world. And Avraham was not enticed as was Noach, of whom, when he went down to that grade, it is written: "And he drank of the wine and was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent (Heb. ohaloh)" (Beresheet 9:21). Ohaloh is spelled with an additional Hei, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF 'A STRANGE WOMAN.'

143. But what is written about Avraham? "And Avram went up out of Egypt." That he went up-not down-and returned to his place, to the supernal grade to which he was previously attached. This action came to reveal Wisdom; he deserved to reach full perfection because he was not enticed BY THE EGYPTIANS; rather he remained entirely steadfast and returned to his place. "The Negev" means the south, CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN. THIS IS the supernal grade to which he first cleaved. As it is written: "And Avram journeyed, going on still toward the Negev" (Beresheet 12:9). So here as well, "to the Negev" MEANS to the grade to which he had previously cleaved.

138. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, הָא כְּתִיב עַל דְּבַר שְׂרַי אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָם. דִּהְכִי הוּא אָמַר לִיה, עַל דְּבַר שְׂרַי אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָם. דִּהָא לֹא הוּא מַמְלִיל עִמָּיה, כְּמָה דְּמַמְלִיל בְּאַבְימֶלֶךְ, אֲלֵא בְּמֶלֶךְ דָּא אֲתָמַר, וְלֹא יִתִּיר, מִכְתָּשָׁא דָא, עַל דְּבַר שְׂרַי אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָם אִיהִי, וְלֹא הוּא מְלִיל עִמָּיה, בְּדִין יָדַע דִּהָא אֲתַתִּיה דְּאַבְרָהָם אִיהִי, מִיָּד וִיקְרָא פֶּרַעַה לְאַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר וְגו'.

139. וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו פֶּרַעַה אַנְשִׁים. לְמָה, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִקְרַב בַּר נֶשׁ בְּהוּ, לְאַבְרָם לֹן. וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ אוֹתוֹ. לְוִיָּה עֲבָדוּ לִיה, בְּכָל אֶרֶץ דְּמִצְרַיִם. אֲמַרְלוּקְדָּשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא הָכִי אֲנִי זְמִין לְמַעַבְדַּ לְבָנוּי, אֶת תְּחוּזָא לֹן מֵאַרְעָךְ, דְּכְתִיב וַיְהִי בְּשִׁלַּח פֶּרַעַה אֶת הָעָם. דְּאוּזִיף לֹן מְכַל אֶרְעִיה.

140. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, כָּל כֶּךָ לְמָה אוֹדְמֵן לִיה לְאַבְרָהָם, וְלִמָּא אֶצְטְרִיךְ. אֲלֵא, בְּגִין לְגַדְלָא שְׁמִיה דְּאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה בְּעַלְמָא, דְּאַפִּילוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם, דְּאִינוּן חֲרָשֵׁי עַלְמָא, וְלֹא הוּא יָכִיל בַּר נֶשׁ לְאַשְׁתִּזִּיב מְנִיָּה, אֲתַגְדֵּל אַבְרָהָם, וְאַסְתְּלִיק לְעִילָא, דִּהָא הוּא דְּכְתִיב וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם, לֹאן אֲתַר, הִנֵּגְבָה.

141. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, תָּא חֲזִי, כָּלָא רְזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא אִיהוּ, וְקָא רְמִזַּה הָכָא בְּחֻכְמָתָא, וְדִרְגִין דִּלְתַּתָּא, דְּקָא נְחִית אַבְרָהָם לְעוֹמְקֵיָא דְּלַהוּן, וַיֵּדַע לֹן, וְלֹא אֲתַדְבֵּק בְּהוּ, וְתַב לְקַמֵּי מְרִיה.

142. וְלֹא אֲתַפְתָּא בְּהוּ, כְּאָדָם, דְּכִד מְטָא לְהוּא דְּרָגָא, אֲתַפְתָּא בְּנַחֲשׁ, וְגָרִים מוֹתָא לְעַלְמָא. וְלֹא אֲתַפְתָּא כְּנֹחַ, דְּכִד נָחַת וּמְטָא לְהוּא דְּרָגָא, מָה כְּתִיב, וַיֵּשֶׁת מִן הַיַּיִן וַיִּשְׁכָּר וַיִּתְּגַל בְּתוֹךְ אֹהֶלָה. אֹהֶלָה כְּתִיב בְּה"א.

143. אַבְל בְּאַבְרָהָם מָה כְּתִיב, וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם. דְּסָלִיק וְלֹא נְחִית, וְתַב לְאַתְרִיה, לְדִרְגָא עַלְאָה, דְּאַתְדְּבֵק בֵּיה בְּקַדְמִיתָא. וְעוֹבְדָא דָא הוּא, בְּגִין, לְאַחֲזָא חֻכְמָתָא, דְּאַתְקִיָּים בְּקִיּוּמָא שְׁלִים, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי לִיה, וְלֹא אֲתַפְתָּא, וְקָם בְּקִיּוּמָא וְתַב לְאַתְרִיה. הִנֵּגְבָה: דָּא דְרוּם, דְּרָגָא עַלְאָה, דְּאַתְאַחִיד בֵּיה בְּקַדְמִיתָא, דְּכְתִיב הַלֹּךְ וְנִסּוּעַ הִנֵּגְבָה. אוּף הָכָא הִנֵּגְבָה, אֲתַר דְּאַתְדְּבֵק בֵּיה בְּקַדְמִיתָא.

144. Come and behold the secret of this matter: Had Avram not gone down to Egypt and been purified, his destiny would not have been attached to the Holy One, blessed be He. And the same thing happened to his children, when the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to join them to one nation-one perfect and complete nation-and bring them near to Him. Had they not gone to Egypt first and been purified, they would not have become His one nation.

144. תָּא חַזִּי, רָזָא דְּמַלְהָ, אִי אַבְרָם לֹא יִיחֹת לְמִצְרַיִם, וְלֹא יִצְטָרֵף תַּמָּן בְּקַדְמִיּוּתָא. לֹא יִהְיֶה חוּלְק עַדְבִּיָּה בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. בְּגוּוּנָא דָּא לְבָנוּי, בְּדַבְעָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְמַעַבְדַּ לִּיה עֲמָא חָדָא, עֲמָא שְׁלִימָה, וְלִקְרָבָא לֹון לְגַבִּיָּה, אִי לֹא נַחְתּוּ בְּקַדְמִיּוּתָא לְמִצְרַיִם, וְלֹא יִצְטָרֵפוּן תַּמָּן, לֹאֲהוּ עֲמָא יַחֲדָא דִּילִיָּה.

145. In the same manner, had the Holy Land not been given at first to the Cna'anites and had they not ruled over it, then this land would not have been destined to become the portion and lot of the Holy One, blessed be He; it is all the same secret.

145. בְּגוּוּנָא דָּא, אִי לֹא אֲתִיְהִיבַת אֶרֶעָא קִדְשָׁא לְכַנְעֵן בְּקַדְמִיּוּתָא, וְיִשְׁלוּט בָּהּ, לֹא הָוֵת אֶרֶעָא חוּלְקִיָּה וְעַדְבִּיָּה, דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. וְכָלֹא רָזָא חָדָא.

17. "With my soul have I desired you in the night"

Ancient mysteries pertaining to the soul's activities during the night are unveiled by the Zohar. During sleep, people who have made a sincere attempt at spiritual growth and positive change during the day will see their souls elevate to the highest of heights in the spiritual atmosphere during the night. These souls are given a window through which they can perceive the future. Conversely, those who remain spiritually complacent, who have no regard or care for positive deeds and spiritual growth, their souls elevate, but are immediately engulfed by negative forces.

The Relevance of this Passage

When we awaken in the morning, if our soul ascended to great heights during the night, our sense of intuitiveness and foresight is acutely enhanced. We make the right decisions as we are guided by our intuition. If however, our souls are enveloped by negative forces, these entities whisper lies and speak falsehoods to our soul. These words of deception distort a person's reality during the day, so that life appears even more confusing, more chaotic. We find ourselves at the wrong place at the wrong time. Our thoughts, ideas, and decisions lead us down the wrong path. The verses of the Zohar can help us apply our sleep as a powerful tool that can help our soul elevate to great heights during the night.

146. Rabbi Shimon was walking along the way, accompanied by his son, Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Aba, and Rabbi Yehuda. As they were walking, Rabbi Shimon said: I am amazed that the people of this world do not pay attention to the words of Torah or to understanding the reason for their own existence in the world! He opened the discussion by saying: With my soul (Heb. Nefesh) have I desired you in the night; with my spirit (Heb. Ruach) within me will I seek you early" (Yeshayah 26:9). This verse has already been explained. But come and behold: When a person goes to bed, his Nefesh leaves and mounts on high. And if you say that they all mount on high-REFERRING TO THE OTHER GRADES, RUACH AND NESHAMAH-it is not so! Because not every one sees the face of the King. Only the Nefesh rises up, leaving an impression, in the form of minimum life for the heart, with the body.

146. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן־הוּהוּ אָזִיל בְּאַרְחָא, וְהוּהוּ עֲמִיָּה ר' אֶלְעָזָר בְּרִיָּה, וְרַבִּי אַבָּא וְרַבִּי יְהוּדָה. עַד דִּהּוּ אֶזְלוּ, אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, תְּוֹהֵנָא, הֵיךְ בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא לֹא מְשַׁגְּיחִין, לְמַנְדַּע מְלִי דְּאוּרִיּוּתָא, וְעַל מַה קְיוּמִי. פִּתַּח וְאָמַר, נִפְשֵׁי אֲוִיתִיךָ בְּלִילָה אֶף רַחוּי בְּקִרְבִּי אֲשַׁחֲרֶךְ. הָאִי קָרָא אוֹקְמוּהָ, וְאוֹקִימָנָא לִיה, אֲבַל תָּא חַזִּי, נִפְשָׁא דְּבַר נֶשׁ, בְּדַ סְלִיק לְעַרְסִיָּה, נִפְקַת מִנִּיָּה, וְסִלְקָא לְעִילָא. וְאִי תִימָא, דְּכִלְהוּ סִלְקָאן. לֹא כָּל חַד וְחַד חָמִי אִפִּי מַלְכָּא, אֲלֹא נִפְשָׁא סִלְקָא, וְלֹא אֲשַׁתָּאֵר בָּהּ בְּהִרֵּי גּוּפָא, בְּרַ חַד רְשִׁימוּ דְּקִסְטָא דְּחִיּוּתָא דְּלָבָא.

147. As the Nefesh leaves THE BODY and wishes to climb. There are many grades to climb. It wanders about and meets with Klipot of the lights of impurity. If the Nefesh is pure and has not been defiled WITH THE BODY during the day, then it rises upward. But if it is impure then it is defiled among THE KLIPOT cleaves onto them, and climbs no further.

147. וְנִפְשָׁא אֶזְלָא וּבַעֲיָא לְסִלְקָא. וְכַמָּה דִּרְגִין לְדִרְגִין לְסִלְקָא, שְׁטָאֵת, וְהִיא אֲתַעְרַעַת בְּהַנִּי קוּמְרִין טְהוּרִין דְּמִסְאָבוּתָא, אִי הִיא דְּכִיּוּתָא, דְּלֹא אֲסַתָּאֵת בִּימָמָא, סִלְקָא לְעִילָא. וְאִי לֹא דְּכִיּוּתָא, אֲסַתָּאֵת בִּינִיּוּהוּ, וְאֲתַדְּבַקַת בְּהוּ, וְלֹא סִלְקָא יִתִּיר.

148. And there, AMONG THE KLIPOT, they inform the Nefesh about future events, and THE NEFESH cleaves on to them. Sometimes, they scoff with the Nefesh and tell it lies. Thus, in such a manner, it wanders all night until the person wakes up. Then the Nefesh returns to its place IN THE BODY. Happy are the righteous that the Holy One, blessed be He, reveals His secrets to them in their dreams, so that they may protect themselves from judgment. Woe to those wicked people who defile themselves and their Nefesh.

149. Come and behold: As for those who have not defiled themselves DURING THE DAY, when they go to bed to sleep the Nefesh rises. At first, it enters among all the grades OF THE KLIPOT, BUT then it rises above them and does not cleave to them. It continues to wander and climb, until it reaches its proper grade.

150. The Nefesh that deserves to climb high appears before the King and clings passionately to the desire to be seen and to see the pleasantness of the King and visit His palace. Such person shall always have a share in the world to come.

151. This is the Nefesh, who yearns to reach the Holy One, blessed be He, and does not cleave to other kinds of Lights. It follows its own holy kind and seeks the place from which it came-THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, FROM WHERE IT IS DRAWN OUT AND COMES FORTH. Therefore it is written: "With my soul (Nefesh) have I desired you in the night," so that I may pursue You, CLEAVE TO YOU, and not be tempted by the other idolatrous kinds.

18. Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah

There are three levels to the human soul: Nefesh [lowest level], Ruach [Middle level], and Neshamah [Highest level of the three]. There is a process that a human being should undergo throughout the day in order to elevate from the lowest to the highest level. This process begins with positive spiritual deeds. According to the Zohar, spiritual deeds are actions that help bring about a dramatic change in our character. When we align ourselves with negative people and chaotic situations in life, we ignite self-centered reactions within ourselves. A spiritual deed is when we rise above this power of impulse and alter our emotional and behavioral responses.

The Relevance of this Passage

Attaining higher levels of growth and evolving our own soul is our ultimate purpose in life, and the strength and inspiration to strive for these higher levels comes to us through the letters that compose this passage.

152. Come and behold: "My soul (Nefesh)"-this is the one that dominates at night and pursues its own grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, IN ORDER TO CLEAVE ON TO IT. "My spirit (Ruach)" governs during the day. As it is written: "With my soul (Nefesh) have I desired you in the night," this is the Nefesh that rules at night, BECAUSE AT THAT TIME IT RISES ON HIGH AND IS PRESENTED BEFORE THE KING. "With my spirit (Ruach) within me will I seek you early" refers to the Ruach, which governs during the day.

148. וְתָמַן מוֹדְעֵי לָהּ מַלְיוֹן, וְאִיהוּ אֲתַדְבֵּקַת מַאֲינוֹן מַלְיוֹן, דְּזָמַן קָרִיב. וְלִזְמַנֵּי דְחִיּוּכִין בָּהּ, וּמוֹדְעִין לָהּ מַלְיוֹן בְּרִיבִין. וּכְדִין אֲזָלָא בְּהַאי גִּוּנָא כָּל לִילְיָא, עַד דִּיתַעַר בַּר נֶשׁ, וְתַאבַּת לְאַתְרָהּ. וְכַאֲיִן אֵינוֹן צְדִיקָיָא, דְּגָלִי לֹון קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, רִזִּין דִּילִיָּה בְּחֶלְמָא, בְּגִין דִּיסְתַּמְרוֹן מִן דִּינָא. וְוִי לֵאנוֹן חֲיוּבֵי עֲלָמָא, דְּמִסְאֲבִין גְּרַמִּיָּהוּ וְנִפְשִׁיָּהוּ.

149. תָּא חֲזִי, אֵינוֹן דְּלֵא אִסְתַּאבּוּ, בַּר סֻלְקֵי בְּעֶרְסִיָּהוּ, נִפְשָׁא סֻלְקָא וְעָאלַת בֵּין כָּל הַנִּי דְּרִגּוֹן בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וְסֻלְקָא וְלֵא אֲתַדְבֵּקַת בָּהּ. וּלְבַתָּר אֲזָלָא וְשָׁטָא, וְסֻלְקָא כַּפּוּם אֹרְחָהּ.

150. הָהִיא נִפְשָׁא דְּזָכַת לְסֻלְקָא, אֲתַחֲזִיאת קַמִּיָּה דְּסִבְרָא אִמִּי יוֹמִין, וְאַתְדְּבֵקַת בְּרַעוּתָא לְאַתְחֻזָּא בְּתִיאֻבָּתָא עֲלָאָה, לְמַחְמִי בְּנוּעָם מִלְכָּא, וּלְבַקְרָא בְּהִיבְלִיָּהּ. וְדָא הוּא בַר נֶשׁ דְּאִית לִיָּה חוּלְקָא תְּדִיר בְּעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי.

151. וְדָא הִיא נִפְשָׁא, דְּכָסִּיפָא דִּילָהּ, בַּר סֻלְקָא, בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְלֵא אֲתַדְבֵּקַת בְּהַנִּי זִינוֹן טְהִירוֹן אַחֲרָנִין, וְהִיא אֲזָלַת בְּתַר זִינָא קְדִישָׁא, בְּאַתְרָא דְּנִפְקַת מִתְּמָן. וּבְגִין כְּרַבְתִּיב נִפְשֵׁי אֲוִיתִךְ בְּלִילָהּ. בְּגִין לְמִרְדֵּף בְּתַרְךְ וְלֵא לְאַתְפַּתָּא בְּתַר זִינָא אַחֲרָא נּוֹכְרָאָהּ.

152. תָּא חֲזִי, נִפְשִׁי: דָּא נִפְשָׁא דְּאִיהוּ שְׁלֵטָא בְּלִילָהּ, וְלְמִרְדֵּף בְּתַר דְּרִגָּא. רוּחַ בְּיוֹם, דְּכַתִּיב נִפְשֵׁי אֲוִיתִךְ בְּלִילָהּ, דָּא נִפְשָׁא דְּאִיהוּ שְׁלֵטָא בְּלִילָהּ, אֶף רוּחִי בְּקִרְבִּי אֲשַׁחֲרֶךְ. דָּא רוּחַ דְּאִיהוּ שְׁלֵטָא בְּיוֹמָא.

153. And if you say THAT NEFESH AND RUACH are two different grades, separate from each other, it is not so! They are two combined as one grade. And there is a higher grade that governs them both; it cleaves to them and they to it-and it is called Neshamah.

154. All these grades rise in accordance with the secret of the inner Wisdom, because when the grades look at each other, man is able to look upon the Supernal Wisdom and the Neshamah can enter to them-TO THE NEFESH AND THE RUACH, and they cling to it. So when THE NESHAMAH governs, then man is called holy, perfected in all ways and is entirely devoted to the Holy One, blessed be He.

155. The Nefesh rouses from below, WHICH MEANS THAT IT IS LOWEST OF THE LIGHTS NEFESH, RUACH, AND NESHAMAH. Because it is closest to the body and nourishes it, the body clings to it and it to the body. Afterward, THE NEFESH is amended BY THE GOOD DEEDS A PERSON PERFORMS and becomes a throne on which the Ruach dwells. This is because of the awakening of the Nefesh, which is attached to the body. As it is written: "Until the spirit (Ruach) be poured upon us from on high..." (Yeshayah 32:15).

156. After both THE NEFESH AND THE RUACH are amended, they are ready to receive the Neshamah, because the Ruach becomes a throne on which the Neshamah rests. And this Neshamah is high above all and remains concealed, unattainable, and most hidden!

157. So there is a throne for the throne, BECAUSE THE NEFESH IS A THRONE FOR THE RUACH, WHICH IS ALSO A THRONE, and a throne for the highest level, BECAUSE THE RUACH IS A THRONE FOR THE NESHAMAH, WHICH IS HIGH ABOVE THEM BOTH. And when you study these grades, you find in this subject the secret of Wisdom. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU LEARN HOW THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH IS DRAWN BY THE NEFESH, RUACH, AND NESHAMAH. And everything is in accordance with the higher Wisdom, in order to achieve certain mysteries.

158. Come and behold: The Nefesh is the awakening factor from below that cleaves to the body. Just like the light of a candle, in which the lowest light, which is black, clings to the wick and exists only through it. So, when THE BLACK LIGHT is improved through AND CLINGS TO the wick, it becomes a throne for the white light above it, BECAUSE THE WHITE LIGHT rests upon the black light. THIS WHITE LIGHT IS EQUIVALENT TO THE LIGHT OF RUACH.

153. ואי תימא, דתרין דרגין אינון בפרודא. לאו הכי, דהא דרגא חד אינון, ואינון תרין, בחבורא חד. וחד עלאה, דשלטא עליהו, ואתדבק בהו, ואינון ביה, ואתקריאת נשמה.

154. וכלהו דרגין סלקאן ברזא דחכמתא, דכד מסתכלן אליון דרגין, וסתכל בר נש, בחכמה עלאה, והאי נשמה עייל בהו, ומתדבקן בה, וכד האי שלטא, כדין ההוא בר נש, אקרי קדוש, שלום מכלא, רעותא חדא לגבי קדשא בריך הוא.

155. נפש: איהו אתערותא תתאה, ודא סמיכא בגופא, וזנת ליה, וגופא אחיד בה, והיא אתאחדת בגופא. לבתר אתתקנת, ואתעבירת פרסויא לאשראה עלה רוח, באתערותא דהאי נפש. דאתאחידת בגופא, כמה דכתיב עד יערה עליונו רוח ממרום.

156. לבתר דמתקני תרווייהו, זמינין לקבלא נשמה, דהא רוח אתעביד פרסויא לגבי נשמה, לאשראה עליה, והאי נשמה, איהו סתימא, עלאה על כלא, טמירא דכל טמירין.

157. אשתכח, דאית פרסויא לפרסויא, וכרסויא לגבי עלאה עליהו. וכד תסתכל בדרגין, תשבח רזא דחכמתא בהאי מלה. וכלא הוא חכמתא לאתדבקא בהאי גוונא מלין סתימין.

158. תא חזי, נפש איהי אתערותא תתאה, דאתדבקא ביה בגופא. כגוונא דנהורא דבוצינא, דנהורא תתאה, דאיהי אוכמא אתדבקת בפתילה, ולא אתפרש מנה, ולא אתתקנת אלא בה. וכד אתתקנת בפתילה, אתעבירת פרסויא לנהורא עלאה חוורא, דשריית על ההוא נהורא אוכמא.

159. After they are fixed, THE BLACK LIGHT WITH THE WHITE LIGHT OVER IT, the white light becomes a throne for a concealed light. What rests on the white light, which is neither seen nor known, IS EQUIVALENT TO THE LIGHT OF NESHAMAH. The light is now complete IN SUCH A MANNER THAT THE CANDLE HAS THREE LIGHTS-ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER. FIRST, A BLACK LIGHT, WHICH IS THE LOWEST OF THEM ALL AND IS ATTACHED TO THE WICK OF THE CANDLE; SECOND, A WHITE LIGHT THAT RESTS ON THE BLACK LIGHT; AND FINALLY, A HIDDEN LIGHT THAT RESTS ON THE WHITE LIGHT. And so a person who reaches perfection in everything ALSO ATTAINS THESE THREE LIGHTS, ONE OVER THE OTHER, AS IS EXPLAINED BY THE LIGHTS OF THE CANDLE, WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE NEFESH, THE RUACH, AND THE NESHAMAH. Then that person is called 'holy,' as it is written: "for holy people who are in the earth..." (Tehilim 16:3).

160. This appears in the same manner, according to the sublime secret, IN THE VERSES BEFORE US. Come and behold: At the time when Avraham came to the land of Yisrael, the Holy One, blessed be He, appeared before him. As we have already stated and as it is written: "to Hashem, who appeared to him" (Beresheet 12:7). There he attained the LIGHT OF Nefesh, and he built an altar for that grade. After this, "he journeyed on still toward the Negev," where he attained the LIGHT OF Ruach. And after that, when he rose to cleave to the LIGHT OF Neshamah, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF BINAH THAT IS CALLED THE "CONCEALED WORLD," IT IS WRITTEN THAT HE simply "built there an altar to Hashem" (Beresheet 13:18). AS IT IS NOT WRITTEN 'TO HASHEM WHO APPEARED TO HIM.' This refers to the Neshamah, which is the most hidden of all. THEREFORE, IT IS NOT WRITTEN: 'TO HASHEM WHO APPEARED TO HIM' IN RELATION TO THE NESHAMAH, AS IS WRITTEN FOR THE LIGHT OF NEFESH.

161. After this, Avraham knew that he should undergo purification and be crowned with more grades. So immediately, "Avram went down to Egypt," where he was saved by not being enticed by the bright lights. As a result, he was purified, and returned to his place. Since he went down to Egypt and he was purified, immediately it says "Avram went up out of Egypt." He assuredly "went up," WHICH MEANS THAT HE ROSE A GRADE, AS HE NOW MERITED THE LIGHT OF CHAYAH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH OF THE RIGHT SIDE, and returned to his place, TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL. And he cleaved to the Supernal Faith, as it is written: "to the Negev," WHICH ALLUDES TO THE CHOCHMAH OF THE RIGHT, NAMELY CHESD THAT RISES UP DURING MATURITY AND BECOMES CHOCHMAH. THERE ARE FIVE GRADES IN THIS GRADE-NEFESH, RUACH, NESHAMAH, CHAYAH, AND YECHIDAH--AND AVRAHAM NOW MERITED ITS FIRST GRADES.

162. From here onward, Avraham acquired the Supernal Wisdom, cleaved to the Holy One, blessed be He, and became the right of the world. As it is then written: "And Avram was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold" (Beresheet 13:2). "Very rich" from the direction of the east, WHICH IS TIFERET; "in cattle" from the west, WHICH IS MALCHUT; "in silver" from the south, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH, and "in gold" from the north, WHICH IS BINAH.

163. Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Aba, and their companions came and kissed the hands of Rabbi Shimon. Rabbi Aba wept and said: Woe for the time when you shall leave this world. Who shall then light up the light of Torah? Happy is the fate of the companions who have heard these interpretations of Torah coming from your mouth!

159. לְבִתְרָא כִּד מִתְתַּקֵּן תְּרוּוּיָהּ, אֲתַעְבִּידָהּ הָהוּא נְהוּרָא חוּרָא כְּרִסְיָא לְנְהוּרָא סְתִימָא, דְּלֹא אֲתַחֲזִי וְלֹא אֲתִיידֵעַ, מַה דְּשָׂרָא עַל הָהוּא נְהוּרָא חוּרָא. וְכִדִּין, נְהוּרָא שְׁלִים. וְכִךְ הוּא בְּרִנְשׁ, דְּאִיהוּ שְׁלִים בְּכֻלָּא. וְכִדִּין אֶקְרִי קְדוּשָׁ, כִּד"א לְקְדוּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ הַמָּה וְגו'.

160. כְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא בְּרָזָא עֲלָאָה. תָּא חֲזִי בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּעָאֵל אַבְרָהָם לְאַרְעָא, אֲתַחֲזִי לִיהּ קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, כְּמַה דְּאֲתַמֵּר, דְּכִתִּיב לֵה' הִנֵּרָאָה אֱלִיוֹ, וְקִבִּיל תַּמָּן נֶפֶשׁ וּבִנָּה מִזְבֵּחַ לְהָהוּא דְּרִגָּא. לְבִתְרָא הַלּוֹךְ וְנִסּוּעַ הִגְבָּהּ, דְּקִבִּיל רוּחַ. לְבִתְרָא דְּסִלִּיק לְאֲתַדְּבָקָא גּוֹ נִשְׁמָה, כִּדִּין וַיִּבֶן שֵׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לֵה' סֵתֵם, דָּא הוּא נִשְׁמָה, דְּאִיהוּ סְתִימָא דְּכָל סְתִימִין.

161. לְבִתְרָא יָדַע דְּבִעֵי לְאַצְטְרַפָּא וְלֹאֲתַעֲטְרָא בְּדִרְגִין, מִיָּד וַיֵּרֶד אַבְרָם מִצְרִימָה, וְאֲשַׁתִּיב מִתַּמָּן. וְלֹא אֲתַפְּתָא גּוֹ אֵינּוֹן טְהִירִין, וְאֲתַצְרִיף וְתֵב לְאֲתַרִּיהּ. כִּיּוֹן דְּנִחַת וְאֲתַצְרִיף, מִיָּד וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם, סִלִּיק וַיָּאִי וְתֵב לְאֲתַרִּיהּ, וְאֲתַדְּבָק בְּמַהִימְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה, דְּכִתִּיב הִגְבָּהּ.

162. מִכָּאֵן וְלֵהֲלָאָה יָדַע אַבְרָהָם, חֲכֻמָּתָא עֲלָאָה, וְאֲתַדְּבָק בְּקְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, וְאֲתַעְבִּיד וַיִּמְנָא דְּעֻלְמָא. כִּדִּין וַאֲבָרַם כְּבִד מְאֹד בְּמִקְנֵה בְּכֶסֶף וּבְזָהָב. כְּבִד מְאֹד, בְּסִטְרָא דְּמִזְרַח. בְּמִקְנֵה, בְּסִטְרָא דְּמַעְרֵב. בְּכֶסֶף מְסִטְרָא דְּדָרוֹם. בְּזָהָב מְסִטְרָא דְּצִפּוֹן.

163. אָתוּ ר' אֶלְעָזָר וְר' אָבָא וְכֻלְהוּ חֲבֵרֵיא, וְנִשְׁקוּ יָדָיו. בְּכָה ר' אָבָא וְאָמַר ווִי ווִי כִּד תִּסְתַּלַּק מִן עֻלְמָא, מָאן וַיְהִיר נְהוּרָא דְּאוּרִייתָא, וְכָאָה חוּלְקָהוֹן דְּחֲבֵרֵיא דְּשִׁמְעִין מִלִּין דְּאוּרִייתָא אֱלִין מְפֻמָּךְ.

19. "And he went on his journeys"

Avraham the Patriarch attained the highest level of wisdom that a man can achieve. The spiritual process that he endured to acquire this great wisdom is recounted in the following section.

The Relevance of this Passage

According to the Zohar, the wisdom of Kabbalah is not merely information and knowledge that one acquires as an external asset. On the contrary, Kabbalistic wisdom is the very substance of Light, the essence and core of that which it describes. To acquire spiritual wisdom is to, therefore, infuse one's self with spiritual energy. This great Light nurtures and fills our soul through the wisdom and words of this profound portion.

164. Rabbi Shimon said, Come and behold: The verse, "And he went on his journeys... (Heb. lemasa'av)" (Beresheet 13:3) MEANS that he went to visit his place and his grade. In this verse, lemasa'av IS SPELLED WITHOUT THE LETTER YUD, INDICATING THE SINGULAR FORM. SO HE ASKS: Which journey? AND HE ANSWERS: This is the first grade that was revealed to him. Here, it is written: "masa'av (his journey)"; and in another place thither (Heb. masa): "was built of stone made ready before it was brought" (I Melachim 6:7). As we have already explained, assuredly it was "stone made ready (Heb. shlemah)" WHICH MEANS THAT THE STONE, WHICH IS MALCHUT, BELONGS TO THE KING TO WHOM THE PEACE (HEB. SHALOM) BELONGS. AND KING SOLOMON (HEB. SHLOMO) ALLUDES TO THE KING TO WHOM PEACE BELONGS, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN. SO BY ANALOGY, IN THE FORMER VERSE AS WELL IT REFERS TO THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. "Masa" has already been explained.

165. The words, "on his journeys," MEANS THAT HE MOVED ALONG all of these grades, one after the other, as explained, "from the Negev even to Bet El," to firmly establish his place, WHICH IS CHESED, and to unite it WITH BET EL WHICH IS THE NUKVA. Because the secret of Wisdom lies "from the Negev even to Bet El."

166. In the verse, "to the place where his tent (Heb. ohaloh) had been at the beginning" (Beresheet 13:3), the word ohaloh is spelled with a letter Hei (at the end) INSTEAD OF WITH A LETTER VAV. THIS IMPLIES THAT ohaloh is Bet El, WHICH IS CALLED a "stone made ready," as we have stated, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Furthermore, he states THAT HE REFERS TO THE NUKVA, and says: "To the place of the altar, which he had made there at first..." Of this it says: "to Hashem, who appeared to him," WHICH ALLUDES TO THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. And then it is written: "And there Avram called in the name of Hashem." Because then he cleaved to the complete faith.

167. Come and behold: At first, he rose THROUGH THE GRADES from lower to higher, as it is written: "And Hashem appeared to Avram," and "to Hashem who appeared to him." This is the first grade, as we have stated, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF a "stone made ready," NAMELY, THE GRADE OF NUKVA WHERE 'SEEING' LIES. AND FROM HERE HE ATTAINED THE NEFESH. After this it is written: "going on still toward the south," MEANING THAT HE ROSE grade after grade until he was crowned in the south, WHICH IS CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN; THIS IS his share and destiny. AND FROM HERE HE REACHED RUACH. After this, as he rose higher, the matter is concealed, and it simply says, "to Hashem," RATHER THAN, "TO HASHEM WHO APPEARED TO HIM." This is the upper world, NAMELY BINAH. AND FROM HERE HE MERITED THE NESHAMAH. He went through further grades, WHICH MEANS THAT HE WENT DOWN TO EGYPT AND WENT UP FROM THERE. THROUGH THIS, HE ACHIEVED THE GRADE OF CHOCHMAH FROM THE RIGHT SIDE, AS CHESED BECAME CHOCHMAH. Afterward he descended from above downward, AS IS EXPLAINED IN THE VERSE, "AND HE WENT ON HIS JOURNEYS..." and everything was properly attached to its place!

164. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, תָּא חַזִּי, מַה בְּתִיב, וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמַסְעָיו. לְמַפְקֵד אֶתְרִיָּה וּדְרָגָיו. לְמַסְעָיו, לְמַסְעוֹ בְּתִיב, מֵאֵן מַסְעוֹ. דָּא דְרָגָא קְדָמָא, דְּאִתְחַזִּי לִיהּ בְּקַדְמִיתָא, בְּתִיב הָכָא מַסְעוֹ, וּכְתִיב הָתָם אֲבָן שְׁלֵמָה מִסַּע נִבְנָה. וְהָא אוֹקִימָנָא, אֲבָן שְׁלֵמָה וְדַאי מִסַּע בְּמָה דְּאִתְמַר.

165. וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמַסְעָיו. כָּל אֵינֹן דְּרָגִין, דְּרָגָא בְּתַר דְּרָגָא, בְּמָה דְּאִתְמַר. מִנְּגַב וְעַד בֵּית אֵל, לְאַתְקְנָא אֶתְרִיָּה, וּלְחַבְרָא לֹון בְּיַחוּדָא שְׁלִים. דְּהָא מִנְּגַב וְעַד בֵּית אֵל, אֲשַׁתְּכַח רְזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

166. אֵל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיָה שֵׁם אֱהֵלָה בְּתַחֲלָה אֱהֵלָה בֵּה"א, מֵאֵן אֱהֵלָה, דָּא בֵּית אֵל, אֲבָן שְׁלֵמָה בְּדִאמְרִין. תּוּ רְשִׁים וְאָמַר, אֵל מָקוֹם הַמְּזֻבָּח אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה שֵׁם בְּרִאשׁוֹנָה. דְּכְתִיב לֵה' הִנֵּרָאָה אֱלֹוִ. וּכְדִין וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם אֲבָרָם בְּשֵׁם ה'. בְּדִין אִתְדַּבֵּק בְּמַהִימְנוּתָא שְׁלִימָתָא.

167. תָּא חַזִּי, בְּקַדְמִיתָא סֵלִיק מִתַּתָּא לְעִילָא, דְּכְתִיב וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אֲבָרָם, וּכְתִיב לֵה' הִנֵּרָאָה אֱלֹוִ. וְדָא הוּא דְרָגָא קְדָמָא, בְּדִאמְרִין אֲבָן שְׁלֵמָה. וּלְבִתְרָה הַלּוֹךְ וְנִסּוּעַ הַנִּגְבָּה. דְּרָגָא בְּתַר דְּרָגָא, עַד דְּאִתְעַטֵּר בְּדָרוֹם, חוּלְקִיָּה וְעַדְבִּיָּה. לְבִתְרָה סְתִים מְלָה, בְּדִ סֵלִיק, וְאָמַר לֵה' סְתָם, דָּא עֲלָמָא עֲלָאָה. וּמִתְמֵן נָטִיל בְּדְרָגִין, וְנִחִית מְעִילָא לְתַתָּא, וְאִתְדַּבֵּק בְּלָא בְּאִתְרִיָּה, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

168. Here, as you observe the grades THAT APPEAR IN THE SCRIPTURE, you shall find the secret of the supernal Wisdom (Chochmah)-NAMELY CHOCHMAH OF THE RIGHT SIDE. As it is written: "And he went on his journeys from the Negev." THIS MEANS from the right side, WHICH IS THE SOUTH AND the beginning of the Supernal, NAMELY BINA, concealed and unfathomed deep, reaching up to the Endless World (Heb. Ein Sof). And from there he descended, grade after grade, "from the Negev even to Bet El" (Beresheet 18:8), WHICH IS THE NUKVA.

169. And it is written: "and there Avram called in the name of Hashem," MEANING THAT he attached Unity in its proper place. As it is written: "To the place of the altar, which he had made there at first." What is THE MEANING OF "which he made there?" IT MEANS THAT FIRST he elevated THE NUKVA from below to the upper grades and now he brought her down through the grades, so that she remains attached to those supernal grades and they remain attached to her, and all become united in one as should be!

170. Then Avraham was crowned and his destiny surly became connected with the Holy One, blessed be He. Happy are the righteous, who are crowned by the Holy One, blessed be He, and He, in turn, is crowned by them. They are happy in this world, as well as in the world to come. Of them it is written: "Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever" (Yeshayah 60:21), and "But the path of the just is like the gleam of sunlight, that shines ever more brightly until the height of noonday" (Mishlei 4:18).

171. They went along until they reached a field in which they sat down. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion by saying: "Turn to me and have mercy upon me..." (Tehilim 86:16). This verse should be studied. Even though we have explained it in many places, there is hidden meaning in its passages. HE ASKS: How could it be that David, WHO WAS HUMBLE, should say: "Turn to me and have mercy upon me?"

172. AND HE REPLIES: He was referring to his grade, by which he is crowned. IN OTHER WORDS, HE PRAYED FOR THE SAKE OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. In the verse, "give Your strength to your servant," the words "give Your strength" refer to the supernal strength, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH. As it is written: "and he shall give strength to his king" (I Shmuel 2:10). Who is his king? His king, without any specific reference, is clearly to King Mashiach, NAMELY MALCHUT, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. In this passage, the words "your servant" also refer to Mashiach. As we have stated, the king is mentioned without any reference; THEREFORE IT ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA.

168. וְהָכָא כִּד תַּסְתַּבֵּל בְּדִרְגֵּינָן, תִּשְׁכַּח רְזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא עֲלָאָה, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִסְעוֹ מִנֶּגֶב, מִסְטָרָא דִּימִינָא, שִׁירוֹתָא דְעֵלְמָא עֲלָאָה, סְתִימָא עֲמִיקָא לְעִילָא, עַד אֵין סוּף, וְנָחִית דְּרָגָא בְּתַר דְּרָגָא, מִנֶּגֶב וְעַד בֵּית אֵל מְעִילָא לְתַתָּא.

169. וּכְתִיב, וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם אֲבָרָם בְּשֵׁם ה' . אֲדָבָק יְחֻדָּא בְּאַתְרֵיהּ, בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, דְּכְתִיב, אֵל מְקוֹם הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה שֵׁם בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה, מֵאִי אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה שֵׁם. דְּסָלִיק לָהּ מִתַּתָּא לְעִילָא. וְהִשְׁתָּא נָחִית בְּדִרְגֵּינָן מְעִילָא לְתַתָּא, בְּגִין דְּהוּא לֹא תַעֲרִי מְאִינוֹן דְּרָגִין עֲלָאִין, וְאִינוֹן לֹא יַעֲרוֹן מִנָּה, וַיִּתְיַחַד כָּלָא בְּיַחְדָּא חָדָא בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת.

170. בְּדִין אֲתַעֲטֵר אֲבָרָהָם, וְהוּא חוֹלֵק עַרְבֵיָה דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְדָאִי. זָכָאִין אִינוֹן צְדִיקֵינָא, דְּמִתַּעֲטְרֵי בֵיהּ, בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. וְהוּא, מִתַּעֲטֵר בְּהוֹן. זָכָאִין אִינוֹן בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין, וְחָכָאִין אִינוֹן בְּעֵלְמָא דְּאֵתִי. עֲלִיָּהּ כְּתִיב וְעַמְּךָ כָּלִם צְדִיקִים לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ. וּכְתִיב וְאוֹרַח צְדִיקִים כְּאוֹר נֹגַהּ הוֹלֵךְ וְאוֹר עַד נְכוֹן הַיּוֹם.

171. אָזְלוּ, כִּד מְטוּ בְּחַד בֵּי חָקֵל, יִתְבּוּ. פְּתַח ר' שְׁמַעוֹן וְאָמַר, פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי וְגו'. הָאִי קָרָא אֵית לְאַסְתַּבֵּלָא בֵיהּ, וְהָא אֻקְיָמָנָא לִיהּ, בְּכַמָּה אֲתֵר. אָבֵל בְּהָאִי קָרָא, מְלִין סְתִימִין אֵית בֵּיהּ, פְּנֵה אֵלַי. וְכִי דוֹד אָמַר פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי.

172. אֵלָא, בְּגִין דְּרָגָא דִּילִיָּהּ, דְּאִיהוּ אֲתַעֲטֵר בֵּיהּ קְאָמַר, תְּנֵה עֶזְךָ לְעַבְדְּךָ. תְּנֵה עֶזְךָ, דָּא עֶז עֲלָאָה, כְּדְכְתִיב וַיִּתֵּן עֶז לְמַלְכוֹ. מֵאֵין מַלְכוֹ. דָּא מֶלֶךְ סְתֵם, מְלָכָא מְשִׁיחָא. אוֹף הָכָא לְעַבְדְּךָ, דָּא מְלָכָא מְשִׁיחָא, כְּדָאמְרֵן מֶלֶךְ סְתֵם.

173. About the verse, "And save the son of Your handmaid" (Tehilim 86:16), HE ASKS: Was he not the son of Yishai? If so, then why did he refer to himself as the son of his mother and not of his father? AND HE REPLIES: We have already explained that when a person comes forward to receive something lofty, he should refer only to things that are absolutely true. Therefore he mentioned his mother, WHEN HE SAID, "AND SAVE THE SON OF YOUR HANDMAID," and not his father. And furthermore, we have already learned that this refers to an unspecified king, as we said. THIS MEANS THAT HE DID NOT PRAY FOR HIMSELF, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF THE NUKVA WHICH IS CALLED 'KING' WITH NO FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS. THIS IS WHY HE MENTIONED HIS MOTHER'S NAME, WHO PERTAINS TO THE NUKVA, AND NOT HIS FATHER'S NAME!

173. וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבֶן אִמְתְּךָ. וְכִי לֹא הוּא בְרִיה דְּיִשַׁי אִיהוּ, עַד דְּאִיהוּ אָמַר בְּשֵׁמָא דְאִמְיָהּ, וְלֹא בְשֵׁמָא דְאָבוּי. אֲלֵא, הָא אֻקְיָמָנָא, דְּכַד יִיתִי בִּר נְשַׁלְקָבֵל מְלָה עֲלָאָה לְאַדְכָּרָא, בְּעֵי לְמַהֲךָ בְּמִלָּה דְאִיהוּ וְדָאִי. וְעַל דָּא, אֲדַכְּרָא לְאִמְיָהּ, וְלֹא לְאָבוּי. וְתוּ, הָא תְּנִינָן דְּדָא מֶלֶךְ בְּדִקְאָמְרָן.

20. "And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Avram's cattle"

When Avraham discovered that Lot, his nephew, was engaged in Idol Worshipping, Avraham knew immediately that he had to disconnect himself completely from Lot. The spiritual principle of this story concerns the influence that our immediate environment exerts upon us. It is incumbent upon all of us to associate with people who are sincere in their desire for spiritual growth. Although our own intentions may be pure, the influences that surround us inevitably affect our way of life.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Kabbalistic definition of Idol Worshipping includes much more than simply praying to statues or other false gods. Whenever we allow an external object or situation to control our behavior, our thoughts, or our emotions, we are worshipping an idol. Many people, for example, worship the idol of money. They are disciples and servants to their own businesses. Others are ruled by appearances and the perceptions of those around them. The moment we allow the external world to control our hearts and minds, we are committing the sin of Idol Worshipping. In this portion, freedom from external negative forces and influences is bestowed upon the reader.

174. Rabbi Shimon said, Come and behold, It is written: "And there was strife (Heb. riv) between the herdsmen of Avram's cattle." The word riv is spelled Resh Bet without the letter Yud, which means that Lot wanted to return to idol worshipping, which was the custom of the natives. Thus, at the end of the verse, it is written: "and the Cnaani and the Perizi dwelt then in the land." THIS TEACHES US THAT LOT WANTED TO WORSHIP IDOLS AS THEY DID. AND THE REASON WHY IT GIVES RIV WITHOUT A YUD IS TO POINT TOWARD IDOL WORSHIP. IT FOLLOWS THE SECRET FOUND IN THE VERSE, "AND THE ELDER (HEB. RAV) SHALL SERVE THE YOUNGER" (BERESHEET 25:23). ESAV SAID TO YA'AKOV, "I HAVE ENOUGH (HEB. RAV - RESH BET)" (BERESHEET 33:9), BUT YA'AKOV SAID TO HIM, "AND BECAUSE I HAVE ALL (HEB. KOL)" (BERESHEET 25:11). THIS IS ALSO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "AND A MIXED MULTITUDE (HEB. EREV RAV) WENT UP ALSO WITH THEM" (SHEMOT 12:38).

174. אָמַר ר' שִׁמְעוֹן, תָּא חֲזִי, מַה בְּתִיב, וְיִהְיִי רִיב בֵּין רַעֲי מִקְנֵה אַבְרָם, רַב בְּתִיב, חֶסֶר יוֹד, דְּבַעָא לוֹט לְמַהֲדֵר לְפֻלְחָנָא נּוֹכְרָאָה, דְּפִלְחֵי יִתְבִּי אֶרְעָא, וְסוּפִיָּה דְקָרָא אוֹכַח, דְּכְתִיב וְהַכְנַעְנִי וְהַפְרִיזוּ אִזּוּ יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ.

175. How do we know that Lot reverted to his evil ways of idolatry? We know is from the verse: "and Lot journeyed from the east (i.e. from yore)" (Beresheet 13:11). And what is the meaning of "yore?" It means from Him-He who is more ancient than the world. And thus it is written: "and Lot journeyed from the east," and "it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east" (Beresheet 11:1). So, because there they journeyed away from Him-He who is more ancient than the world, it means the same thing here!

175. וּמִנְלָן דְּלוֹט אֶהְדֵּר לְסֶרְחֲנִיָּה, לְפֻלְחָנָא נּוֹכְרָאָה, דְּכְתִיב, וַיֵּסַע לוֹט מִמְּקָדָם. מֵאִי מִקְדָם, מִקְדָמוֹנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם. בְּתִיב הָכָא, וַיֵּסַע לוֹט מִמְּקָדָם, וּכְתִיב וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעָם מִמְּקָדָם, מַה לְהֵלֶן נָטִילוּ מִקְדָמוֹנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם אוֹף הָכָא בֵּן.

176. As soon as Avraham realized that Lot reverted TO IDOLATRY, he spoke to him: "And Avram said to Lot, separate yourself, I pray you, from me" (Beresheet 13:8-9)--you are not worthy of associating with me. So Avraham separated from him and did not want to travel with or deal him any more, because whoever accompanies a wicked person shall eventually follow in his steps and be punished because of him.

176. בֵּינָן דִּידַע אַבְרָהָם, דְּלוֹט לְהִכִּי נָטִי לְבִיָּהּ. מִידּוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל לוֹט וְגו' הִפְרָד נָא מֵעָלִי. לִית אֲנָתְךָ בְּרָאִי לְאַתְחַפְּרָא בְּהִדָאִי. כְּדִין אֲתַפְּרֵשׁ אַבְרָהָם מִנִּיָּה, וְלֹא בַעָא לְמִיָּהֲךָ וְלֹאֲתַחַפְּרָא עִמִּיָּהּ, דְּכָל מֶאֵן דִּיתַחַבֵּר לְחַיִּיבָא, סוּפִיָּה לְמִיָּהֲךָ אַבְתְּרִיָּהּ, וְלֹאֲתַעֲנֵשׁ בְּגִינִיָּה.

177. How do we know this? We know this from Yehoshafat, who associated with Achav. And had it not been for the merit of his ancestors, Yehoshafat would have been punished because of Achav. As it is written: "but Yehoshafat cried out..." (II Divrei Hayamim 18:31). Then he was saved, as it is written: "and Elohim moved them to depart from him" (Ibid.)

178. Although Avraham did not want to travel with Lot, Lot still did not want to return from his evil way. As it is written: "Then Lot chose him all the plain of the Yarden; and Lot journeyed from the east" (Beresheet 13:11), WHICH MEANS THAT he "journeyed away" from Him-He who is more ancient than the world, and refused to adhere to the True Complete Faith, as did Avraham.

179. THE LAND OF CNA'AN IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, AND, AND IT IS WRITTEN: "Avram dwelt in the land of Cna'an" IN ORDER to cleave to the place of the Faith, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and to attain knowledge about the Wisdom of his Master. Lot, however, "dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sdom," WHICH MEANS THAT he became associated with the wicked of the world, who departed from the Faith. They are described by the verse, "But the men of Sdom were wicked and sinners before Hashem exceedingly." Each one departed and went his own way: AVRAHAM TO THE PATH OF HOLINESS, AND LOT TO THE WICKED. Because of this, happy are those freinds, who study Torah day and night, as they cleave to the Holy One, blessed be He. THEY DO AS AVRAHAM DID, AND NOT AS LOT. Of them it is written: "But you that did cleave to Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4).

21. "And Hashem said to Avram after Lot was separated from him"

Progressing from the previous section, the Zohar reveals how Avraham the Patriarch prepared and readied himself to receive the Light of the Creator after disconnecting himself from the negative influences of his nephew Lot.

The Relevance of this Passage

This portion illustrates the importance of preparing ourselves, both spiritually and physically, for the Light of Creator to rest upon us. This preparation process is referred to as "building one's Vessel." Without a Vessel, the Light of the Creator cannot be revealed. This important Kabbalistic principle is clarified by an analogy: The sun requires a physical object, a vessel to reflect, and thus, reveal its light. In like manner, the Light of the Creator requires a Vessel in order to illuminate our physical world. These sacred verses assist us in the building of our own Vessel so that spiritual light can illuminate the dark areas of our life.

180. "And Hashem said to Avram, after Lot was separated from him..." (Beresheet 13:14). Rabbi Aba opened the discussion by saying: "And Yonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of Hashem" (Yonah 1:3). Woe to those who hide from the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He, of whom it is written: "I fill the heaven and earth, says Hashem" (Yirmeyah 23:24). AND HE WONDERS, why did Yonah want to flee from the presence OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE?

181. AND HE REPLIES: In the verse, "My dove (Heb. yonati), who are in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff" (Shir Hashirim 2:14), "my dove" refers to the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH; "in the clefts of the rock" means Jerusalem, that is, the highest place in the world. Just as the rock is more eminent and stronger than everything, so is Jerusalem more eminent and stronger than all. The words, "in the secret places of the cliff" refer to the place that is called the place of the holy of holies, which is the heart of the entire world.

177. מְנַלָּן, מִיְהוֹשָׁפָט, דְּאַתְחַבֵּר עִם אַחָב, וְאַלְמָלָא זָכוּ דְאַבְהָן, אַתְעֵנֶשׁ תַּמָּן, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּזְעַק יְהוֹשָׁפָט. וְכִדִּין אֲשֶׁתִּיב, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּסִּיתֶם אֱלֹקִים מִמֶּנּוּ.

178. וְעַד לֹא בָעָא אַבְרָם לְמִיָּהָ בְּהִדְיָה דְלוֹט. וְעַם כָּל דָּא, לֹא בָעָא לוֹט, לְמַהֲדָר מְסוּרַחְנִיָּה, אֶלָּא וַיִּבְחַר לוֹ לוֹט אֶת כָּל כְּבַר הַיַּרְדֵּן. וַיִּסַּע לוֹט מִקֶּדֶם. אֲתַנְטִיל מִן קְדָמָא דְעֵלְמָא, וְלֹא בָעָא לְאַתְדַּבְקָא בְּמַהֲיִמְנוּתָא שְׁלִימָתָא, כְּאַבְרָהָם.

179. אַבְרָם יָשָׁב בְּאַרְץ כְּנָעַן. לְאַתְדַּבְקָא בְּאַתְרָא דְמַהֲיִמְנוּתָא, וְלִמְנַדַּע חֻכְמָתָא, לְאַתְדַּבְקָא בְּמַאֲרִיָּה. וְלוֹט יָשָׁב בְּעָרֵי הַכֶּכֶר וַיֵּאָהֵל עַד סְדוֹם, עִם אִינוֹן חֲיִיבִין דְּעֵלְמָא, דְּנִפְקוּ מִגּוּ מַהֲיִמְנוּתָא, דְּכְתִיב, וְאֲנָשֵׁי סְדוֹם רָעִים וְחָטָאִים לֵה' מְאֹד. כָּל חָד אֲתַפְּרֵשׁ לְאַרְחִיָּה, בְּדָקָא וְאוֹת. בְּגִין כְּרִזְבָּאִין אִינוֹן חֲבֵרִיָּא, דְּמִשְׁתַּדְּלִי בְּאוֹרֵייתָא יִמְמָא וְלִילֵיָא, וְחֲבֵרוּתָא דְלֵהוֹן בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. וְעֲלִיָּהוּ כְתִיב וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבָקִים בַּה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם חַיִּים כָּלְכֶם הַיּוֹם.

180. וְה' אָמַר אֶל אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הַפָּרֶד לוֹט מֵעִמּוֹ וְגו'. ר' אַבְא פָּתַח וַיִּקֶּם יוֹנָה לְבְרוּחַ תַּרְשִׁישָׁה מִלְפָּנֵי ה' וְגו', וְוִי לְמָאן דְּאַסְתַּתֵּר מִקְמִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּכְתִיב בֵּיהּ הֲלֹא אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲנִי מִלֵּא נָאִם ה'. וְהוּא אָתִי לְמַעַרְק מִקְמִיָּה.

181. אֶלָּא, כְּתִיב יוֹנָתִי בַּחֲגוֹי הַסֵּלַע בְּסִתְרַי הַמְּדֻרְגָּה. יוֹנָתִי: דָּא בְּנִסְתַּי יִשְׂרָאֵל. בַּחֲגוֹי הַסֵּלַע: דָּא יְרוּשָׁלַם, דְּאִיְהִי סִלְקָא עַל כָּל עֵלְמָא. מַה סֵּלַע, אִיְהִי עֲלָאָה וְתַקִּיפָא עַל כָּלָא, אוּף יְרוּשָׁלַם אִיְהִי עֲלָאָה וְתַקִּיפָא עַל כָּלָא. בְּסִתְרַי הַמְּדֻרְגָּה: דָּא אֲתֵר דְּאִקְרִי בֵּית קֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוּשִׁים, לְבָא דְכָל עֵלְמָא.

182. It is written: "in the secret places of the cliff" OF THE HOLY OF HOLIES because the Shechinah used to hide Herself there, as does a modest wife, who does not show herself out of her house. Just as it is written: "Your wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of your house" (Tehilim 128:3), so the Congregation of Yisrael does not dwell out of its own place, WHICH IS the "secret places of the cliff," except at times of exile. And since it is in exile, then the other nations of the world enjoy greater prosperity and peace THAN YISRAEL.

183. Come and behold: When the nation of Yisrael dwells in the Holy Land, everything is in its place, and the throne, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, is firmly established over them. They worshipped Hashem, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY ELEVATED MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS), and transcended the layers of air of the world. Their service ascended on high to its place TO THE MALE AND THE FEMALE, CAUSING THEM TO MATE WITH EACH OTHER. Because Yisrael alone is suited for the service, other nations were kept afar from the land. They did not rule as they do now. The other nations were nourished only from the residue. IN OTHER WORDS, THE ABUNDANCE THAT YISRAEL DREW DOWN BY THEIR SERVICE WAS ENOUGH TO ALSO NOURISH THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD. BUT THE MAJORITY OF THE ABUNDANCE WENT TO YISRAEL; THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD RECEIVED ONLY A RESIDUE OF THIS ABUNDANCE. THIS IS WHY DOMINION WAS GIVEN TO YISRAEL.

184. You may say, 'But we can see that many foreign kings ruled, even when the Temple was still in the world.' Come and behold: During the first Temple, Yisrael had not yet defiled the land. As a result, the other nations did not yet rule completely. Rather, they were nourished from the residue. And because their dominion was nourished by this residue, their rule was not very powerful. But as Yisrael sinned and defiled the land, it was as if they drove the Shechinah from her place to another place. And then, the other nations took control and were allowed to rule.

185. Come and behold: No other Governor rules over the land of Yisrael but the Holy One, blessed be He, alone. So when Yisrael sinned and burned incense to other deities in the land, it is as if the Shechinah was driven from her place. Because the incense attracted other deities, these deities became associates with Yisrael and dominion was handed over to them. Because the incense makes connections, THEY DREW THEIR POWER FROM THE SHECHINAH AND ATTAINED THEIR DOMINION THROUGH HER. Then the other nations ruled, the prophets were no more, and all the supernal grades ceased to rule over the land.

182. ובגין כרכתיב בסתר המדרגה, בגין דתמן הות שכינתא מסתתרא, כאתתא דאיהי צנועה לבעלה, ולא נפקא מביתא לבר. כמה דאת אמר, אשתך כגפן פוריה בירכתי ביתך וגו'. כך כנסת ישראל לא שרייא לבר מאתרהא, בסתירו דדרגא, אלא בזמנא דגלותא, דאיהו בגו גלותא, ובגין דאיהי בגלותא, שאר עמין אית לון טיבו ושלוח יתיר.

183. תא חזי, בזמנא דישראל שריין על ארעא קדישא, כלא הוה מתתקן בדקא יאות, וכרסויא שלים עליהו, ועבדי פולחנא, ובקע אוירין דעלמא, וסליק ההוא פולחנא לעילא לאתריה, בגין דארעא לא אתתקנת לפולחנא, אלא לישראל בלחודייהו. ובגין כך, שאר עמין עעכו"ם, הוו מתרחקי, דלא הוו שלטין בה כדהשתא, בגין דלא אתזנו אלא מתמצית.

184. ואי תימא, הא חמינן כמה מלכין הוו, דשליטין בזמנא דבית המקדש קנים על עלמא. תא חזי, בבית ראשון, עד לא סאיבו ישראל ארעא, לא הוו שלטין שאר עמין עעכו"ם, אלא, אתזנו מתמצית, ובה הוו שלטין, ולא כל כך. כין דחבו ישראל, וסאיבו ארעא, כדין כביכול, דחו לה לשכינתא מאתרה, ואתקרבת לדוכתא אחרא, וכדין שלטין שאר עמין, ואתייהיב לון רשו לשלטאה.

185. תא חזי, ארעא דישראל, לא שליט עליה ממנא אחרא, בר קדשא ברין הוא בלחודיו. ובשעתא דחאבו ישראל, והוו מקטרין לטעוון אחרנין, בגו ארעא, כביכול אדחייא שכינתא מאתרה, ומשכי ומקטרי לאתקשרא טעוון אחרן גו שכינתא, וכדין אתייהיב לון שלטנותא, בגין דקטרת קטרא הוא לאתקטרא. וכדין, שלטו שאר עמין, ובטלו נביאים, וכל אינון דרגין עלאין לא שלטו בארעא.

186. And the dominion was not taken away from the other nations, because they drew THE ABUNDANCE OF the Shechinah to themselves. Therefore, during the second Temple, the dominion of the other nations was not withdrawn from them. Even more so at the time of exile, when the Shechinah resided among other nations where other Governors had control. Thus they all draw their power from the Shechinah, who is drawn to them.

187. Accordingly, when Yisrael dwelt in the land and performed the services for the Holy One, blessed be He, the Shechinah was hidden modestly among them and did not leave Her home nor appear in public. Because of this, all the prophets that existed during that time, NAMELY THE TIME WHEN THE TEMPLE STOOD, did not receive their prophecy from outside of Her place, OUTSIDE OF THE LAND OF YISRAEL, as we have stated. Because of this, Yonah fled from the Holy Land. He did not want the prophecy revealed to him, so that he would not be obliged to complete the mission of the Holy One, blessed be He.

188. You might say, 'But the Shechinah revealed Herself to Yechezkel in Babylon, which is outside of the land of Yisrael!' However, as we have explained, these words, "the word came (Heb. hayoh hayah)" (Yechezkel 1:3), refer to an event that never happened before nor since the construction of the Temple. That prophecy was for that time only, TO BRING CONSOLATION TO YISRAEL.

189. And as it is written: "by the river Kevar," WHICH MEANS the river had already (Heb. kevar) been there since the creation of the world, and the Shechinah had always appeared there, EVEN BEFORE THE TEMPLE WAS CONSTRUCTED. As it is written: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and branched to four streams" (Beresheet 2:10). The river Kevar is one of these four STREAMS.

190. So the Shechinah was revealed there temporarily because of Yisrael's need to be consoled for the misery CAUSED BY THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE. But, at other times, the Shechinah did not appear OUTSIDE THE LAND OF YISRAEL. Therefore, Yonah fled, so that the Shechinah would not rest upon or appear before him. He left the Holy Land and fled. This is why it is written: "from the presence of Hashem," and "that the men knew that he fled from the presence of Hashem" (Yonah 1:10).

191. Come and behold; Just as the Shechinah does not reveal Herself in an inappropriate place, so She does not reveal herself to anyone who is unworthy of Her. So from the time that Lot planned on returning to his evil ways, the Holy Spirit departed from Avraham. And when Lot separated from him, the Holy Spirit came back to rest in its place-NAMELY UPON AVRAHAM. This is why it is written: "And Hashem said to Avram, after Lot was separated from him..."

186. וְלֹא אֶעֱדִי שְׁלֹטֹנֹתָא דְשָׂאָר עַמִּין, בְּגִין דְּאִינוּן מְשֻׁכוֹ לְשְׁכִינְתָּא לְגַבְיָהּ. וְעַל דְּאִבְבִּית שְׁנִי, הָא שְׁלֹטֹנֹתָא מְשָׂאָר עַמִּין, לֹא אֶעֱדִי, וְכ"ש בְּגִלּוֹתָא, דְּשְׁכִינְתָּא בְּשָׂאָר עַמִּין, אֲתֵר דְּשָׂאָר מִמֶּנּוּ שְׁלֹטִין, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ כְּלָהּ וְנִקִּין מִן שְׁכִינְתָּא, דְּאִתְקְרִיבַת גַּבְיָהּ.

187. וְעַל דָּא, בְּזִמְנָא דְיִשְׂרָאֵל, הוּוּ שְׂרָאן עַל אֶרֶעָא, וּמַלְחֵי פּוֹלְחָנָא דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, שְׁכִינְתָּא הָיָה צְנוּעָה בִּינְיָהּ, וְלֹא נִפְקַת מִגּוֹ בֵּיתָא לְבַר בְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא. וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, כָּל אִינוּן נְבִיאִים דְּהוּוּ בְּהוּא זִמְנָא, לֹא נִטְלוּ נְבוּאָה אֱלָא בְּאַתְרָהּ כְּדַקְאֲמֶרֶן. וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, יוֹנָה הָוָה עֶרְק לְבַר מֵאֶרֶעָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּלֹא יִתְגַּלִּי עָלֶיהָ נְבוּאָה, וְלֹא יֵהָךְ בְּשְׁלִיחוֹתָא דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

188. וְאִי תִימָא, הָא חֲמִינָן דְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא שְׁכִינְתָּא בְּבָבֶל, דְּאִיהוּ לְבַר. הָא אֱוִקִימָנָא, דְּכְתִיב הָיָה הָיָה, דְּהוּוּ, מַה דְּלֹא הָוָה מִן קִדְמַת דְּנָא, מִיּוֹמָא דְּאַתְבְּנִי בִּי מִקְדְּשָׁא, וְהָיָא נְבוּאָה לְשַׁעֲתָא הָיָה.

189. וְכְתִיב, עַל נָהָר כְּבַר. נָהָר דְּכְבַר הָוָה, מִיּוֹמָא דְּאַתְבְּנִי עָלְמָא, וְשְׁכִינְתָּא אֲתְגְּלִיָּא תְּדִיר עָלֶיהָ, דְּכְתִיב וְנָהָר יוֹצֵא מַעְרָן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת הַגֶּן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרֹד וְגו'. וְדָא אִיהוּ חַד מִינְיָהּ.

190. וְתִמְנָן אֲתְגְּלִיָּא שְׁכִינְתָּא, לְפֻם שַׁעֲתָא דְּאַצְטְרִיכוּ לָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְפֻם צַעֲרִיָּהּ. אֲבָל בְּזִמְנָא אַחְרָא לֹא אֲתְגְּלִיָּא, וּבְגִין כְּרִיזָהּ, בְּגִין דְּלֹא תִשְׁרִי עָלֶיהָ שְׁכִינְתָּא, וְלֹא תִתְגַּלִּי עָלֶיהָ, אֲזַל מֵאֶרֶעָא קְדִישָׁא, וְעֶרְק. הָה"ד מִלְפְּנֵי ה'. וְכְתִיב בִּי יִדְעוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בִּי מִלְפְּנֵי ה' הוּא בּוֹרַח.

191. תָּא חֲזִי כְּמָה דְּשְׁכִינְתָּא לֹא אֲתְגְּלִיָּא, אֱלָא בְּאַתְרָא דְּאַתְחֲזִי לָהּ, אוֹף הֵכִי לֹא אֲתְחֲזִי וְלֹא אֲתְגְּלִיָּא, אֱלָא בְּבֵר נֶשׁ דְּאַתְחֲזִי לָהּ. דְּהָא מִן יוֹמָא דְּסִלִּיק עַל רְעוּתֶיהָ דְּלוֹט, לְאַתְהַפְּכָא בְּסַרְחָנִיהָ, אֲסִתְלַקְתָּ רּוּחָא קְדִישָׁא מֵאַבְרָהָם. וְכֵד אֲסִתְלַק לּוֹט מִנֶּיהָ, מִיָּד שְׂרָא רּוּחַ קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּדוּכְתֶיהָ. הָדָא הוּא דְּכְתִיב, וְה' אָמַר אֶל אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הַפֶּרֶד לוֹט מֵעִמּוֹ וְגו'.

192. Come and behold: Avraham saw that Lot returned to his evil habits and was afraid. He said: 'Could it be, heaven forbid, that because I associate with him, I have lost the holy portion that the Holy One, blessed be He, adorned me with!' But as soon as Lot left him, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "Now lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you are."

193. AND HE ASKS: What is the meaning of the words, "from the place where you are?" AND HE ANSWERS: They mean from the place to which you have cleaved from the beginning and in which you were adorned by the complete Faith. "Northward, southward, eastward, and westward" are the directions of his first journeys, as it is written: "And he went on his journeys." THIS IS THE SECRET OF NEFESH, RUACH, NESHAMAH, AND CHAYAH. THUS, NORTHWARD IS THE SECRET OF BINAH AND NESHAMAH; SOUTHWARD IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH AND CHAYAH; EASTWARD IS THE SECRET OF TIFERET AND RUACH; WESTWARD IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT AND NEFESH. And it is written: "going on still toward the Negev"; these are the supernal grades with which he was adorned with the Complete Faith, as at first.

194. And then he received the good news that they would not depart from him or from his children forever. As it is written: "For all the land which you see, TO YOU WILL I GIVE IT, AND TO YOUR SEED FOR EVER" (Beresheet 13:15). AND HE ASKS: What is the meaning of 'which you see'? AND HE REPLIES: This is the first grade that appeared to him, WHICH IS THE GRADE OF NEFESH. As it is written: 'to Hashem, who appeared to him.' As a result, it is written: 'which you see,' because this first grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, includes other grades, and all of the grades appear in it. This is why IT IS WRITTEN: "For all the land which you see ..."

22. "As the apple tree among the trees of the forest"

The Zohar tells us that Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Chizkiyah were lodging at an inexpensive inn located in the city of Lod. Kabbalistically, these two great sages are actually occupying a specific spiritual dimension as they discuss the many layers of meaning in Biblical scripture. Specifically, these two spiritual giants are discussing a verse in the Torah that tells of an apple tree in the midst of a forest.

The Relevance of this Passage

As the two mystics explore the various Lights and spiritual forces concealed within the text of the Torah, the letters that form this Kabbalistic story arouses our appreciation for the depth, richness, and spiritual Light contained in each word and verse of the Torah.

195. Rabbi Elazar came to an inn in Lod together with Rabbi Chizkiyah. Rabbi Elazar got up during the night to study Torah. Rabbi Chizkiyah stood by him, BECAUSE THE PLACE WAS SMALL. Rabbi Elazar said: The friends always meet in a narrow place. HE MEANT THAT BECAUSE THE FRIENDS STUDY TORAH MUCH OF THE TIME AND WORK ONLY A LITTLE, THEY MEET IN SMALL AND NARROW INNS; THEY HAVE NO MONEY TO RENT LARGE ROOMS.

196. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion by saying, "As the apple tree among the trees of the forest..." (Shir Hashirim 2:3). "The apple tree" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, who is precious and decorated by His colors. HIS COLORS-WHITE, RED, AND GREEN-ARE THE SECRET OF THE THREE COLUMNS OF CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. His tree has no equal among all the other trees, WHICH REPRESENT THE SEVENTY GOVERNORS WHO IMITATE THE HOLINESS, AS AN APE DOES A MAN. He is distinguished from them all, and there is no one like Him.

182. תָּא חַיִּי, בֵּינוֹן דְּחֵמָא אַבְרָהָם, דְּלוֹט הוּא תָּב לְסִרְחָנִיָּה, הוּא דְּחִיל אַבְרָהָם, אָמַר דִּילְמָא ח"ו, בְּגִין חֲבֵרוֹתָא דְּרָא, אַבִּידְנָא בְּגִינִיָּה חוֹלְקָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּאֶעֱטֵר לִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. בֵּינוֹן דְּאִתְפָּרֵשׁ מִנִּיָּה, אֲמַרְלוּשָׁא נָא עֵינֶיךָ וְרָאָה מִן הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֵתָּה שָׁם.

193. מַאי מִן הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֵתָּה שָׁם. דְּאִתְדַבַּקְתָּ בֵּיהּ בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וְאִתְעֵטַרְתָּ בְּהִימָנוּתָא שְׁלִימָתָא. צְפוּנָה, וְנִגְבָּה, וְקִדְמָה, וְיָמָה. אֵלִין אִינוּן מִסְעֵיו, דְּהוּוּ בְּקִדְמִיתָא, דְּכִתִּיב וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִסְעָיו. וְכִתִּיב הַלֹּךְ וְנִסּוֹעַ הַנִּגְבָּה. אֵלִין דְּרִגִּין עֲלָאִין, דְּאִתְעֵטַר בְּמַהִימָנוּתָא שְׁלִימָתָא בְּקִדְמִיתָא.

184. וְכִדִּין אִתְבָּשַׁר, דְּלֹא יַעֲרִי מִנִּיָּה וּמִן בְּנוֹי לְעַלְמִין, דְּכִתִּיב כִּי אֵת כָּל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֵתָּה רֹאָה. מַאי אֲשֶׁר אֵתָּה רֹאָה. דָּא דְּרָגָא קִדְמָאָה דְּאִתְגַּלְיָא לִיָּה, כִּד"א לָהּ הִנֵּרְאָה אֵלִינוּ. וּבְגִין כְּרָאָשׁר אֵתָּה רֹאָה, בְּגִין דְּדִרְגָּא דָּא קִדְמָאָה, אִתְכַּלִּיל מִכְּלָהּ דְּרִגִּין, וְכָלָהּ אִתְחַזֵּן בֵּיהּ, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, כִּי אֵת כָּל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֵתָּה רֹאָה וְגו'.

195. ר' אֶלְעָזָר אֶעֱרַע בְּבִי אוֹשְׁמִיזָא בְּלוֹד, וְהוּא עֲמִיָּה רַבִּי חֲזִקְיָה. קָם בְּלִילִיָּא לְמַלְעֵי בְּאוּרִיָּתָא, קָם רַבִּי חֲזִקְיָה גַּבִּיָּה, אֲמַרְלוֹר' אֶלְעָזָר, בְּקִיסְטָרָא דְּקוֹסְטָא, חֲבֵרִיָּא שְׂכִיחִי.

196. פִּתַּח ר' אֶלְעָזָר וְאָמַר, כְּתִפּוּחַ בַּעֲצֵי הַיַּעַר וְגו'. כְּתִפּוּחַ, דָּא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דְּאִתְּרָאִהּ חֲמִיד וּמִתְעֵטַר בְּגוּוֹנוֹ, מִכָּל שְׂאָר אֵילָנִין, דְּלֹא אֵית דְּדָמִי לִיָּה. רָשִׁים אִיהוּ מִכָּלָא, רָשִׁים הוּא, דְּלִית אַחֲרָא כְּוֹתִיָּה.

197. Because of this, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight." (Ibid.) The verse reads, "under his shadow," and not under any anyone else's, BECAUSE BEFORE SHE WAS PROPERLY ESTABLISHED AND WELL AMENDED, THE SHECHINAH LAY UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE LEAVES OF THE FIG TREE. SO "UNDER HIS SHADOW" AND NOT UNDER ANY OTHER'S ALLUDES TO THE OTHER SEVENTY GOVERNORS. "With great delight," HE ASKS: Since when? WE CANNOT SAY THAT SHE HAS ALWAYS EXPERIENCED GREAT DELIGHT, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE SIN WHEN SHE WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE SEVENTY GOVERNORS!" AND HE SAYS: This is from the day when Avraham came to this world, who loved the Holy One, blessed be He. It is written: "Avraham my beloved" (Yeshayah 41:8), BECAUSE HE FULLY AMENDED THE SHECHINAH AND SHE WAS UNITED AGAIN WITH ZEIR ANPIN." "His fruit was sweet to my taste" refers to Yitzchak, who is the holy fruit OF AVRAHAM.

198. Another explanation of the verse, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight," is that it refers to Ya'akov, WHO IS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. "And his fruit was sweet to my taste" refers to Yosef the righteous, WHO IS THE SECRET OF YESOD, who brought forth holy fruits to the world, NAMELY SOULS. Therefore, it is written: "These are the generations of Ya'akov: Yosef" (Beresheet 37:2), which shows that all the generations of Ya'akov are established by Yosef the righteous, WHO IS THE ASPECT OF THE YESOD OF YA'AKOV. And because of this Yisrael is called by the name of Ephraim, as it is written: "Ephraim my dear son" (Yirmeyah 31:19).

199. There is another explanation of the verse "as the apple tree among the trees of the forest" is that the words refer to Avraham, who was like a fragrant apple tree and was distinguished from others of his generation by his complete faith. And he became distinguished as one both above and below. As is written: "Avraham was one" (Yechezkel 33:24).

200. HE ASKS: Why was he 'one'?" AND HE SAYS: Because there was no other then in the world, who had elevated himself by the faith in the Holy One, blessed be He, besides him. Rabbi Chizkiyah said to him: But it is written: "and the souls that they had made in Charan," WHICH MEANS THAT AVRAHAM BROUGHT MEN AND SARAH BROUGHT WOMEN TO BE CONVERTED. SO THERE WERE PEOPLE WITH FAITH IN THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BESIDES HIM! He told him, Nevertheless, they did not reach the supernal grades with which Avraham was adorned!

201. Later, he said to him: I have also heard that Avraham was not referred to as one, until he became united with Yitzchak and Ya'akov. Only after he became associated with Yitzchak and Ya'akov and the three were the fathers of the world was Avraham named "one." THIS MEANS THAT ONLY AFTER HE COMBINED ALL THREE COLUMNS TO ONE WAS HE NAMED "ONE"; then he was CALLED the apple tree of the world, WHICH WAS DISTINGUISHED BY ITS THREE COLORS, WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, WHICH ALLUDE TO THE THREE COLUMNS. "Thus, he was distinguished and different from all the people of his generation. He said to him: Well said!

197. בגיני כך, בצלו חמדתי. בצלו: ולא בצל אחר. בצלו: ולא בצל דשאר ממנו. חמדתי, אימתי, מן יומא דהוה אברהם בעלמא, דאיהו חמיר ורחים ליה לקדשא בריך הואבאהבה. בד"א אברהם אוהבי. ופריו מתוק לחבי, דא הוא יצחק, דאיהו איבא קדישא.

198. דבר אחר, בצלו חמדתי וישבתי, דא יעקב. ופריו מתוק לחבי, דא יוסף הצדיק, דעבר פירין קדישין בעלמא. וע"ד כתיב אלה תולדות יעקב יוסף. דכל אינון תולדות דיעקב ביוסף הצדיק קיימי, דעביד תולדות. ובגין כך, אקרון ישראל, על שםא דאפרים, דכתיב הבן יקיר לי אפרים וגו'.

199. דבר אחרבתפוח בעצי היער. דא אברהם. דדמי ליה לתפוח, דסליק ריחין, ואתרשים במהימנותא שלימתא, על כל בני דריה, ואתרשים חר לעילא, ואתרשים חר לתתא, דכתיב אחד היה אברהם.

200. מאי טעמא הוה אחד. דלא הוה אחרא בעלמא, די סליק למהימנותא דקדשא בריך הוא, בר איהו. אמרלור' חזקיה, והא כתיב ואת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן. אמרלועד כען, אינון לא הוו בדרגין עלאין, דאתעשר בהו אברהם.

201. לבתר אמרלו, תו שמענא, דלא אקרי אברהם אחר, עד דאסתלק ביצחק ויעקב. ביון דאסתלק ביצחק ויעקב, והו כללו תלתהון אבהן דעלמא, כדין אקרי אברהם אחר. וכדין הוא תפוח בעלמא. רשים מכל בני עלמא. אמר ליה שפיר קא אמרת.

202. A different explanation of the verse, "As the apple tree among the trees of the forest," is that it refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, THE RIGHT COLUMN; "so is my beloved" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, THE LEFT COLUMN; AND "under his shadow" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, THE CENTRAL COLUMN. "I sat down...with great delight" refers to the day on which the Holy One, blessed be He, appeared on Mount Sinai, and Yisrael received Torah and said: "will we do, and obey" (Shemot 24:7). THEN, THE SHECHINAH SAID: "I SAT DOWN...WITH GREAT DELIGHT."

203. "And his fruit was sweet to my taste" refers to the words of Torah, which are described as "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb" (Tehilim 19:11). According to another explanation, "And his fruit was sweet to my taste" refers to the souls of the righteous, who are all the fruit of the handiwork of the Holy One, blessed be He, and abide with Him above.

204. Come and behold: All the souls in the world, who are the fruit of the handiwork of the Holy One, blessed be He, are one in the same secret. IN THE UPPER WORLD, THEY ARE NOT YET DISTINGUISHED AS MALE AND FEMALE. Only when they descend to the world are their souls separated to male and female. And every soul has a male and female part, united together as one.

205. Come and behold: The passion of the female to the male brings forth a Nefesh. And the passion of the male towards the female, and his clinging to her, also brings forth a Nefesh, which includes THE NEFESH FROM the passion of the female. Thus the passion of the lower, THE FEMALE, is united with the passion of the upper, THE MALE, and BOTH NEFASHOT become one desire without any separation.

206. Then the female includes everything within herself BY TAKING BOTH NEFASHOT and becoming pregnant by the male with them. And the passion of both of them conjoins them as one. Therefore, each is included within the other. And when the souls come out, male and female are within them together, as one.

207. Later, when they descend TO THIS WORLD, they are separated from each other, THE MALE FROM THE FEMALE. Each one turns his way. And the Holy One, blessed be He, mates them again. The key to mating them is given only to the Holy One, blessed be He. Only He knows the proper mate for each to properly reunite them, SO THE MALE AND FEMALE WILL BE OF THE SAME SOUL.

202. דְּבַר אַחֵר, בְּתַפּוּחַ בְּעֵצֵי הַיַּעַר, דָּא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. בֵּן דּוּרֵי, דָּא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. בְּצִלּוֹ, דָּא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. חֲמִדְתִּי וַיִּשְׁבַּתִּי, בְּיוֹמָא דְאַתְגָּלִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, עַל טוֹרָא דְסִינַי, וְקִבְּלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹרֵייתָא, וְאָמְרוּ נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע.

203. וּפְרִיּוֹ מֵתוֹק לַחֲכִי. אֵלֶיךָ מְלִין דְּאוֹרֵייתָא, דְּכַתִּיב בְּהוּ וּמִתּוֹקִים מִדְּבַשׁ וְנוֹפֶת צוּפִים. דְּבַר אַחֲרֵפְרִיּוֹ מֵתוֹק לַחֲכִי, אֵלֶיךָ נִשְׁמַתְהוֹן דְּצִדִּיקָא, דְּכָלְהוּ אִיבָא דְּעוֹבְדֵי דְקוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְקִיּוּמֵי עֵמִידָא לְעִילָא.

204. תָּא חֲזִי, כָּל נִשְׁמַתִּין דְּעֵלְמָא, דְּאִינוּן אִיבָא דְּעוֹבְדֵי דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כָּלְהוּ חֵד, בְּרִזָּא חֵד, וְכֵד נַחְתִּי לְעֵלְמָא, כָּלְהוּ מִתְפָּרְשִׁין, בְּגוֹוִנִין דְּכֵד וְנוֹקְבָא, וְאִינוּן דְּכֵד וְנוֹקְבָא מְחוּבְרִין בְּחֵדָא.

205. וְתָא חֲזִי, תִּיאֻבְתָּא דְנוֹקְבָא לְגַבִּי דְכוּרָא, עֵבִיד נֶפֶשׁ. וְרַעוּתָא דְתִיאֻבְתָּא דְכוּרָא, לְגַבִּי נֹקְבָא, וְאַתְדַּבְּקוּתָא דִּילִיָּהּ בְּהָ, אִפִּיק נֶפֶשׁ, וְכִלִּיל תִּיאֻבְתָּא דְנוֹקְבָא, וְנִטִּיל לָהּ. וְאַתְכִּלִּיל תִּיאֻבְתָּא תַתָּא, בְּתִיאֻבְתָּא דְלֵעִילָא, וְאַתְעֵבִידוּ רַעוּתָא חֵדָא, בְּלֹא פְרוּדָא.

206. וְכֵדִין כָּלִיל כָּלֹא נֹקְבָא, וְאַתְעֵבֶרֶת מִן דְכוּרָא, וְתִיאֻבְתִּין דְּתִירוּוִיָּהּ מִתְדַּבְּקִין בְּחֵדָא, וְעַל דָּא, כָּלֹא כָלִיל דָּא בְּדָא. וְכֵד נִשְׁמַתִּין נִפְקִין, דְּכֵד וְנוֹקְבָא בְּחֵדָא נִפְקִין.

207. לְבַתָּר, בֵּיוֹן דְּנַחְתִּי, מִתְפָּרְשִׁין דָּא לְסִטְרָא דָּא, וְדָא לְסִטְרָא דָּא, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מְזוּוג לֹון לְבַתָּר. וְלֹא אֲתִיְהִיב זְווגָא לְאַחֲרָא, אֲלֵא לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּלַחְדוּרֵי, דְּאִיהוּ יָדַע זְווגָא דְלֵהוֹן לְחִבְרָא לֹון בְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

208. Happy is the person who is meritorious in his deeds and walks the Path of Truth, so they will unite one Nefesh with the other, THE MALE WITH THE FEMALE, as they were before THEY CAME TO THIS WORLD. For if he is worthy in deeds, he is a complete man. BUT IF HE IS NOT MERITORIOUS, THAN HE SHALL NOT BE GIVEN HIS SOULMATE. This is why it is written about him, "And his fruit is sweet to my taste." Because this man is blessed with reunion OF MALE AND FEMALE, AS IT SHOULD PROPERLY BE. And the world is blessed by him THROUGH HIS SWEET FRUIT, NAMELY GOODLY CHILDREN, because everything depends on whether a person's actions have been meritorious or not.

209. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: I have heard of the verse, "From me is your fruit found" (Hoshea 14:9). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to the Congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, assuredly, "From me assuredly is your fruit found." It is "your fruit," rather than "my fruit," TO TEACH US that the passion of the female forms the Nefesh, which combines with the might of the male, so that the Nefesh OF THE FEMALE is conjoined with the Nefesh OF THE MALE, and they become one, each including the other, as we have already explained. Later, they are separated to two in this world. We see clearly that through the power of the male results the fruit of the female in this world.

210. Another explanation OF THE VERSE, "FROM ME IS YOUR FRUIT FOUND" is that the passion of the female, WHENCE THE FEMALE ASPECT OF THE NEFESH COMES, is the source of the fruit of the male, because without the passion of the female to the male, there would not have been any fruit in the world. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ANY OFFSPRING. Therefore, it is written: "From me is your fruit found!"

23. "And it came to pass in the days of Amrafel"

Avraham's recognition of the all-encompassing reality of the Creator, is recounted by the Zohar. The Patriarch's step-by-step spiritual process is depicted, beginning with his perception of the rising morning sun. Avraham's soul was profoundly stirred by the underlying cosmic order of our world. This stirring awakened a deep desire to know the ultimate truth, to grasp the supreme Force underlying the physical and metaphysical laws of nature. When Avraham's desire to know the Creator is ignited, only then does the Creator reveal Himself.

The Relevance of this Passage

The act of seeking, in and of itself, is not enough to gain an awareness of the supreme Creator. We must begin to recognize and acknowledge His oneness and direct our efforts along the correct spiritual path. Moreover, our spiritual effort should not be rooted in blind faith; rather, it should take the form of a logical progression of questions and answers, efforts and results, that culminates in a delicate balance of certainty and faith. Through this portion, the power of certainty and the desire to seek the ultimate truth are awakened within our soul.

211. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion of the verse, "And it came to pass in the days of Amrafel, king of Shin'ar..." (Beresheet 14:1), with the text, "Who raised up one from the east, whom righteousness met wherever he set his foot..." (Yeshayah 41:2). Although this passage has already been explained, it has another explanation in accordance with the secret of Wisdom. We have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, created seven firmaments on high, WHICH ARE THE LOWER SEVEN SFIROT OF ATZILUT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT. The purpose of them all is to acknowledge the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, and they exist to proclaim the secret of the Supernal Faith.

208. זָכָאָה הוּא בַּר נֶשׁ, דְּזָכִי בְּעוֹבְדוֹי וְאִזִּיל בְּאוֹרָה קְשׁוּט. בְּגִין דְּאַתְחַבֵּר נַפְשׁ בְּנַפְשׁ, כְּמָה דִּהְוָה מַעֲיָקְרָא. דִּהָא אִי זָכִי בְּעוֹבְדוֹי, דָּא הוּא בַּר נֶשׁ שְׁלִים בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, וּבְגִין כְּכַתִּיב, וּפְרִיו מִתּוֹק לַחֲמִי. דִּהּוּא בְּתַקּוּנָא מְבָרַךְ, לְאַתְּבָרְכָא מִנִּיהּ עֲלָמָא, בְּגִין דְּכָלָא בְּעוֹבְדִין דְּבַר נֶשׁ תִּלְיָא, אִי זָכִי אִי לֹא זָכִי.

209. אָמַר רַבִּי חֲזַקְיָה, הָכִי שְׁמַעְנָא, דְּכַתִּיב מִמֶּנִּי פְרִיךְ נִמְצָא. קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אָמַר לָהּ לְכַנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִמֶּנִּי וְדָא, פְּרִיךְ נִמְצָא, פְּרִי נִמְצָא, לֹא כְּתִיב, אֶלָּא פְּרִיךְ, הֵהוּא תִּיאוּבְתָא דְּנוּקְבָא, דְּעֵבִיד נַפְשׁ, וְאַתְּבָלִיל בְּתוּקְמָא דְּדַכוּרָא, וְאַתְּבָלִיל נַפְשׁ בְּנַפְשׁ, וְאַתְּעִבִּידוּ חֵד, כְּלִיל דָּא בְּדָא, כְּדָאמְרִין. לְבַתֵּר אֲשַׁתְּבַּחוּ תְּרוּוּיָהּ בְּעֲלָמָא, וְדָא בְּחִילָא דְּדַכוּרָא, אֲשַׁתְּכַח אִיבָא דְּנוּקְבָא.

210. דְּבַר אַחֲרֵיתִיאוּבְתָא דְּנוּקְבָא, אֲשַׁתְּכַח אִיבָא דְּדַכוּרָא, דָּאִי לֹא תִיאוּבְתָא דְּנוּקְבָא לְגַבֵּי דַכוּרָא, לֹא אֲתַעֲבִידוּ פִּירִין לְעֲלָמִין, הֵה"ד מִמֶּנִּי פְּרִיךְ נִמְצָא.

211. וַיְהִי בִּימֵי אֲמֶרְפֶּל מֶלֶךְ שִׁנְעָר וְגו'. רַבִּי יוֹסִי פָתַח, מִי הָעִיר מִמִּזְרַח צֶדֶק יִקְרָאָהּ לְרִגְלוֹ וְגו'. הָאִי קָרָא אוֹקְמוּהָ חֲבֵרִינָא. אֲבָל הָאִי קָרָא בְּרִזָּא דְּחֻכְמָתָא אִיהוּ. דִּהָא תְּנִינִין, שְׁבַעָה רְקִיעִין עֲבַד קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעִילָא, וְכָלָהּ לְאַשְׁתַּמּוּדַע יִקְרָא דְּקְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְכָלָהּ קְיָמִין לְאוֹדְעָא רְזָא דְּמַהֲיִמְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה.

212. Come and behold: There is a sublime firmament, high above these seven FIRMAMENTS, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF BINA OF ATZILUT. This firmament guides and illumines all of them. And it is unknowable; THIS REFERS TO ITS UPPER THREE SFIROT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ABA AND IMA. It is stated as a question, because it is unknown; THIS REFERS TO ITS LOWER SEVEN SFIROT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF YISRAEL-SABA AND TEVUNAH. Because it is concealed and so deep, everyone wonders about it. This is why it is called Mi (lit. 'who'), REFERRING TO ITS LOWER SEVEN SFIROT, as has been explained. As it is written: "From the womb of whom (Heb. mi) came forth the ice" (Iyov 38:29), which was explained. And this is the supernal firmament that stands high above the other seven.

213. And there is also a firmament down below, NAMELY MALCHUT, which is the lowest of them all, and it does not shine. Since it is the lowest and has no light, the supernal firmament above them, WHICH IS BINA THAT IS CALLED MI, joins with it. THIS MEANS THAT THE SUPERNAL FIRMAMENT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF MI (MEM-YUD) DOES NOT ILLUMINATE THE CHOCHMAH TO ANY OF THE LOWER SEVEN FIRMAMENTS, BUT ONLY TO THE LOWEST OF THEM ALL, WHICH IS MALCHUT. And these two letters, MEM-YUD, WHICH BELONG TO THE SUPERNAL FIRMAMENT, WHICH IS CALLED MI, are included in itself to form a sea (Heb. yam, Yud-Mem), of the supernal firmament, which is called Mi, A COMBOINATION OF THE LETTERS MEM AND YUD.

214. Because all of the other firmaments, WHICH ARE ABOVE THE LOWEST FIRMAMENT AND ARE CALLED CHESD, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD act as streams and flow to the lowest firmament, it then becomes a supernal sea that produces fruits and fishes in all varieties. THESE ARE THE MOCHIN THAT IT GIVES DOWN TO BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASYAH. David described it with the words, "This great and wide sea wherein there are innumerable creeping things, both small and great beasts" (Tehilim 104:25).

215. On this subject it is written: "Who (Mi) raised up one from the east, whom righteousness met wherever he set his foot..." (Yeshayah 41:2). "Who raised up one from the east" refers to Avraham. AVRAHAM ROUSED UP THE SUPERNAL FIRMAMENT, WHICH IS CALLED MI, TO BRING THE CHOCHMAH DOWN TO THE LOWEST FIRMAMENT, WHICH IS CALLED YAM (YUD-MEM). "whom righteousness met wherever he set his foot" refers to the lowest of all SEVEN firmaments, which has become a sea. Of the verse, "gave the nations before him," HE ASKS: "What is meant by 'before him'?" AND HE SAYS: This is the lowest firmament, as we have said, that takes revenge and overthrows the enemies. David was proud of this and praised it by saying, "You have also given me the necks of my enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me" (Tehilim 18:40).

216. "...gave the nations before him"-these are the nations that Avraham put to flight and the Holy One, blessed be He, put to death. "and made him rule over kings"-these are the angels that govern them from above. Because when the Holy One, blessed be He, executes Judgment on the world, He brings it upon all-high above and down below. THIS MEANS; UPON THE NATIONS BELOW AND UPON THEIR GOVERNORS HIGH ABOVE IN THE HEAVENS.

212. תָּא חֲזוּאִית רְקִיעָא עֲלָא סְתִים, לְעִילָא מְנִיחָהּ, דְּאִינוּן שְׁבַעָה, וְדָא הוּא רְקִיעָא דְּרַבְר לֹון וְנִהִיר לֹון לְכָלָהּ, וְדָא לֹא אֲתִידַע, וְקִימָא בְּשִׁאלָתָא, דְּלֹא יָדִיעָא, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ סְתִים וְעָמִיק, וְכָלָא תּוֹוִהִין עָלֶיהָ, וּבְגִין כְּרִאקְרִי מִי, כְּמָה דְּאֻקְמוּהּ דְּכְתִיב מִבְּטֶן מִי יֵצֵא הַקֶּרֶחַ, וְאֲתַמָּר. וְהֵאִי הוּא רְקִיעָא עֲלָא, דְּקִימָא עַל כָּל אִינוּן שְׁבַעָה.

213. וְאִית לְתַתָּא רְקִיעָא, דְּאִיהוּ תַתָּא מְכָלָהּ וְלֹא נִהִיר. וּבְגִין דְּאִיהוּ תַתָּא דְּלֹא נִהִיר, הֵהוּא רְקִיעָא דְּעִלְיִיהוּ, אֲתַחְבַּר בֵּיהּ, וְאֵלִין תְּרִין אֲתוּן, כְּלִיל לֹון בְּגִיָּה, וְאֻקְרִי יָם, דְּהֵהוּא רְקִיעָא עֲלָא, דְּאֻקְרִי מִי.

214. בְּגִין דְּכָל אִינוּן רְקִיעִין אַחֲרָנִין, אֲתַעְבִּידוּ נַחֲלִין, וְעֵאלִין לְגַבִּיָּה, וּכְדִין אִיהוּ יָם עֲלָא, וְעִבְר אִיבִין וְנוֹנִין לְזִנְיָהּ, וְעַל דָּא אָמַר דָּוִד זֶה הַיָּם גְּדוֹל וְרַחֵב יַדָּים שָׁם רָמַשׁ וְאִין מִסְפֵּר חַיּוֹת קְטָנוֹת עִם גְּדוֹלוֹת.

215. וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב מִי הָעִיר מִמְזֶרַח צֶדֶק יִקְרָאָהּ לְרַגְלוֹ. מִי הָעִיר מִמְזֶרַח דָּא אַבְרָהָם. צֶדֶק יִקְרָאָהּ לְרַגְלוֹ, דָּא הוּא רְקִיעָא תַתָּא דְּכָלָהּ רְקִיעִין, דְּאֲתַעְבִּיד יָם. יִתֵּן לְפָנָיו גּוֹיִם. מֵאֵן הָאִי. הוּא רְקִיעָא תַתָּא דְּאֲמָרָן, דְּעִבִּיד נּוֹקְמִין, וְאִפִּיל שְׁנֵאִין. וּבִהָאִי אֲשַׁתַּבַּח דָּוִד וְאָמַר וְאִיבִי נִתְתָּה לִי עֶרְף וּמִשְׁנָאִי אֲצַמִּיתֶם.

216. יִתֵּן לְפָנָיו גּוֹיִם. אֵלִין אִינוּן עָמִין דְּהוּה רְדִיף עֲלֵיהוֹן אַבְרָהָם, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הוּא קְטִיל לֹון. וּמַלְכִים יִרְדֵּה, אֵלִין מִמֶּנּוּן רַבְרָבִין דְּלְעִילָא. דְּכִר עִבִּיד קוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דִּינָא בְּעֵלְמָא, בְּכָלָא עִבִּיד דִּינָא, בְּעִילָא וְתַתָּא.

217. The text continues, "He pursued them, and passed on safely." "He pursued them" refers to Avraham. Because Avraham pursued them, and the Holy One, blessed be He, went in front of him and killed them off. As it is written: "and passed on safely (Heb. shalom)." This is the Holy One, blessed be He, who is called shalom!

218. Of the words, "even by the way that he had not gone with his feet," HE ASKS: Could you ever imagine that Avraham walked through clouds, or mounted upon horses and carriages? BECAUSE IT IS WRITTEN: "BY THE WAY THAT HE HAD NOT GONE WITH HIS FEET!" AND HE REPLIES: "even by the way that he had not gone with his feet" MEANS that neither an angel nor a messenger preceded Avraham, only the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself. It is written: "with his feet." AND HE ASKS: What are 'his feet'? AND HE REPLIES: These are the angels who are beneath the Holy One, blessed be He. As it is written: "And His feet shall stand on that day..." (Zecharyah 14:4), WHICH REFERS TO THE ANGLES THAT ARE CALLED "HIS FEET." SO IN THE VERSE, "HIS FEET" REFER TO THE ANGELS; "HAD NOT GONE" MEANS EVEN BY THE WAY OF AVRAHAM. ONLY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, ACCOMPANIES HIM ON HIS WAY!

219. There is another explanation of the verse, "Who raised up one from the east." Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, aroused the world, WHICH IS MALCHUT, to bring Avraham closer to Him, this awakening occurred FOR THE SAKE OF YA'AKOV, WHO IS THE SECRET OF THE EAST. Because Ya'akov was destined to come from Avraham and to bring forth the twelve tribes, which were all righteous before the Holy One, blessed be He.

220. The verse continues, "whom righteousness met wherever he set his foot." The Holy One, blessed be He, called him, REFERRING TO YA'AKOV, always, since the world was created, as the verse says: "calling the generations from the beginning" (Yeshayah 41:4). Therefore, "righteousness," THAT IS MALCHUT, "called," him assuredly! "his foot" MEANS THAT he joined Him in His worship and became closer to Him. As it is written: "and all the people that follow You (lit. 'that are at your feet')" (Shemot 11:8), WHICH MEANS THE PEOPLE WHO CLEAVE ON TO YOU. SO HERE AS WELL, "HIS FOOT" MEANS TO CLEAVE ON TO HIM.

221. An alternative explanation of "Who raised up one from the east" is that the light begins to shine from the east. For all the power of the light in the south, WHICH IS CHESED, comes from the east, WHICH IS TIFERET. Therefore, THE VERSE READS, "Who raised up" the light of the south, WHICH IS CHESED, "from the east." THE EAST, BEING TIFERET, RAISED THE LIGHT. Because it, TIFERET, takes and is nourished first, AND AFTERWARD GIVES LIGHT TO THE SIX EXTREMITIES THAT ARE INCLUDED WITHIN TIFERET. AMONG THEM IS THE SOUTH, WHICH IS CHESED. And the desire of the supernal firmament, WHICH IS BINA, is to give abundance to the east, WHICH IS TIFERET.

222. The verse "whom righteousness met wherever he set his foot" refers to the west, WHICH IS MALCHUT. It calls on the east, WHICH IS TIFERET, always and does not quiet down. As it is written: "Keep not Your silence, Elohim: do not hold Your peace, and be still, El" (Tehilim 83:2). Because the west, WHICH IS MALCHUT AND IS CALLED ELOHIM, is constantly aroused to Him. "Gave the nations before him and made him rule over kings," because it is from it-FROM THE EAST-that it receives the power to overcome all the nations of the world.

217. יִרְדָּפֵם וְעָבֹר שְׁלוֹם אַרְח בְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יָבֹא. יִרְדָּפֵם, דָּא אַבְרָהָם. דְּאַבְרָהָם הוּא רְדִיף לֹון וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הוּא עָבֵר קָמִיָּה, וְקָטִיל לֹון. דְּכַתִּיב וְעָבֹר שְׁלוֹם, דָּא קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דְּאַקְרִי שְׁלוֹם.

218. אַרְח בְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יָבֹא. וְכִי סִלְקָא דַּעְתָּךְ, דִּהּוּא אַבְרָהָם אָזִיל בְּגוּ עֲנִי אוּ בְּגוּ סוּסוֹן וּרְתִיכִין. אֵלָּא אַרְח בְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יָבֹא, דִּלָּא הוּא אָזִיל קָמִיָּה דְּאַבְרָהָם, לֹא מִלְּאָכָא, וְלֹא שְׁלִיחָא, אֵלָּא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּלַחְדוּי, דְּכַתִּיב אַרְח בְּרַגְלָיו, מֵאֵן רַגְלָיו, אֵלִין מִלְּאָכִין דְּאִינֹן תַּחְתּוּי דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּד"א וְעַמְדוּ רַגְלָיו בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְגו'.

219. דְּבַר אַחֵר, מִי הָעִיר מְמִזְרָח. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתַתֵּר עֲלֵמָא, לְאַיִיתָאָה לְאַבְרָהָם, וְלִקְרָבָא לֵיהּ לְגַבִּיָּה, הָאִי אֲתַעְרוּתָא, בְּגִין דְּזִמִּין יַעֲקֹב לְמִיפָק מִנִּיהּ, וְלִקְוִימָא תְּרִיסַר שְׁבָטִין, בְּלָהוּ זְכָאִין קָמִיָּה דְּקוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

220. צִדֵּק וְקִרְאָהוּ לְרַגְלוֹ. דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הוּא קְרִי לֵיהּ תְּדִיר, מִן יוֹמָא דְּאַתְבָּרִי עֲלֵמָא, בְּד"א קוֹרָא הַדּוֹרוֹת מֵרֵאשׁ. וּבְגִין כֵּן, צִדֵּק וְקִרְאָהוּ, וְדָאִי. לְרַגְלוֹ: לְאַתְחַבְּרָא בֵּיהּ בְּפִלְחָנִיהּ, וְלִקְרָבָא לֵיהּ לְגַבִּיָּה. בְּד"א הָעָם אֲשֶׁר בְּרַגְלֵיךְ.

221. דְּבַר אַחֲרֵמי הָעִיר מְמִזְרָח. דְּמִתְמָן שְׁרוּתָא דְּנִהוּרָא לְאַנְהָרָא. בְּגִין, דְּדֶרוֹם הָהוּא תּוֹקְפָא דְּנִהוּרָא דִּילֵיהּ, מִגּוּ מִזְרָח אִיהּ, וְעַל דָּא מִי הָעִיר הָהוּא נִהוּרָא דְּדֶרוֹם, מְמִזְרָח. בְּגִין דְּאִיהּ נָטִיל וְאַתָּן בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וְתִיאֻבְּתָא דִּהּוּא רְקִיעָא עֲלָאָה, לְמִיָּהֵב לֵיהּ לְמִזְרָח.

222. צִדֵּק וְקִרְאָהוּ לְרַגְלוֹ. דָּא מַעֲרָב, דְּאִיהּ קְרִי לֵיהּ תְּדִיר וְלֹא שְׁכִיךְ. בְּד"א אֱלֹקִים אֵל דְּמִי לֶךְ אֵל תַּחֲרַשׁ וְאֵל תִּשְׁקוּט אֵל. בְּגִין דְּמַעֲרָב אֲתַתֵּר תְּדִיר לְגַבִּיָּה. יִתֵּן לְפָנָיו גּוֹיִם וּמַלְכִּים יִרְדּוּ. דִּהּא מִנִּיהּ קָבִיל תּוֹקְפָא לְאַכְנֻעָא כָּל אִינוֹן עַמּוּן דְּעֲלֵמָא.

223. Rabbi Yehuda said: "Who raised up one from the east?" This is Avraham, who received his awakening to the Holy One, blessed be He, from the east alone. When he saw that the sun rose in the morning from the east, he was awakened to think it is the Holy One, blessed be He. Avraham said OF THE SUN: 'This is the king who created me.' And he worshipped the sun all that day. As evening came, he saw that the sun went down and the moon shone. He said ABOUT THE MOON, 'This must be the one that rules over the worship that he had performed during the day FOR THE SUN. Since the sun has been darkened and shines no more before the moon!' And he worshipped the moon all that night.

224. In the morning, he saw that the moon became dark. As the east lit up, he said: 'There must be a king and ruler over all these, who governs them.' So when the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that Avraham's desire was directed towards Him, He revealed Himself to Avraham and spoke with him. As it is written: "whom righteousness met wherever he set his foot." "RIGHTEOUSNESS" REFERS TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO CALLED HIM, spoke with him, and revealed Himself to him.

225. Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion by saying: "I speak righteousness, I declare things that are right" (Yeshayah 45:19). All that the Holy One, blessed be He, says is true; all of His actions are just. HE ASKS: How does He act justly? AND HE SAYS: When the Holy One, blessed be He created the world, it wavered from side to side, unable to stand. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to the world, 'Why are you collapsing?' It answered, 'Master of the Universe, I am unable to stand because I have no foundation to stand upon!'

226. THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE said to the world, 'But I am about to raise within you a righteous man, who is Avraham, who shall love Me!' Immediately, the world stood up and was firmly established. As it is written: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created (Heb. behibar'am)" (Bereshheet 2:4). Do not read behibar'am, but rather, BeAvraham (with Avraham) because by Avraham was the world established.

227. Rabbi Chiya said: "...I declare things that are right" MEANS that the world answered the Holy One, blessed be He, by saying, 'From this same Avraham, children will come forth who shall destroy the Temple and shall burn the Torah!' THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, said to it: 'One man is destined to come from him, who is Ya'akov. And from him twelve tribes shall come forth, all of them righteous. Immediately the world was established for his sake.' Therefore, it is written: "I declare things that are right," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF YA'AKOV, WHO IS TIFERET.

223. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר מִי הָעִיר מִמִּזְרַח, דָּא אַבְרָהָם. דְּלֹא נָטִיל אֶתְעֲרוּתָא לְגַבִּי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֱלֹא מִמִּזְרַח, בְּגִין דְּחָמָא שְׁמַשׁ דְּנִפְיָא בְּצַפְרָא, מִסְטָרָא דְּמִזְרַח, נָטִיל אֶתְעֲרוּתָא לְנִפְשֵׁיהּ דְּאִיהוּ קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אָמַר דָּא הוּא מַלְכָּא דְּבִרָא יְתִי, פִּלַּח לִיה כָּל הָהוּא יוֹמָא. לְרַמְשָׁא, חָמָא שְׁמַשׁ דְּאִתְכַּנֵּישׁ, וְסִיחָרָא נִהְרָא. אָמַר דָּא הוּא וְדָאִי, דְּשִׁלִּיט עַל הָהוּא פּוֹלְחָנָא דְּפִלְחִית כָּל הָאִי יוֹמָא, דְּהָא אֶתְחַשֵּׁךְ קַמֵּיהּ וְלֹא נִהִיר. פִּלַּח לִיה כָּל הָהוּא לִילֵנָא.

224. לְצַפְרָא, חָמָא דְּאִזְלָא חֲשׂוּכָא, וְאִתְנַהֵיר סְטָרָא דְּמִזְרַח, אָמַר וְדָאִי כָּל אֱלִין, מַלְכָּא אִית עֲלֵיהּ, וְשִׁלִּיט דְּאִנְהִיג לֹון. כִּיּוֹן דְּחָמָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, תִּיאֻבְתָּא דְּאַבְרָהָם לְגַבִּיהּ, כְּדִין אֶתְגַּלִּי עֲלוּי, וּמִלִּיל עֲמִיהּ, דְּכְתִיב צֶדֶק יִקְרָאֵהוּ לְרַגְלוֹ. דְּמִלִּיל עֲמִיהּ, וְאִתְגַּלִּי עֲלֵיהּ.

225. רַבִּי יִצְחָק פִּתַּח דּוֹבֵר צֶדֶק מִגִּיד מִישְׁרִים. קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כָּל מְלוּי אֵינוֹן בְּקוּשְׁטָא, וְעֵבִיד מִישְׁרִים, בְּמָה עֵבִיד מִישְׁרִים. בְּגִין, דְּכִד בְּרָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲלֵמָא, לֹא הוּה קָאִים, וְהוּה מְתַמוּטֵט לְהֵכָא וְלְהֵכָא. אָמַר לֹקְדָּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲלֵמָא, מַה לָּךְ דָּאֵת מְתַמוּטֵט. אָמַר לֹרְבוּנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, לֹא יְכִילָנָא לְמִיקָם, דְּלִית בֵּי יְסוּדָא, עַל מַה דְּאִתְקֵיִים.

226. אָמַר לְוָהָא אָנָּא זְמִין לְמִיקָם בְּךָ חַד צְדִיק, דְּאִיהוּ אַבְרָהָם, דִּי יִרְחִים לִי. מִיָּד קָאִים עֲלֵמָא בְּקִיּוּמִיהּ, הֵה"ד אֱלֹה תוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם; אֵל תִּקְרָא בְּהִבְרָאָם אֱלֹא בְּאַבְרָהָם. בְּאַבְרָהָם מִתְקִיִּים עֲלֵמָא.

227. אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא, מִגִּיד מִישְׁרִים. דְּהָא אֲתִיב לִיה עֲלֵמָא לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, הָהוּא אַבְרָהָם זְמִין הוּא דִּינְפָקוֹן מִנִּיהּ בְּגִין דִּיחֲרִיבּוֹ מִקְדָּשָׁא, וְיוֹקִידּוֹ אוֹרִינִיתָא. אָמַר לִיה, זְמִין חַד בֵּר נֶשׁ לְמִיפָק מִנִּיהּ, דְּאִיהוּ יַעֲקֹב, וְיִפְקוֹן מִנִּיהּ תְּרִיסַר שְׁבֻטִין, כְּלָהוּ זְכָאִין. מִיָּד אֶתְקִיִּים עֲלֵמָא בְּגִינִיהּ הֵה"ד מִגִּיד מִישְׁרִים.

228. Rabbi Elazar said that we have noted here that each one of the terms-"to speak," "to declare," and "to say"-has a meaning of its own. "To speak" means openly, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT AND IS CALLED THE REVEALED WORLD. This is an external, not an internal, grade, as the grades that are higher THAN IT. And this also applies to "speak righteousness," WHICH REFERS TO MALCHUT WHICH IS THE ASPECT OF "SPEAKING."

229. "To declare" alludes to the internal and supernal grade, which governs speech THAT IS MALCHUT and this applies also to "declare...right." Who is "right?" This is the supernal grade, where Ya'akov dwells, NAMELY TIFERET. Hence "You founded things that are right" (Tehilim 99:4). And this is why it says here "declare," rather than "speak." IT SHOWS US THAT THE INTENTION HERE APPLIES TO TIFERET AND NOT TO MALCHUT. AND RABBI ELAZAR HEREBY OFFERS A PROOF FOR WHAT RABBI CHIYA SAID!

230. Rabbi Yitzchak said that it is written: "And He declared to you His covenant" (Devarim 4:13). ACCORDINGLY, IF THE TERM "DECLARE" IS USED WITH THE COVENANT, THEN IT CAN ALSO BE USED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS! He said to him, "It is surely so" THAT THE TERM "DECLARE" CAN BE USED WITH THE COVENANT, NAMELY WITH YESOD, BECAUSE TIFERET AND THE COVENANT ARE ONE. NEVERTHELESS, YESOD is a grade that is dominant over the lower grade, which is "speak righteousness," SO HERE WE CAN USE THE TERM "DECLARE" AS WELL. And all this should be well examined. Come and behold: Even though we said that the term "speak" is the lowest of them all, do not conclude from this that it is not a high and important GRADE! The term "speak" includes within it all the other GRADES, and is a high grade. And the proof of this appears in the verse, "For it is not a vain thing (speech)" (Devarim 32:47).

231. Rabbi Elazar was on his way to his father-in-law, accompanied by Rabbi Chiya, Rabbi Yosi, and Rabbi Chizkiyah. Rabbi Elazar said: I see that the awakening from above occurs as a response to awakening from below, because the upper is aroused by the passion and desire of the lower, and depends on it.

24. "Keep not your silence, Elohim"

The establishment leaders who lived during the time of Avraham want to slay him because he has enlightened the people and led them away from the futility of Idol Worshipping. People like Avraham, who dare to initiate positive change and help others in their spiritual awakening, always encounter opposition from forces who seek to propagate chaos and ignorance for their own personal gain.

The Relevance of this Passage

Throughout human history, any major advancement in civilization was first met with opposition, defiance, and scorn from those who would not benefit by the betterment of the human condition. This spiritual principle holds true in our own personal life. As opportunities for spiritual advancement present themselves to us, there will be obstacles and opposition. This passage gives us protection from the forces that attempt to impede our spiritual progress.

232. He opened the discussion with the verse, "Keep not Your silence, Elohim: do not hold Your peace, and be still, El" (Tehilim 83:2). This represents the awakening from below; FROM THE NUKVA, to take control. David responded, "Keep not Your silence, Elohim"; from arousing Your desire to the upper, ZEIR ANPIN, and to cling on to the Right, TO HIS CHESED.

228. רבי אלעזר אמר, הא אתערנא, וידבר, ויגד, ויאמר, בלהו לטעמיהו מתפרשן, וידבר: איהו באתגליא, דרגא לבר, דלא איהו דרגא פנימאה, באינון דרגין עלאין, ודא איהו דובר צדק.

229. ויגד: איהו רמז לדרגא פנימאה עלאה, דשלטאה על דבור, ודא הוא מגיד מישרים, מאן מישרים, דא דרגא עלאה דיעקב שרייא ביה. הדא הוא דכתיב אתה כוננת מישרים, ובגין כךמגיד כתיב, ולא כתיב דובר.

230. אמר רבי יצחק, והא כתיב, ויגד לכם את בריתו. אמרלוהבי הוא ודאי איהו דרגא דשלטא על תתאה, דאיהו דובר צדק. וכלא איהו לאסתכלא הכא. תא חזי, דאף על גבדבור איהו תתאה, לא תימא, דלא עלאה איהו, אלא ודאי דבור מלויא איהו מכלא, ודרגא עלאה איהו. וסימניך בי לא דבר רק הוא מכם.

231. רבי אלעזר, הוה אזיל לבי חמוי, והו עמיה רבי חייא, ורבי יוסי, ורבי חזקיה. אמר רבי אלעזר, הא חמינא דאתערותא דלעילא לאו איהו, אלא כד אתער לתתא, דהא אתערותא דלעילא, בתיאובתא דלתתא תלויא.

232. פתח ואמר, אלקים אל דמי לך אל תחרש ואל תשקוט אל. דא הוא אתערותא דלתתא. בגין לשלטאה. אמר דוד, אלקים אל דמי לך, לאתערא לגבי עלאה, ולא תחברא גבי ומינא.

233. For what reason? Because "For, lo, Your enemies make a tumult.... For they have consulted together with one consent: they make a covenant against You:" (Tehilim 3:6). THE NUKVA IS THE ASPECT OF THE LEFT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM, AND CHOCHMAH CANNOT SHINE WITHOUT CHASSADIM. THEREFORE ALL THE KLIPOT AND THE ENEMIES OF THE HOLINESS RAISE UP THEIR HEADS. Hence, "Keep not Your silence, Elohim" from awakening toward the upper, ZEIR ANPIN. Because then the right OF ZEIR ANPIN is aroused and attaches Her to itself. WHEN SHE IS ATTACHED TO THE RIGHT--NAMELY WHEN THE CHOCHMAH IN HER IS ENCLOSED BY THE CHASSADIM OF THE RIGHT--then the enemies are defeated. BECAUSE THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH DESTROYS ALL THE ENEMIES OF THE HOLINESS. As it written: "Your right hand, Hashem, has become glorious in power: Your right hand, Hashem, has dashed the enemy in pieces" (Shemot 15:6).

234. So come and behold: When all those kings joined to make war against Avraham, they consulted one another about how to destroy him. But as soon as they took control over Lot, Avraham's nephew, they immediately left. As it is written: "And they took Lot, Avram's brother's son, and his possessions and departed" (Beresheet 14:12). What was the reason? Lot's image was similar to that of Avraham. As a result, they "departed," AS THEY BELIEVED THEY HAD CAPTURED AVRAHAM, which was the purpose of the war.

235. AND HE ASKS: Why DID THEY WANT TO KILL AVRAHAM? AND HE ANSWERS: Because Avraham took people of this world away from idolatry and brought them to worship the Holy One, blessed be He. THIS IS WHY THEY WANTED TO KILL HIM. In addition, it was the Holy One, blessed be He, who incited them TO FIGHT AVRAHAM, so that Avraham would be brought closer to His way of worship and the name of Avraham would become glorified throughout the world.

236. And the secret behind this is that when, Avraham pursued them, then IT IS WRITTEN: "Keep not Your silence, Elohim," AS THE NUKVA WAS AROUSED TOWARD ZEIR ANPIN AND ELEVATED MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) UP TO HIM TO DRAW CHESD, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT, until all was attached to Avraham, WHO IS THE SECRET OF CHESD OF ZEIR ANPIN. THIS MEANS THAT HER CHOCHMAH WAS CLOTHED BY CHASSADIM AND HER ILLUMINATION WAS COMPLETED. And when all this was attached to Avraham, then all the kings were defeated before him. As we have previously stated; it is then written: "Your right hand Hashem, has dashed the enemy in pieces."

25. Malki-Tzedek

Avraham, King David, and the other great spiritual giants of history, devoted their lives to easing the pain of the Shechinah, the collective universal soul that protects and assist us in the physical world. The Shechinah, possessing its own consciousness, experiences the collective pain of humanity when negativity and suffering abound in the world. Similarly, our consciousness and intent to ease the pain of the Shechinah serves to ease the pain of all mankind. Spiritual work cannot be ego-based. We must learn to feel the pain of others and dedicate ourselves to ending their suffering, as well as our own.

The Relevance of this Passage

Many spiritual lessons and benefits radiate throughout these verses. We gain awareness of the global purpose of our existence, which is to diminish and remove our intemperate character traits that separate us from the Light of the Creator. A recognition of the impact that our actions have on both on ourselves and on all mankind, is instilled within our consciousness.

233. מאי טעמא, בגין כי הנה אויבך יהמיון וגו', כי נועצו לב יחדיו עליך ברית וכרותו, ובגין כך, אלהים אל דמי לך, לאתערך לגבי עילא, דהא ברין אתערך ומינא, וקטירת לה בהדה. וכד אתקשרת בימינא, ברין אתפר שנאין, דכתיב, ימינך ה' נאדרי בכח ימינך ה' תרעץ אויב.

234. ותא חזי, בשעתא דאתחברו כל אינון מלכין, לאגחא קרבא עליה דאברהם, אתניעטו לאעברא ליה מן עלמא, וביון דשלטו בלוט, בר אחוה דאברהם, מיד אזלו, דכתיב ויקחו את לוט ואת רכושו בן אחי אברם וילכו. מ"ט, בגין, דדיוקניה דלוט הוה דמי לאברהם, ובגין כך וילכו, דכל ההוא קרבא, בגיניה הוה.

235. מאי טעמא. בגין, דהוה אברהם אפיק בני עלמא מפולחנא נוכרא, ואעיל לון, בפולחנא דקדשא ברין הוא. ותו, קדשא ברין הוא אתער לון בעלמא, בגין לגדלא שמא דאברהם בעלמא ולקרבא ליה לפולחניה.

236. ורזא דמלה, ביון דאברהם אתער למרדף אבתרייהו, ברין אלקים אל דמי לך, עד דאתקשר כלא באברהם, וכד אתקשר כלא באברהם, ברין אתפרו כלהו מלכין מקמיה, בדקא אמרן, דכתיב ימינך ה' תרעץ אויב וגו'.

237. "And Malki Tzedek king of Shalem brought forth bread and wine..." (Beresheet 14:18). Rabbi Shimon opened the discourse, saying, "In Shalem also is set his tabernacle" (Tehilim 76:3). Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS THE SECRET OF BINAH, decided to create the world, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN THAT IS CALLED THE 'WORLD,' He produced a flame from the Holy illumination. As wind blew wind, THE FLAME darkened and began to burn. And He took out from within an abyss a particular drop, which He joined with the flame. With them, He created the world, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN.

238. HE EXPLAINS THAT the flame rose and was crowned by the Left COLUMN OF BINAH. And the drop, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN, rose and was crowned by the Right COLUMN OF BINAH. Then they became intertwined-THE RIGHT AND LEFT repeatedly exchanging places with each other. That which had descended now ascended and that which had ascended then descended.

239. BOTH COLUMNS-THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT OF BINAH-combined and a completed Ruach came forth. THIS REFERS TO ZEIR ANPIN, WHO IS CALLED RUACH AND EMANATE FROM THE UNION OF THE TWO COLUMNS. Two sides emerged as one, AND THE RUACH ITSELF was placed in the middle AS THE ASPECT OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. HENCE, THE RESULT WAS THREE COLUMNS. And they were crowned by one another-THAT IS, ALL THREE COLUMNS OF ZEIR ANPIN WERE CROWNED BY ONE ANOTHER. Then there was perfection above, IN BINAH, and perfection below, IN ZEIR ANPIN. The grade was established, AND THE GRADE OF THE MOCHIN OF ZEIR ANPIN WAS COMPLETED!

240. The FIRST Hei OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS BINAH, was crowned by the Vav, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. The Vav OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, in turn, was crowned by the Hei OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS BINAH. THEN the SECOND Hei OF THE YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN TO THE VAV OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, rose and became perfectly attached TO HIM, BY RECEIVING FROM HIM THE MOCHIN OF BINAH. Thus, "And Malki Tzedek king of Shalem (lit. 'perfect')"; and indeed he is a perfect king! THUS, IT IS WRITTEN ABOUT THE SECOND HEI, WHICH IS CALLED MALKI-TZEDEK: "AND MALKI TZEDEK, KING OF SHALEM," BECAUSE NOW IT IS ASSUREDLY A PERFECT KING. THIS MEANS a king who rules perfectly. He asks: When is THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN considered to be a perfect king? AND HE ANSWERS: On Yom Kippur, WHEN MALCHUT RISES UP AND ENCLOTHES BINAH, AND when all faces shine-EVEN THE FACE OF THE NUKVA SHINES LIKE THE FACE OF BINAH!

241. "And Malki Tzedek (lit. 'king of justice') can also be explained as a reference to the last world, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, AND "King of Shalem" to the upper world, WHICH IS BINAH. They adorn one another, MEANING THAT THE LOWER WORLD WAS CROWNED BY THE UPPER WORLD, they are inseparable and the two worlds are as one. And even the lower world is entirely one WITH THE UPPER WORLD. WHY? BECAUSE AT THAT TIME THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN RISES TO CLOTHE BINAH, EVERY LOWER GRADE THAT RISES TO AN UPPER GRADE BECOMES COMPLETELY LIKE IT. THEREFORE, THESE TWO WORLDS, WHICH ARE THE NUKVA AND BINAH, BECOME AS IF THE SAME. "Brought forth bread and wine" indicates that both are included; BREAD ALLUDES TO THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM FROM THE RIGHT; WINE ALLUDES TO THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH FROM THE LEFT. THEREFORE HE "BROUGHT FORTH BREAD AND WINE" TO INFORM US THAT BOTH OF THESE ILLUMINATIONS EXIST NOW IN MALKI TZEDEK, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA AS SHE ENCLOTHES BINAH. "And he was the priest of the most high El," who served the world that corresponds to another world. "And he was the priest of the most high El" MEANS THAT THE LOWER WORLD SERVES THE UPPER WORLD WITH CHASSADIM. BECAUSE

237. ומלכי-צדק מלך שלם הוציא לחם ויין. רבי שמעון פתח ואמר ויהי בשלם סכו וגו'. תא חזי, בד סליק ברעותא דקדשא בריך הוא למברי עלמא, אפיק חד שלהובא דבוצינא דקרדינותא, ונשף זיקא בזיקא, חשכאת ואוקידת. ואפיק מגו סטרי תהומא, חד טיף, וחבר לון בחד, וברא בהו עלמא.

238. ההוא שלהובא סליק, ואתעטר בשמאלא, וההוא טיף סליק ואתעטר בימינא, סלקו חד בחד, אחלפו דוכתי, דא לסטרא דא, ודא לסטרא דא, דנחית סליק, ודסליק נחית.

239. אתקטרו דא בדא, נפיק מבינייהו רוח שלים. בדין אינון תרין סטרין, אתעבידו חד, ואתייהיב בינייהו, ואתעטרו חד בחד. בדין אשתכח שלם לעילא, ושלם לתתא, ודרגא אתקנים.

240. אתעטרת ה"א בוא"ו, וא"ו בה"א, בדין סלקא ה"א, ואתקשרא בקשורא שלים. בדין ומלכי צדק מלך שלם. מלך שלם ודאי, מלך איהו דשליט בשלימו, אימתי איהו מלך שלם, ביומא דכפורי דכל אנפין נהירין.

241. ומלכי צדק. דא עלמא בתראה. מלך שלם, דא עלמא עלאה. דאתעטר חד בחד, בלא פירודא, תרין עלמין בחדא, ואפילו עלמא תתאה, בלא חד מלה איהו. הוציא לחם ויין, דתרין אליון ביה. והוא כהן לאל עליון משמש עלמא לקבל עלמא. והוא כהן, דא ימינא. לאל עליון, עלמא עלאה. ובגין כך, בעי בהנא, לברכא עלמא.

"the priest" is the right, REFERRING TO THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM IN THE NUKVA, AND "the most high El" is the upper world, NAMELY BINAH. The priests, therefore, desire to bless the world.

242. Come and behold: This lower world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, receives blessings when it is attached to the high priest, NAMELY TO THE RIGHT COLUMN OF BINAH THAT IS CALLED "THE HIGH PRIEST." Then, "And blessed him" MEANS THAT AFTER THE NUKVA HAD RECEIVED THE BLESSINGS FROM THE HIGH PRIEST, SHE BLESSED AVRAHAM. AS IT IS WRITTEN: "and he said: Blessed be Avram of the most high El" (Bereshheet 14:19), as it is surely so! The same applies to the priest below IN THIS WORLD. HE SHOULD tie knots, NAMELY TO MEDITATE AS IS EXPLAINED HERE, so as to bless this place, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, so that SHE may be attached to CHASSADIM OF the right SIDE OF BINAH. Thus both worlds, THE NUKVA AND BINAH, are united as one!

243. "Blessed be Avram." The secret behind this is that this blessing contains the meditations that we are to have whenever we say a blessing. "Blessed be Avram" is similar to the words "Blessed are You," which we recite IN EVERY BLESSING; "of the most high El," WHICH APPEARS HERE, IS SIMILAR TO WHAT WE RECITE IN EVERY BLESSING: "Hashem our Elohim"; "possessor of heaven and earth" IS SIMILAR TO WHAT WE RECITE IN EVERY BLESSING: "the king of the world." So this phrase is the secret of all the blessings. "And he blessed him, AND SAID: BLESSED BE AVRAM", WHICH IS THE DIRECTION OF THE MEDITATION from below upward. "Blessed be the most high El, WHO HAD DELIVERED THE ENEMIES TO YOUR HANDS" IS THE DIRECTION OF THE MEDITATION from above downward. "And he gave him a tithe of everything" MEANS THAT HE GAVE THE NUKVA A TITHE in order to be attached to that place, where the tie has been made with the world below. THIS IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT, WHICH FINISHES THE ILLUMINATION OF THE NUKVA, SO AS NOT TO GIVE HOLD TO THE EXTERNALS, AS THE SECRET OF THE TITHE IS THE CONCLUSION OF HER ILLUMINATION.

244. As they were walking, they met Rabbi Yesa and a Jew who was with him. The Jew quoted the verse, "Of David: To you, Hashem, do I lift up my soul" (Tehilim 25:1), AND HE ASKED WHY IS IT WRITTEN "Of David" rather than "A psalm of David" or "To David a psalm?"

245. AND HE ANSWERS: It is written 'Of David' because it was meant for his own grade. And the praise that he recited was for his own sake. "To you Hashem, do I lift up my soul" MEANS "To you, Hashem" upward. "My soul (Nefesh)." Who is meant by "my Nefesh?" David is meant. David is the first grade, as we have stated; NAMELY HE IS MALCHUT, WHICH IS THE FIRST GRADE FROM BELOW UPWARD. "do I lift up" MEANS to elevate, as it is written: "I will lift up my eyes to the hills" (Tehilim 121:1) Because during his entire life, David was always striving to raise his grade TO THAT OF BINAH-to adorn it BY BINAH above and to attach it there in a true and everlasting bond, as it should properly be!

242. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּרַכָּאן נָטִיל הָאִי עֲלֵמָא תַתָּא, בְּדִ אֲתַחְבֵּר בְּכֹהֵנָא רַבָּא. בְּדִין, וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ, וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ אֲבִרָם לֵאלֹהֵי עֲלִיּוֹן. הֵכִי הוּא וְדָאִי. בְּגֻוְנָא דָּא בְּעִי בְּהֵנָּא לְתַתָּא, לְקִשְׁרָא קִשְׁרִין, וּלְבְּרַכָּא הָאִי דּוּכְתָּא, בְּגִין דִּיתְקַשֵּׁר בִּימִינָא, לְאַתְקִשְׁרָא תְרִין עֲלָמִין בְּחָד.

243. בְּרוּךְ אֲבִרָם. רָזָא דְמַלְכָּה, תְּקוּנָא דְבְּרַכָּאן אִיהוּ. בְּרוּךְ אֲבִרָם, כְּמָה דְאִמְרִינֵן בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה. לֵאלֹהֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ. קוּנָה שְׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. וְהָאִי קָרָא, רָזָא דְבְּרַכָּאן אִיהוּ. וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ, מִתַּתָּא לְעִילָא. וּבְרוּךְ אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, מֵעִילָא לְתַתָּא. וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ מַעֲשֵׂר מְכַל. לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בְּאַתֵּר דְּקִשְׁוִירָא אֲתַקִּשֵׁר לְתַתָּא.

244. עַד דִּהְווּ אֲזִילִי, אֶעְרַע בְּהוּ ר' יִיסָא וְחָד יוֹדָאִי בְּהַרְיָה. וְהוּא אָמַר הָהוּא יוֹדָאִי, לְדוֹד אֱלִיךָ ה' נִפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא. לְדוֹד, וְכִי אֲמַאי לֹא כְּתִיב, מִזְמוֹר לְדוֹד, אוֹ לְדוֹד מִזְמוֹר.

245. אֵלָא, בְּגִין דְּרִגְיָה קֹאמֵר לְדוֹד, תּוֹשְׁבַתָּא דְאָמַר בְּגִינְיָה. אֱלִיךָ ה' נִפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא. אֱלִיךָ ה', לְעִילָא. נִפְשִׁי: מֵאֵן נִפְשִׁי. דָּא דוֹד, דְּרִגָּא קְדָמָא דְקֹאמֵרֵן. אֶשָּׂא: אֶסְלֵק. כַּד "א אֶשָּׂא עֵינִי אֶל הָהָרִים, בְּגִין, דְּכָל יוֹמוֹי דְּדוֹד, הוּא מִשְׁתַּדֵּל לְסַלְקָא דְּרִגְיָה, לְאַתְעֵטְרָא לְעִילָא, וּלְאַתְקִשְׁרָא תַמָּן בְּקִשְׁוִירָא שְׁלִים, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

246. Similarly, "Of David, bless Hashem, my soul (Nefesh)" (Tehilim 103:1) was also said for the sake of his own grade. And what did he say? "Bless Hashem, my soul (Nefesh)." In this case, the particle Et before "Hashem" MEANS to be attached with bonds to the upper GRADE-BINAH. And what is meant by "and all that is within me?" It refers to the other beasts of the fields, NAMELY THE SFIROT OF THE NUKVA, that are called "all that is within me (lit. 'entrails')." As it is written: "and my bowels yearned for him" (Shir Hashirim 5:5) Another explanation of the words "bless ...my soul" is that he said it for the sake of his own grade. "Hashem" is the full perfection of everything-the inclusion of everything. THIS MEANS THAT ET IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT; HASHEM (YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI) IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN. SO ET HASHEM ALLUDES TO THE COMPLETE UNISON OF ZEIR ANPIN WITH HIS NUKVA.

247. Rabbi Elazar said to Rabbi Yesa: I see that you have come in company with the Shechinah. HE SAID THIS BECAUSE HE SAW THAT THE SHECHINAH RESTED UPON THE JEW. He said to him: Most certainly! I walked with him for three parasangs, and he has told me many goodly matters. And I have hired him to serve me for this day, and did not realize that he is such a shining light as I see now!"

248. Rabbi Elazar asked the Jew, "What is your name?" He answered, "Yoezer." Rabbi Elazar said: Let us sit together, AS OUR NAMES ARE SIMILAR. They sat beside a rock in that field. The Jew opened the discussion, by quoting, "I, even I, am he that blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember your sins" (Yeshayah 43:25). HE ASKED HIM, "What is the reason for saying 'I...I' twice?"

249. AND HE REPLIED THAT the first "I" was said at Mount Sinai and the second was said during the creation of the world. Thus, at Mount Sinai it is written: "I am Hashem your Elohim" (Shemot 20:2); and at the creation, it is written: "I have made the earth and created man upon it" (Yeshayah 45:12). This shows that there is no separation between above, BINAH, and below, MALCHUT.

250. HE ASKS: Why does it say "blots out" rather than "removes your transgressions?" AND HE REPLIES: So that they shall never appear again in the world. "For My own sake"--to reveal the compassion that emerges from Me. As it is written: "For Hashem your Elohim is a merciful El" (Devarim 4:31).

251. Come and behold: Another explanation of the words "blots out your transgressions for My own sake," is that the wicked of the world cause damage. For when their sins rise, mercy and the Supernal Light are lost and blessings cannot descend to this world. So this grade, NAMELY THE NUKVA WHICH IS NAMED "I," does not receive any blessings from above to pass on to the lower beings. THEREFORE, THIS IS CONSIDERED BY HER A DAMAGE, and so She says, "for my own sake," so that blessings will not be withheld from me, to be given to all.

246. כְּגֹוֹנָא דָא, לְדֹד בְּרָכִי נִפְשִׁי אֶת ה', בְּגִין דְּרָגִיָּה קָאֻמֵּר, וּמֵאִי אָמַר, בְּרָכִי נִפְשִׁי אֶת ה'. אֶת: לְאַתְקַשְׁרָא בְּקַשּׁוּרָא לְעִילָא. וְכָל קְרִבִּי, מֵאֵן קְרִבִּי. אֵלִין שָׂאֵר חֵיוֹן בְּרָא, דְּאִקְרוּן קְרִבִּים, כְּדִ"א וּמַעֲוֵי הָמוּ עָלָיו דְּבַר אַחֵר, בְּרָכִי נִפְשִׁי, בְּגִינִיָּה קָאֻמֵּר. אֶת ה', דָּא שְׁלִימוּ דְכָלָא, אֶת ה' כְּלָלָא דְכָלָא.

247. אִמְרִלּוּרְבִי אֶלְעֶזֶר לְרַבִּי יוֹסָא, חֲמִינָא לָךְ, דִּהָא עִם שְׂכִינְתָא קְאֵתִית וְאַתְחַבֵּרַת. אִמְרִלוּ, הֵכִי הוּא וְדָאִי, וְתִלֵּת פְּרָסֵי הוּא דְאִזְלָנָא בְּהַדְרִיָּה, וְאָמַר לִי כְּמָה מִיָּלִי מַעֲלִייתָא, וְאָנָּא אֲגִירָנָא לִיָּה לְיוֹמָא דָא, וְלֹא יִדְעָנָא דְאִיהוּ בּוֹצִינָא דְנִהִיר כְּדַחֲמִינָא הַשְׁתָּא.

248. אִמְרִלּוּרְבִי אֶלְעֶזֶר, לְהֵהוּא יוֹדָאִי, מַה שְׁמִךְ, אִמְרִלוּיְעֶזֶר. אִמְרִלוּיְעֶזֶר וְאֶלְעֶזֶר, יְתִיבֵן בְּחֻדָּא. יְתָבוּ גְבֵי חַד טַנְרָא בְּהֵהוּא חֻקֵּל. פִּתַּח הֵהוּא יוֹדָאִי וְאָמַר, אֲנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי הוּא מוֹחָה פִּשְׁעֶיךָ לְמַעַנִי וְחֻטְאֲתֶיךָ לֹא אֶזְכּוֹר, מֵאִי טַעְמָא, תְּרִי זְמִינִי, אֲנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי.

249. אֵלָא, חַד בְּסִינִי. וְחַד בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּבְרָא עֲלֵמָא. דְּכִתִּיב, אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ, דָּא הוּא בְּסִינִי. וְחַד בְּדְּבָרָא עֲלֵמָא, דְּכִתִּיב, אֲנֹכִי עֲשִׂיתִי אֶרֶץ וְאָדָם עָלֶיהָ בְּרָאתִי. הוּא בְּגִין לְאַחֲזָאָה, דְּלֹא הָיִי פְּרוּדָא בֵּין עִילָא וְתַתָּא.

250. מוֹחָה פִּשְׁעֶיךָ. מַעֲבִיר פִּשְׁעֶיךָ לֹא כְּתִיב, אֵלָא מוֹחָה, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִתְחַזֵּן לְעֲלָמִין. לְמַעַנִי. מֵאִי לְמַעַנִי, בְּגִין אֵינֹן רַחֲמִין דְּתַלְוִין בִּי. דְּכִתִּיב בִּי אֵל רַחוּם ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ וְגו'.

251. דְּבַר אַחֵר, מוֹחָה פִּשְׁעֶיךָ לְמַעַנִי. תָּא חֲזִי, חֲזִיבִי עֲלֵמָא עֲבָדִין פְּגִימוּתָא לְעִילָא, דְּכַד אֵינֹן חוֹבִין סְלָקִין, רַחֲמִין, וְנִהִירוּ עֲלָאָה, וְיִנְיִקוּ דְּבִרְכָּאֵן, לֹא נִחִית לְתַתָּא, וְדָאִי דְּרָגָא לֹא נָטִיל בְּרִכָּאֵן דְּלְעִילָא, לְיִנְקָא לְתַתָּא. וּבְגִין כְּרָלְמַעַנִי, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִתְמַנְעוּן בְּרִכָּאֵן לְיִנְקָא לְכָלָא.

252. The same applies to the verse, "See now that I, even I, am He..." (Devarim 32:39), IN WHICH THE FIRST "I" APPLIES TO BINAH AND THE SECOND "I" TO MALCHUT. THIS IS to show that no separation exists between BINAH above and MALCHUT below, as we have already explained.

253. Come and behold: Similarly, when there are righteous people in the world, blessings are sent down to all the worlds. As soon as Avraham arrived, the blessings were sent to the world. As it is written: "and I will bless you, and you shall be a blessing" (Bereshheet 12:2). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of, "And you shall be a blessing"? AND HE ANSWERS that because of his merit, blessings shall be abundant on high, IN THE UPPER WORLDS, and down below, IN THE LOWER WORLDS. As it is written: "And in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed," REFERRING TO THE LOWER BEINGS, and "I will bless them that bless you" REFERRING TO THE UPPER WORLDS. WHEN THEY CONVEY THE BLESSINGS DOWNWARD, THEY ARE BLESSED FIRST, AS IS KNOWN. THIS IS THE SECRET OF "I WILL BLESS THEM THAT BLESS YOU!"

254. Yitzchak arrived and informed everyone that there is judgment and there is a Judge above to punish the wicked. And he awakened judgment on the world, so that all would be in awe of the Holy One, blessed He. Ya'akov arrived, brought mercy on the world, and perfected the Faith in the world as proper. AVRAHAM DREW CHESSED, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT COLUMN OF THE FAITH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. AND YITZCHAK DREW FOR HER THE JUDGMENT AND THE SFIRAH OF GVURAH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF HER LEFT COLUMN. YA'AKOV COMPLETED HER BY DRAWING DOWN MERCY, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN.

255. Thus, of the days of Avraham, it is written: "And Malki Tzedek king of Shalem," since the Throne, THE NUKVA, was crowned in its own place, IN BINAH. Then THE NUKVA, the "king of Shalem" (a perfect king), was completely flawless. THE NUKVA "brought forth bread and wine" to nourish all of the worlds as ought to be. The words "brought forth bread and wine" SHOW THAT the blessings were not withheld from any of the worlds. The words "brought forth" are similar to the phrase "Let the Earth bring forth," (Bereshheet 1:24) WHICH REFERS TO THE NUKVA, WHICH BROUGHT nourishment and blessings from the highest levels to all the worlds!

256. "And he was the priest of the most high El" (Bereshheet 14:68) MEANS THAT everything has reached full supernal perfection, as it ought to. THAT REFERS TO THE PERFECTION OF BINAH, WHICH IS CALLED "THE MOST HIGH EL." This teaches us that just as the sinners bring damage upon the world and prevent blessings FROM REACHING IT, so the righteous bring blessings to the world, and for their sake, all the people of the world are blessed as well.

252. בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא, רְאוּ עֵתָה כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא, לְאַחֲזָא דְלָא הוּי פְּרוּדָא, בֵּין עֵילָא וְתַתָּא. כְּמָה דְאַתְמֹר.

253. תָּא חַיִּי, בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא, כִּד אֲשַׁתְּכַחוּ זְכָאִין בְּעֵלְמָא, אֲתַעְרוּ בְּרַכָּאן לְעֵלְמִין כְּלָהוּ. בֵּינָן דְאַתָּא אֲבִרְהֵם, אֲתַעֵר בְּרַכָּאן לְעֵלְמָא. דְכִתִּיב וְאֲבִרְכֶךָ. וְהִיָּה בְרַכָּה, מְאִי וְהִיָּה בְרַכָּה. רְמִז דִּישְׁתַּכְחוּן בְּגִינִיָּה בְּרַכָּאן, לְעֵילָא וְתַתָּא. דְכִתִּיב וְנִבְרַכְכוּ בְּךָ וְגו' וְכִתִּיב וְאֲבִרְכָה מְבִרְכֶיךָ.

254. אֲתָא יִצְחָק, אוֹדַע לְכָלָא, דְאֵית דִּין וְאֵית דִּינִין לְעֵילָא, לְאַתְפָּרַעַא מִרְשִׁיעִיָּא, וְאִיהוּ אֲתַעֵר דִּינָא בְּעֵלְמָא, בְּגִין דִּיִּדְחֻלּוֹן לִיה לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כֹּל בְּנֵי עֵלְמָא. אֲתָא יַעֲקֹב, וְאַתְעֵר רַחֲמֵי בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאַשְׁלִים מִהֵימְנוּתָא בְּעֵלְמָא, כְּדָקָא חַיִּי.

255. בְּיוֹמֵי דְאַבְרָהֵם מִה כְּתִיב, וּמִלְכֵי צֶדֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם, דְאַתְעֵטְרַת כְּרִסְיָא בְּרוּכְתִּיָּה, וְכִדִּין אֲשַׁתְּכַח מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם, בְּלֹא פְגִימוּ כָלָל. הוּצִיא לָחֶם וַיִּין דְאַפִּיק מְזוּנִין לְעֵלְמִין, כְּלָהוּ כְּדָקָא חַיִּי. הוּצִיא לָחֶם וַיִּין, דְלֹא אֲתַמְנְעוּ בְּרַכָּאן מִכְּלָהוּ עֲלֵמִין, הוּצִיא: כִּד"א תּוּצֵא הָאָרֶץ, מִדְּרָגִין דְלְעֵילָא אֲפִיק מְזוּנִין וּבְרַכָּאן לְעֵלְמִין כְּלָהוּ.

256. וְהוּא כֹהֵן לְאֵל עֲלִיּוֹן. דְאַשְׁתַּכַּח כָּלָא, בְּשִׁלְמוֹ עֲלָאָה, כְּדָקָא חַיִּי. לְאַתְחַזָּא כְּמָה דְחַיִּיבִיא עֲבָדֵי פְגִימוּ בְּעֵלְמָא, וּמְנַעֵי בְּרַכָּאן. הֵכִי נִמִּי, בְּגִין זְכָאִין אֲתִיִּין בְּרַכָּאן לְעֵלְמָא, וּבְגִינִיָּהוּ אֲתַבְּרַכָּאן כָּל בְּנֵי עֵלְמָא.

257. What is the meaning of "And he gave him a tithe of all" (Beresheet 14:20), IT MEANS THAT MALKI TZEDEK GAVE HIM those blessings that issue from "all," WHICH IS YESOD. THIS MEANS THAT MALKI TZEDEK, WHO IS THE NUKVA, RECEIVED THE TITHE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE BLESSINGS, FROM YESOD, AND PASSED THEM ON TO AVRAHAM. WHY FROM THE YESOD? Because this is the place from which all blessings that reach the world originate. Another explanation of the words "And he gave him a tithe of all" is that it was the Holy One, blessed be He, who gave Avraham the tithe. And what is the tithe? It is a grade, where all the gates of faith and the blessings of the world are established, it is one out of ten, and ten out of a hundred, NAMELY MALCHUT, WHICH DURING HER IMATURE STATE, HAS NO OTHER SFIRAH BUT KETER. AND THIS SFIRAH IS BUT ONE OUT OF THE TEN SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN. BUT DURING HER STAGE OF MATURITY, MALCHUT HAS TEN COMPLETE SFIROT, AND THEN SHE IS "TEN OUT OF A HUNDRED" SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN. AND THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, GAVE THIS GRADE TO AVRAHAM. From this point on, Avraham's existence became firmly established from above, WHICH MEANS THAT HE MERITED FULL CONCEPTION FOREVER!" Rabbi Elazar said to him, "You have spoken well!"

258. Rabbi Elazar asked him, "What is your job?" He responded, "I teach children, back home. But when Rabbi Yosi of the village Chanin came to town, all the children were taken from me and passed on to him. NEVERTHELESS, the people of my town paid my salary, as they had when the children were with me. But I searched my soul and found it improper to benefit from doing nothing. So I offered my services to this wise man, NAMELY RABBI YESA." Rabbi Elazar said: Here, the blessings of my father-REFERRING TO RABBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI-are required.

259. They went before Rabbi Shimon, and THE JEW would sit and study all day long before Rabbi Shimon. One day, as they were studying the laws concerning the washing of the hands, RABBI SHIMON said: Whoever does not wash his hands properly is punished from above and also below IN THIS WORLD. And what is his punishment below? He brings poverty upon himself. And just as he who washes his hands improperly is punished, so he who washes his hands properly is rewarded ABOVE AND BELOW, bringing the blessings of above on himself. Because the blessings OF ABOVE rest properly on his hands, he is blessed BELOW with wealth.

260. At a later time, Rabbi Shimon woke up in time to see the Jew washing his hands with a great quantity of water. Rabbi Shimon said: "Fill his hands with your blessings." And so it was from that day onward, because the Jew became rich and found a treasure, he studied Torah and gave food and nourishment to the poor every day, and was happy and kind to them. As a result, in reference to him, Rabbi Shimon quoted the verse, "And you shall rejoice in Hashem and shall glory in the Holy One of Yisrael" (Yeshayah 41:16).

257. וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ מֵעֶשֶׂר מְכַל. מֵאֵי מֵעֶשֶׂר מְכַל, מֵאִינוֹן בְּרַכָּאן, דְּנִמְקֵי מְכַל. בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ אֲתֵר, דְּכָל בְּרַכָּאן דִּנְחִתִּי לְעֵלְמָא, מִתְמֵן נִמְקִי. דְּבֵר אַחֲרָא, וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ מֵעֶשֶׂר מְכַל. קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אִיהַב לִיה מֵעֶשֶׂרָא. וּמֵאֵן אִיהוּ, דָּא דְרָגָא, דְּכָל פְּתִיחִין דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא, וּבְרַכָּאן דְּעֵלְמָא, בֵּיה קִיּוּמִי. וְאִיהוּ מֵעֶשֶׂר, וְאִיהוּ חֵד מֵעֶשֶׂרָה, וְאִיהוּ עֶשְׂרָה מִמָּאָה. מִכָּאן וּלְהֵלָאָה עָל אַבְרָהָם, בְּקִיּוּמָא דְלַעִילָא, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי. אֲמַר לִיה רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר שְׁפִיר קָא אֲמַרְתָּ.

258. אֲמַר לוֹ ר' אֶלְעָזָר, מֵאֵי עֲבִידְתָּךְ. אֲמַר לוֹ קִרְדִּיקִי בְּאַתְרִי, הִשְׁתָּא אֲתָא ר' יוֹסִי דְכִפְר חֲנִין לְמִתָּא, וְסָלִיקוּ לוֹן מִגְבָּאִי, וְאוֹתְבוּ לוֹן לְגַבְיָה. וְהוּא יְהִבִּין לִי כָל בְּנֵי מִתָּא אַגְרָא, כִּהֵּוּא זְמָנָא דְרִדְרִיקִי הוּא גָבֵאִי. וְאִסְתַּכְלָנָא בְּנִפְשָׁאִי, דְּלֹא אֲתַחֲזִי לִי לְאַתְהֵי מְנִיָּהּ לְמִגְנָא, וְאִגִּירָנָא גְרָמָאִי בְּהִדִּי דְהָאִי חֲבִים. אֲמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, בְּרַכָּאן דְּאָבָא אֲצִטְרִיכוּ הָכָא.

259. קָמוּ. אֲתוּ קָמִיָּה דְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, וְהוּא יְתִיב וְלַעִי כָל יוֹמָא קָמִיָּה דְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן. וַיּוֹמַר חֵד, הָוֵה עָסִיק בְּנִטְלַת יָדִים קָמִיָּה, אֲמַר, כָּל מֵאֵן דְּלֹא נָטִיל יָדָיו בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, אֵף עַל גְּבִדְאֲתַעֲנֵשׁ לַעִילָא, אֲתַעֲנִישׁ לְתַתָּא. וּמֵאֵי עוֹנָשִׁיָּה לְתַתָּא, דְּגָרִים לִיה לְגִרְמִיָּה מִסְכְּנוּתָא. כִּמָּה דְעוֹנָשִׁיָּה, כִּךְ הָכִי הוּא זְכִי, מֵאֵן דְּנָטִיל יָדָיו בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת. דְּגָרִים לְגִרְמִיָּה בְּרַכָּאן דְּלַעִילָא, דְּשָׂרָאן בְּרַכָּאן עַל יָדָיו בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, וְאַתְבְּרַךְ בְּעוֹתְרָא.

260. לְבַתֵּר אֶקְדִּים רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, חֲמָא לִיה, דְּאֲנִטֵּל יָדָיו בְּמִיָּא, וְנָטִיל לוֹן, בְּשִׁיעוּרָא סְגִיָּא דְמִיּוּן. אֲמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן מֵלֹא יָדִיו מִבְּרַכּוֹתֶיךָ. וְכִךְ הָוֵה, מִהֵּוּא יוֹמָא וּלְהֵלָאָה, אֲתַעֲתֵר, וְאִשְׁכַּח סִימָא, וְהוּא לַעִי בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, וְיִהִיב מְזוֹנָא לְמִסְכְּנֵי כָל יוֹמָא, וְהוּא חֲדִי עֲמֵהוּן וּמִסְבֵּר לוֹן אֲנָפִין נְהִירִין. קָרָא עֲלֵיהּ רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, וְאַתָּה תְּגִיל בְּה' בְּקִדּוֹשׁ גּוֹ'.

Just as sunlight requires physical matter to reveal its radiance, spiritual Light requires a Vessel in order to express itself. Though many spiritual traditions teach renunciation of material existence, Kabbalah takes a very different view. Rather than meditating on a mountaintop above the fray and fracas of our daily existence, we must embrace the chaos of life, using it as an opportunity, as a vessel to reveal Light. Spiritual Light ignites in that momentary flash-point of character transformation.

The Relevance of this Passage

Acknowledging and rooting out the negative, dark side of our nature when confronting chaos and conflict, give us the opportunity to effect character change. Moreover, we must initiate the physical actions necessary to transform ourselves, change our world, and reveal the spiritual Light of the Creator. Accordingly, this portion strengthens us so that we successfully confront and transform life's challenges.

261. "After these things, the word of Hashem came to Avram..." (Beresheet 15:1). Rabbi Yehuda opened the discourse by quoting, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me" (Shir Hashirim 7:11). As has been explained, this means that awakening below results in awakening above. There can be no awakening from above until there is awakening from below. In addition, blessings from above rest in a place of substance, not in an empty space.

261. אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְּבַר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם וְגו'. ר' יְהוּדָה פָּתַח אָנִי לְדוֹדִי וְעָלִי תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ. הָאֵל אֹקְמוֹה, אֲבָל בְּאַתְעָרוּתָא דְּלִתְתָּא, אֲשֶׁתְּכַח אֲתַעְרוּתָא לְעִילָא, דְּהָא לֹא אֲתַעַר לְעִילָא, עַד דְּאֲתַעַר לְתַתָּא. וּבִרְכָּאן דְּלְעִילָא לֹא מִשְׁתַּבְּחִי, אֲלֵא בְּמָה דְּאִית בֵּיה מִמָּשָׂא, וְלֹא אִיהוּ רִיקְנִיָּא.

262. How do we know this? We know this from the wife of Ovadyahu, to whom Elisha said: "Tell me, what have you in the house" (II Melachim 4:2). He asked this because blessings from above do not rest on an empty table, AS WILL BE EXPLAINED ABOUT THE SHEW-BREAD, nor in an empty place, AS IS TOLD OF THE WIFE OF OVADYAHU. "And she said: 'Your handmaid has nothing in the house but a pot of oil'" (Ibid.). AND HE ASKS: What is a pot? AND HE SAYS: There is only enough oil IN THE POT to smear the little finger.

262. מְנַלְן. מֵאֵשֶׁת עוֹבְדִיָּהוּ, דְּאָמַר לָהּ אֵלִישָׁע הַגִּידִי לִי מָה יֵשׁ לָךְ בְּבֵית, דְּהָא בִּרְכָּאן דְּלְעִילָא, לֹא שְׂרִינִין עַל פְּתוּרָא רִיקְנִיָּא, וְלֹא בְּאַתְרֵי רִיקְנִיָּא. מָה כְּתִיב, וְתֹאמַר אֵין לְשִׁמְחָתְךָ כָּל בְּבֵית כִּי אִם אֶסוּךְ שֶׁמֶן. מֵאִי אֶסוּךְ. אֲלֵא אִמְרִלוּ, שִׁיעוּרָא דְּהָאִי מִשְׁחָא, לֹא אִיהוּ, אֲלֵא כְּדִי מְשִׁיחַת אֶצְבָּעָא זַעֲרִיא.

263. ELISHA said: You have relieved me. Because I did not know how the blessings of above would rest in an empty place. But now that you have some oil, this is the place where the blessings shall rest. How do we know this? Because it is written: "It is like the precious ointment..." (Tehilim 133:2). And how does the verse end? With the words, "for there Hashem has commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (Ibid.). SO in this place, NAMELY IN THE OIL, there are blessings.

263. אָמַר לָהּ, נִחְמַתְנִי. דְּהָא לֹא יָדַעְנָא, הֵיאֵךְ יִשְׂרוּן בִּרְכָּאן דְּלְעִילָא, בְּדוּכְתָּא רִיקְנִיָּא, אֲבָל הִשְׁתָּא דְּאִית לָךְ שֶׁמֶן, דָּא הוּא אַתְרֵי, לְאֲשֶׁתְּכַחא בֵּיה בִּרְכָּאן. מְנַלְן דְּכְתִיב בְּשֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב וְגו'. וְסִימָיָה מָה כְּתִיב, כִּי שֶׁם צִוָּה ה' אֶת הַבְּרָכָה חַיִּים עַד הָעוֹלָם. וּבְאַתְרָא דָּא שְׂרָאן בִּרְכָּאן.

264. You might think that because in the words, "like the dew of Chermom descending upon the mountains of Tzion" (Ibid.), FOLLOWED BY THE WORDS "FOR THERE HASHEM HAS COMMANDED THE BLESSINGS," dew is mentioned rather than oil. DEW IS THEN THE PLACE FOR THE BLESSING AND NOT OIL. BUT, HE REPLIES: It is oil and it is dew, MEANING THAT THEY ARE THE SAME. BECAUSE this dew is what the Holy One, blessed be He, drew out of the supernal oil, which comes out of the right side.

264. וְאִי תִימָא כְּטֵל חֶרְמוֹן שְׂוֹרֵד עַל הָרֵי צִיּוֹן, וְלֹא כְּתִיב שֶׁמֶן אֲלֵא טֵל. אֲלֵא, אִיהוּ שֶׁמֶן, וְאִיהוּ טֵל. הֵהוּא טֵל, אִיהוּ, דְּאֵטִיל קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מִמִּשְׁחָא עֲלָא. דְּהֵהוּא שֶׁמֶן נִפְקַל לְסִטְרָא דִּימִינָא.

265. These are two things-wine and oil-and they flow to two sides. Wine flows to the left and oil to the right. And from the right side all blessings come forth and descend to this world, and from there, the holy kingdom, WHICH REFERS TO THE KINGS OF YISRAEL, is anointed. Because oil is first prepared below, MEANING THAT SHE HAD THE POT OF OIL, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE AWAKENING FROM BELOW, then the oil was available from above, referring to the flowing of the blessings FROM ABOVE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE AWAKENING FROM ABOVE, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "UPON HER SONS, WHO BROUGHT THE VESSELS TO HER; AND SHE POURED OUT" (II MELACHIM 4:5).

265. תְּרִין אֵינּוּן: יַיִן וְשֶׁמֶן. וְאִזְלוּ לְתֵרִין סִטְרִין, יַיִן לְסִטְרָא שְׂמָאלָא, שֶׁמֶן, לְסִטְרָא יְמִינָא. וּמִסִּטְרָא דִּימִינָא, נִפְקִי בִּרְכָּאן לְעֲלָמָא, וּמִתַּמֵּן אֲתַמְשַׁח מַלְכוּתָא קִדְשָׁא. וּבִגִּין דְּשֶׁמֶן הָוָה אֲתַתְקַן לְתַתָּא בְּקִדְמִיתָא, שֶׁמֶן אֲזִדְמַן לְעִילָא, אֲרִיקוּ דְּבִרְכָּאן.

266. Come and behold: From the awakening of this oil above, it was poured on David and Solomon, so that their sons would be blessed. How do we know this? It is in the verse, "And the oil stopped (lit. 'stood')" (II Melachim 4:6). THIS IS ANALOGOUS TO WHAT IS written elsewhere, "a root of Yishai, that stands for a banner of the people..." (Yeshayah 11:10). BECAUSE THIS VERSE ALLUDES TO DAVID, SOLOMON, AND THEIR DESCENDANTS, WHO ARE FROM THE ROOT OF YISHAI, THEN HERE AS WELL THE VERSE ALLUDES TO DAVID, SOLOMON, AND THEIR DESCENDANTS.

267. Come and behold: Just as the table of the shew-bread, from where all the blessings and replenishment of the world come, should not remain empty even for a moment, so that the blessings may not be removed from there, one should never recite blessings over an empty table. The blessings from above will not rest upon an empty table.

268. Come and behold, it is then written: "I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me." First, "I am my beloved's," and then, "his desire is towards me." "I am my beloved's" to prepare a place for him at first BY THE AWAKENING FROM BELOW, and afterwards "his desire is towards me."

269. Another explanation for "I am my beloved's" is based on the understanding that the Shechinah does not reside among the wicked. As soon as a person desires to purify himself and come close to the Holy One, blessed be He, only then does the Shechinah rest upon him. Therefore it is written: "I am my beloved's" first, and then, "his desire is towards me." Because when a person comes to be purified, he is purified.

270. Come and behold: "After these things," after Avraham pursued the kings, and the Holy One, blessed be He, killed them off, Avraham was wondering if perhaps "I have lost all the reward from bringing people to repent and return to the Holy One, blessed be He, and holding on to them to draw them nearer to Him--since now people were killed by me!" Immediately, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: "Fear not, Avram, I am your shield, your reward shall be exceedingly great." You are receiving a reward for them, BECAUSE THEY WERE KILLED, because none of them shall ever be able to improve their behavior.

266. תָּא חֲזִי, מֵאֲתַעְרוּתָא דְהָאֵי שְׁמֵן דְלַעִילָא, קָאֵי לְאַרְקָא עַל דְּדוֹר וּשְׁלָמָה, לְאַתְבָּרְכָא בְנוֹי. מִנ"ל, דְּכַתִּיב, וַיַּעֲמֵד הַשֶּׁמֶן. כְּתִיב הֵכָּא וַיַּעֲמֵד. וְכַתִּיב הֵתֵם שְׂרֵשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲשֶׁר עֲמַד לְנֵס עַמִּים.

267. תָּא חֲזִי, מִשְׁלַחַן דְּלַחֲמֵי הַפָּנִים, דְּבִרְכָאן נַפְקִין מִתַּמֶּן, וּמִזֹּנָא לְעֵלְמָא, לֹא בְעֵי לְאַשְׁתַּבַּח רִיקְנִיא, אֲפִילוּ רִגְעָא חֲדָא, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִסְתַּלְקוּן בְּרָכָאן מִתַּמֶּן, אוֹף הֵכִי לֹא מְבָרְכִין עַל שְׁלַחַן רִיקְנִיא, דְּהָא בְּרָכָאן דְלַעִילָא, לֹא שְׂרִינְן עַל שְׁלַחַן רִיקְנִיא.

268. תָּא חֲזִי, מַה כְּתִיב אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי וְעָלִי תְשׁוּקָתוֹ. אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וּלְבִתֵּר וְעָלִי תְשׁוּקָתוֹ. אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי, לְאַתְקֵנָא לִיהּ דּוּכְתָא בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וּלְבִתֵּר, וְעָלִי תְשׁוּקָתוֹ.

269. דְּבַר אַחֲרָאֵי לְדוֹדִי. דְּהָא תַנִּינָן שְׂכִינְתָא לֹא אֲשַׁתְּכַחַת עִמָּהוּן דְּחִיבִיא, בִּין דָּאֲתִי בַר נֶשׁ לְאַתְדַּבָּא, וּלְמַקְרַב גְּבִי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, בְּרִין שְׂכִינְתָא שְׂרִיא עָלֶיהָ. הֵה"ד אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וְעָלִי תְשׁוּקָתוֹ לְבִתֵּר. אֲתִי בַר נֶשׁ לְאַתְדַּבָּא, מְדַבְּאִין לִיהּ.

270. תָּא חֲזִי, אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, דִּרְדַּף אַבְרָהָם בֵּתֵר אֱלִין מַלְכִין, וְקָטִיל לֹון קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, הוּא אַבְרָהָם תּוֹהָא, אֲמַר דִּילְמָא ח"ו, גְּרַעְנָא הוּא אֲגָרָא, דְּהוּינָא אֲהֵדֵר בְּנִי נֶשָׁא לְגַבִּי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, וְאַחֲדִינָא בְּהוּ, לְקִרְבָּא לֹון לְגַבִּיהּ, וְהִשְׁתָּא אֲתַקְטִילוּ בְּנִי נֶשָׁא עַל יְדֵי. מִיָּד אֲמַרְלוּקְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, אַל תִּירָא אַבְרָם אֲנִכִּי מִגֵּן לֶךְ שְׂכִרְךָ הִרְבָּה וְגו'. אֲגָרָא קְבִילַת עַלְיָהּ, דְּהָא כְּלָהּ לֹא יִזְכּוּן לְעֵלְמִין.

27. "Hashem came to Avram in a vision"

The Zohar presents four complex ideas. The first concerns the mysteries of circumcision. Before we can begin to understand any ritual performed in our physical world, we must acquire some understanding of the structure of the Upper Worlds which are the foundation of our physical existence. The Zohar refers to ten dimensions that compose all creation. These dimensions are known as the Ten Sfirot, or Ten Emanations.

The Sfirah of Yesod is a reservoir to which all the upper Sfirot pour their various energies. Yesod gathers all these elements, blends them, and transfers this great Light to the Sfirah of Malchut, which is our physical universe. Residing just above Malchut in the structure of the Ten Sfirot, Yesod acts as the portal through which the awesome forces of Light enter our realm. As the building blocks of all creation, the Ten Sfirot reflect themselves in our world. Thus, we have ten fingers, ten toes, and our numerical system functions on base ten.

The Sfirah of Yesod correlates to the sexual organ, in which the greatest expression of Light manifests. This great Light is responsible for the miracle of procreation and the pleasure derived from it.

The negative forces in our midst attach themselves to any gateway through which the greatest Light can shine. For this reason, these negative entities are found in the upper world realm of Yesod; in our physical realm, negative forces manifest in the human sexual organ. The purpose of the

covenant of circumcision is to remove this negative influence from our lives as well as from the worlds above. Circumcision, performed properly with Kabbalistic mediation, removes all negativity from both the child and the world. The act of circumcision brings enormous spiritual benefits to the child, including boosting his immune system. Though small in size, the foreskin contains powerful negative forces, as if it were a nuclear warhead at the tip of a ballistic missile.

The Relevance of this Passage

These specific Aramaic texts emanate spiritual influences that help cleanse and purify the realm of Yesod within us, including any negative sexual thoughts, desires or actions. It is these blockages that can prevent us from receiving our full portion of the Light.

271. "The word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision, saying..." HE ASKS: What is meant by a vision? AND HE ANSWERS: This is the mirror, which is the grade in which all images appear. Rabbi Shimon said: Come and behold, before Avraham was circumcised, only one grade spoke to him. And which one was that? It was the 'vision,' NAMELY THE NUKVA. As it is written: "...seeing the vision of Shadai" (Bemidbar 24:16).

272. After Avraham was circumcised, all the grades rested upon that grade, WHICH IS CALLED THE VISION, and then He spoke to him. Hence, it is written: "And I appeared to Avraham," WHO IS THE SECRET OF CHESD, "to Yitzchak," WHO IS THE SECRET OF GVURAH, "and to Ya'akov," WHO IS THE SECRET OF TIFERET, "by the name of El Shadai" (Shemot 6:3), WHICH IS THE SECRET OF YESOD AND MALCHUT. ALL THE GRADES, FROM CHESD DOWNWARD, ILLUMINATE IN THE NUKVA. So, before he was circumcised, these grades did not yet speak to him, ONLY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE "VISION OF SHADAI" ALONE!

273. You might say that it is already written: "And Hashem appeared to Avram," WHICH IS THE LEVEL OF NEFESH, AND "and Avram journeyed, going on still toward the south," WHICH IS RUACH; and "and there he built an altar," WHICH IS NESHAMAH. If here are the supernal grades THAT HE ATTAINED, how can we say that before he was circumcised, the supernal grades did not rest upon that certain grade, in order to speak to him?

274. AND HE REPLIES, Come and behold: In the beginning; BEFORE HE WAS CIRCUMCISED, the Holy One, blessed be He, gave wisdom to Avraham, NAMELY THE AFOREMENTIONED SUPERNAL GRADES, so that he would know wisdom and would cleave to THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. And Avraham did achieve the secret of Faith, but he could not speak to Him, only to the lower grade alone, NAMELY THE NUKVA AS SEEN "THROUGH THE VISION OF SHADAI." But after he was circumcised, then all the supernal grades rested upon this lower grade, in order to speak with him. And then Avraham ascended through all the grades, as has been explained.

275. Come and behold: As long as a man is not circumcised, he does not hold on to the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He. As soon as he is circumcised, he enters His Name and is attached to it. And if you say that Avraham was nevertheless attached to Him even before he was circumcised, the response is that he was indeed attached to Him, but not properly. Because of the sublime love that the Holy One, blessed be He, felt toward Avraham, He brought him closer to Himself, BUT IN SPITE OF ALL THIS, IT WAS NOT AS IT SHOULD PROPERLY BE.

271. הָיָה דְבַר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם בַּמַּחְזָה לֵאמֹר. מֵאִי בַּמַּחְזָה. אֵלָּא, בַּהֲהוּא חֵיזוּ, דְּרָגָא דְכָל דְיוֹקְנִין אֲתַחְזִיין בֵּיהּ. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן תָּא חֲזִי, עַד לָא אֲתַגְזֹר אַבְרָהָם, הָוֵה חַד דְּרָגָא מְלִיל עֲמִיָּה, וּמֵאֵן אִיהוּ, דָּא מַחְזָה, דְּכַתִּיב מַחְזָה שְׂדֵי יַחֲזֶה.

272. בֵּינָן דְּאֲתַגְזֹר, הָוֵה כְּלָהּ דְּרִגִּין שְׂרָאן עַל הָאֵי דְרָגָא, וּכְדִין מְלִיל עֲמִיָּה, הֵה"ד, וְאֵרָא אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֶל יִצְחָק וְאֶל יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שְׁדֵי, וְעַד לָא אֲתַגְזֹר, לָא הָוֵה אֵינֻן דְּרִגִּין שְׂרָאן עַלֹּי לְמַלְלָא.

273. וְאִי תִימָא, דְּהָא בְּקַדְמִיתָא כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אַבְרָם, וּכְתִיב, וַיֵּסַע אַבְרָם הַלּוֹךְ וְנָסוּעַ הַנִּגְבָּה. וּכְתִיב וַיֵּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ. הָא הֵכָא אֵינֻן דְּרִגִּין עֲלָאִין. וְהִשְׁתָּא אֲמַרְן דְּעַד לָא אֲתַגְזֹר, לָא הָוֵה אֵינֻן דְּרִגִּין עֲלָאִין, שְׂרָאן עַל הָאֵי דְרָגָא לְמַלְלָא עֲמִיָּה.

274. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּקַדְמִיתָא יְהִיב קַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא חֲכָמָה לְאַבְרָהָם, לְמַנְדַּע חֲכָמָה לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בֵּיהּ, וַיֵּדַע רִזָּא דְמַהִימָנוּתָא, אֲבָל לְמַלְלָא עֲמִיָּה, לָא הָוֵה, אֵלָּא הָאֵי דְרָגָא תַתָּא בְּלַחוּדוֹ. בֵּינָן דְּאֲתַגְזֹר, כְּלָהּ דְּרִגִּין עֲלָאִין הָוֵה שְׂרָאן עַל הָאֵי דְרָגָא תַתָּא, בְּגִין לְמַלְלָא עֲמִיָּה, וּכְדִין אֲסַתְּלַק אַבְרָהָם בְּכָלָא. כְּמָה דְּאֲתַמַּר.

275. תָּא חֲזִי, עַד לָא אֲתַגְזֹר בְּרִיךְ נֶשׁ, לָא אֲתַאֲחִיד בְּשֵׁמָא דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בֵּינָן דְּאֲתַגְזֹר, עָאֵל בְּשֵׁמִיָּה, וְאֲתַאֲחִיד בֵּיהּ. וְאִי תִימָא אַבְרָהָם, דְּאֲתַאֲחִיד בֵּיהּ, עַד לָא אֲתַגְזֹר. הֵכִי הָוֵה, דְּאֲתַאֲחִיד בֵּיהּ וְלָא כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, דְּהָא מְגוּ רַחֲמִימוּתָא עֲלָאָה דְרַחֲמִים לִיהּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא קָרִיב לִיהּ.

276. After, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, commanded Avraham to circumcise himself, and presented him with the covenant, WHICH IS YESOD, which is the link to all the supernal grades. The covenant is the bond that links all the grades together, to be included within one another. The covenant is the bond that everything is bound to. And because of this, before Avraham was circumcised, He spoke with him only through the "vision," as we have stated. THE UPPER GRADES WERE MISSING FROM IT, BECAUSE THE COVENANT, WHICH LINKS ALL THE GRADES TOGETHER, WAS MISSING.

277. Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He created it based on the covenant. It is written: "In the beginning (Heb. Beresheet) Elohim created (Heb. bara)" (Beresheet 1:1), WHERE SHEET (ARAM. SIX) refers to the covenant, because by relying upon the covenant, the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world. And it is also written: "If My covenant be not day and night, it were as if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Yirmeyah 33:25). This is a unifying covenant, which ensures that day and night, WHICH ARE ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, may not be separated.

278. Rabbi Elazar said: "When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, it was on the condition that if Yisrael will come forth and receive Torah, all would be well. If Yisrael will not do so, then the world would be returned to chaos. So the world was not firmly established until Yisrael stood at Mount Sinai and received Torah. The second idea presented by the Zohar concerns the concept of soul mates. Our success in finding our true soul mate depends on the levels we reach in our spiritual work. If we attain the necessary level of growth, we may merit the appearance of our soul mate in our life.

The Relevance of this Passage

According to Kabbalah, soul mates are two halves of one soul. If two people are soul mates living on opposite ends of the world, circumstances will eventually arise that will lead them across vast continents and oceans in order that they may encounter one another and reunite. The Aramaic words expressing this spiritual truth, assists us towards that end.

279. From that day onward, the Holy One, blessed be He, has been creating worlds. And what are these worlds? They are the matings of human beings. Because ever since that day, the Holy One blessed be He, has been making marriages, by saying: "The daughter of so to so for so and so." These are the worlds He creates, BECAUSE EVERY UNION OF A COUPLE IS CONSIDERED TO BE A WORLD. Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

280. "After these things." These are the words of Torah, just as "These words Hashem spoke to all your assembly" (Devarim 5:19) are the words of Torah. THE MEANING OF THE VERSE IS THAT "After" a person has been occupied in this world with "these things (lit. 'words')," then the Holy One, blessed be He, prepares good tidings for the soul and welcomes it. As it is written: "Fear not, Avram, I am your shield"; I shall shield you from all the evil aspects in Gehenom."

276. לְבִתָּר פִּקִּיד לִיה, דִּיתְגֹּזֵר, וְאַתִּייהִיב לִיה בְּרִית. קְשׁוּרָא דְכֻלְהוּ דְרִגִּין עֲלָאִין. בְּרִית קְשׁוּרָא לְאַתְקֻשְׂרָא כָּלָא כְּחֻדָּא, לְאַכְלֵלָא דָּא בְּדָא, בְּרִית קְשׁוּרָא, דְכָלָא אֶתְקֻשְׂרָא בִּיה, וּבְגִין כְּרָאבְרָהֶם עַד לָא אֶתְגֹּזֵר. מְלוּי לָא הוּה עֲמִיה, אֶלָּא בְּמַחְזָה. כְּמָה דְאַתְמֹר.

277. תָּא חֲזִי. בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְבָרָא קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֵעֵלְמָא. לָא אֶתְבְּרוּ אֶלָּא עַל בְּרִית. כַּד"א בְּרִית א-שִׁי"ת בְּרָא אֱלֹקִים, וְהֵינּוּ בְּרִית, דְּעַל בְּרִית קִיִּים קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֵעֵלְמָא וּכְתִיב אִם לָא בְּרִיתִי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה חֻקֹּת שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ לָא שְׁמַתִּי, דְּהָא בְּרִית קְשׁוּרָא אִיהוּ, דִּיּוֹמָא וּלְיָלָיָא לָא מִתְפָּרְשָׁאִין.

278. אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלֵעָזָר, כַּד בְּרָא קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֵעֵלְמָא, עַל תְּנָאי הוּה, דְּכַד יִיתוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל, אִם יִקְבְּלוּן אוֹרִייתָא יְאוּת, וְאִם לָאו הָרִי אָנָּא אֶהְדֵּר לְכוּ, לְתַהּוּ וּבְהוּ. וְעֵלְמָא לָא אֶתְקִיִּים, עַד דְּקִיִּימוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל טוֹרָא דְסִינֵי, וּקְבִילוּ אוֹרִייתָא, וּכְדִין אֶתְקִיִּים עֵלְמָא.

279. וּמַהְוָא יוֹמָא וְלַהֲלָא, קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֲבְרִי עֲלָמִין, וּמָאן אִינוּן, זְוֹגִין דְּבִנֵּי נָשָׂא. דְּהָא מַהְוָא זְמָנָא, קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֲמַזְוֹג זְוֹגִין, וְאוּמַר בֵּת פְּלוֹנִי לְפְלוֹנִי, וְאַלִין אִינוּן עֲלָמִין דְּהוּא בְּרִי.

סְתְרֵי תוֹרָה

280. אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְגו'. אֵלִין פְּתַגְמֵי אוֹרִייתָא, דְּכְתִיב אֶת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה דְּבַר ה' אֶל כָּל קְהִלָּתְכֶם. מַה לְהֵלֵן פְּתַגְמֵי אוֹרִייתָא, אוֹף הָכָא פְּתַגְמֵי אוֹרִייתָא. בְּתַר דְּאַשְׁתַּדֵּל בֵּר נִשְׁבְּהָאִי עֵלְמָא, בְּדְבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, קְדָשָׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֲמַבְשֵׁר לִיה, וְאַקְדִּים לָהּ לְנִשְׁמַתָּא שְׁלָם, הַה"ד אֶל תִּירָא אַבְרָם אֲנִכִי מִגֵּן לָךְ. מִכָּל זַיִּינִין בִּישִׁין דְּגִיְהֵנָם.

281. "And your reward shall be exceedingly great," because whoever studies Torah in this world shall merit and inherit a place in the world to come. As it is written: "That I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance" (Mishlei 8:21). "What is substance?" Substance is "the world to come," and "I will fill their treasures" in this world by riches and all goodness of the world. He who goes to the right shall merit a place in the world to come, and he who goes to the left shall merit the riches of this world.

The third idea explicated upon by the Zohar concerns the power associated with the study of Torah. Rabbi Aba helps his student, Rabbi Yosi, transform his Torah study from a selfish, self-seeking pursuit, to a process of learning that expresses caring and compassion for the rest of the world.

The benefits of learning Torah are not limited to the traditional concept of acquiring knowledge. Torah study is the sum and substance of spiritual energy itself, and therefore, it reveals enormous spiritual Light both individually and collectively. Our motivation for study should not be selfish desire for knowledge and scholarship. Our purpose should be to reveal and impart Light to others.

The Relevance of this Passage

It is tempting for man to wear the garment of pride as he begins to acquire the knowledge and the secrets of the universe. This discourse helps us accomplish our learning and perform our spiritual work with an intention of sharing combined with deep humility.

282. After Rabbi Aba returned from BABYLON, he declared that whoever desires to be rich and have a long life in the world to come should study Torah, and the whole world gathered around him TO STUDY TORAH. There was a bachelor in his neighborhood. One day he said to Rabbi Aba, "Rabbi, I wish to learn Torah so that I may be wealthy." Rabbi Aba responded, "Why of course, YOU SHALL MERIT MUCH WEALTH BY STUDYING TORAH." He asked, "What is your name?" The bachelor responded, "Yosi." Rabbi Aba told his pupils to call the bachelor "Yosi, a man of great wealth and glory." And Yosi delved to the study of Torah.

283. After a while, as the days passed, Yosi stood before Rabbi Aba and asked, "Rabbi, where is the wealth?" RABBI ABA responded, "I can see that he is not learning for the sake of heaven!" And then he went to his room TO CONSIDER WHAT TO DO WITH YOSI. He then heard a voice that said: Do not punish him, because he shall become a great man! He returned to him and said: Sit down, my son, sit down. And I shall give you wealth.

284. In the meantime, a man appeared with a vessel made of pure gold, He showed it to everyone, and its sparkle lit up the house. He said: Rabbi, I wish to merit Torah. Because I MYSELF have not merited THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE TORAH, I am searching for someone who can learn Torah for my sake. I inherited great wealth from my father, who used to set upon his table thirteen of these cups MADE OF PURE GOLD. I wish to achieve the merit of studying Torah, and I shall give my wealth to achieve it.

281. שְׂכָרְךָ הָרַבָּה מְאֹד. בְּגִין דְּכָל מָאן דְּאִשְׁתַּדַּל בְּאוּרִייתָא בְּהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, זְכִי וְאַחֲסִין יְרוּתָא אַחֲסִנְתָּא בְּעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי, כְּמָה דְּכְתִיב לְהִנְחִיל אוֹהֲבֵי יֵשׁ. מֵאֵי יֵשׁ. דָּא עֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי. וְאוֹצְרוֹתֵיהֶם אֲמֵלָא, בְּהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, מְעוֹתְרָא וּמִכָּל טִיבוּ דְּעֲלָמָא, מָאן דְּאִזְיֵל לְיְמִינָא, זְכִי לְעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי. וּמָאן דְּאִזְיֵל לְשְׂמָאלָא, הָא עוֹתְרָא בְּעֲלָמָא דִּין.

282. ר' אבא בר אבא מיהתם, הוה מוכריז, מן בעי עותרא, ומן בעי אורכא דחיי בעלמא דאתי, ויתי וישתדל באורייתא. הוה מתכנשין כולי עלמא לגביה. רוק חד הוה בשיכבותיה. יומא חד אתא לגביה, אמרלור, בעינא למלעי באורייתא, ברי שהיה לי עותרא. אמרלוהא ודאי. אמרלוהא שמך. אמרלווסי. אמר לון לתלמידוי דיקרון ליה ר' יוסי מארי דעותרא ויקרא. יתיב ואתעסק באורייתא.

283. ליומין, הוה קאים קמיה, אמרלור, אן הוא עותרא. אמר שמע מינה, דלא לשם שמים קא עבד, ועאל לארריה, שמע חד קלא דהוה אמר, לא תענשיה, דגברא רבא ליהוי. תב לגביה, אמר ליה, תיב ברי תיב, ואנא יהיבנא לך עותרא.

284. אדהכי, אתא גברא חד, ומאנא דפז ביריה, אמקיה ונפל נהורא בביתא. אמרלורבי בעינא למזבי באורייתא, ואנא לא זכינא, ובעינא מן דישתדל באורייתא בגיני. דהא אית לי עותרא סגי, דקא שבק לי אבא, דכד יתיב על פתוריה, הוה מסדר עליה, תליסר כסי מאלין. ובעינא למזבי באורייתא, ואנא יהיבנא עותרא.

285. He said to the bachelor: Study Torah, and this man shall give you wealth! The man gave him the cup of gold. In relation to him, Rabbi ABA said out loud the verse, "Gold and crystal cannot equal it. And the exchange of it shall not be for vessels of fine gold" (Iyov 28:17). The bachelor then sat down and studied Torah, while the other man gave him wealth.

286. As days passed, the desire for the Torah entered his bowels. One day he sat down and cried. His Rabbi found him weeping and said to him, "Why are you weeping?" And he replied, "What am I leaving behind for this WEALTH? The life in the world to come! I do not want to learn anymore FOR THE SAKE OF THIS MAN. But rather merit Torah for myself." RABBI ABA said: So now I understand that he is doing it for the sake of heaven.

287. He called for that man and said to him, "Take your wealth back and share it with the poor and the orphans. I shall give you a bigger portion in the Torah, from all that we are learning!" Rabbi Yosi returned the cup of gold to him, and to this very day, the name "the son of gold (Heb. ben pazi)" has not been taken away from him or from his children. He became THE FAMOUS Rabbi, Yosi ben Pazi. And he and his sons merited a lot of Torah, because there is no greater reward in the world than to study Torah. AND A RECOMPENSE FOR IT IS NOT NECESSARY. AS IT IS WRITTEN: "GOLD AND CRYSTAL CANNOT EQUAL IT; AND THE EXCHANGE OF IT SHALL NOT BE FOR VESSELS OF FINE GOLD."

The fourth concept examined by the Zohar concerns the importance and power of the Zohar's Aramaic language. Aramaic is above any invisible negative influences, and this language provides a direct connection to the Creator. Accordingly, when the Creator reveals important wisdom that requires protection from potentially harmful angelic forces, the wisdom is expressed in Aramaic.

Kabbalistically, the Hebrew and Aramaic languages are not merely communication tools for mankind. This instrument of language has many other higher functions, including the direct expression of metaphysical forces in our material world.

The Relevance of this Passage

We live in a world of concealment, where metaphysical forces and spiritual influences remain obscured from the five senses. Inasmuch as mankind has been conditioned to accept only that which the eyes can see, raising our consciousness becomes a considerable and difficult task. The discussion pertaining to Aramaic reinforces our own conviction and connection to the language, elevating our consciousness so that the energy pouring out from the Aramaic letters fills our soul.

288. "After these things the word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision, saying, 'Fear not, Avram....'" Wherever the words "in a vision" appear in the Torah, it is the one that appeared to the Patriarchs. And what is it? It is Shadai, as it is written: "And I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov by the name of El Shadai" (Shmot 6:3), and as you may read, "which saw the vision of Shadai" (Bemidbar 24:4). And this is the vision through which all supernal appearances are seen, just as a mirror OF GLASS in which all images are reflected. And vision (Heb. mar'eh) and the appearance (Heb. machazeh) are the same-one is in Aramaic and the other is in the holy tongue.

285. אִמְרִלּוּלָהּהוּא רוּק, תִּשְׁתַּדֵּל בְּאוּרִייתָא, וְדִאֲהִיב לָךְ עוֹתְרָא, יְהִי לִיה הֵהוּא כֶּסֶף דְּפִז. קָרָא עֲלֵיהּ ר' אָבָא, לֹא יַעֲרֻכָּנָה זָהָב וְזָכוּכִית וְתַמּוּרְתָּהּ כְּלִי פִז. יְתִיב וְלַעָא בְּאוּרִייתָא, וְהֵהוּא בֵּר נֶשׁ הָהוּא יְהִיב לִיה עוֹתְרָא.

286. לְיוֹמִין עָאֵל חֲמִידוֹ דְּאוּרִייתָא בְּמַעוּי, יוֹמָא חַד הָהוּא יְתִיב, וְהָהוּא בְּכִי. אֲשַׁכְּחִיה רַבִּינָה דְּהָהוּ בְּכִי. אִמְרִלּוּעַל מַה קָא בְּכִית. אִמְרִלוּ, וּמַה מִּנְחָנָא חֲוִי דַּעֲלָמָא דְּאֲתִי, בְּגִין הָאִי, לֹא בַּעֲיָנָא אֱלָא לְמִזְכִּי לְגַבְאִי. אִמְרִלוּהֲשִׁתָּא שׁ"מ דְּהָא לְשֵׁם שְׁמַיִם קָא עֵבִיד.

287. קָרָא לִיה לְהֵהוּא גִבְרָא, אִמְרִלוּטוּל עוֹתְרָךְ וְהִיב לִיה לִיתְמִי וְלְמַסְכְּנִי, וְאָנָא יְהִיבְנָא לָךְ חוֹלָק יְתִיר בְּאוּרִייתָא, בְּכָל מַה דְּאָנָן לַעָאֵן. אֲהֲדֵר לִיה ר' יוֹסִי הֵהוּא כֶּסֶף דְּפִז, וְעַד יוֹמָא לֹא אַעֲדִי שְׁמִיה וּמִן בְּנוֹי בֶּן פָּזִי, וְהֵינֵנוּ ר' יוֹסִי בֶּן פָּזִי, וְזָכָה לְכַמָּה אוּרִייתָא, הוּא וּבְנוֹי. דְּלִית לָךְ אֲגֵר טַב בַּעֲלָמָא כְּמָאֵן דְּלַעֲי בְּאוּרִייתָא.

288. אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְּבַר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם בְּמַחֲזָה לֵאמֹר וְגו'. בְּכָל אֲתֵר דְּכְתִיב בְּאוּרִייתָא בְּמַחֲזָה, דָּא שְׁמָא דְּאֲתַגְלִי לְאַבְהָן, וּמָאֵן אִיהוּ. שְׁדִי, שְׁנָאֲמֵר וְאֵרָא אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֶל יִצְחָק וְאֶל יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שְׁדִי. כִּד"א אֲשֶׁר מַחֲזָה שְׁדִי יַחֲזָה. וְדָא אִיהוּ חֲיוּ דְּכָל חֲזוּן עֲלָאִין אֲתַחֲזִין מְגֻיָּה, כְּהֵאִי מְרָאָה, דְּכָל דְּיוֹקְנִין אֲתַחֲזִין בֵּיהּ, וְכָלֹא חַד. מְרָאָה מַחֲזָה חַד הוּא, דָּא תַּרְגוּם, וְדָא לְשׁוֹן קֳדוּשׁ.

289. Rabbi Yosi said: There are many ARAMAIC WORDS in the Torah. Therefore, Onkelos had permission to translate the Torah to the same language that the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed in the Torah. But this language is not understood by the angels above, and they did not recognize it when THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, spoke to Avraham.

290. AND HE ASKS: What is the reason, THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED HE, SPOKE WITH AVRAHAM IN A LANGUAGE THAT WAS NOT RECOGNIZABLE BY THE ANGELS? AND HE REPLIES: Because Avraham was not circumcised; his foreskin still covered his flesh. Therefore THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SPOKE in the language of the translation, which is incomprehensible TO THE ANGELS. The same with Bilaam, as it is written: "who sees (Heb. yechezeh) the vision of Shadai." The word 'YECHZEH' is not comprehensible to the ministering angels. So that they have no excuse to complain that the Holy One, blessed be He, is talking with an uncircumcised and impure man. Because the holy angels have no use for the Aramaic translation, THEY WERE UNAWARE THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WAS SPEAKING WITH BILAAM!"

291. AND HE ASKS: You say that THE ANGELS do not understand THE LANGUAGE OF THE TRANSLATION, but Gavriel taught Yosef seventy languages and Aramaic was one of them. AND HE REPLIES: They do know the language, but have no use for it. WHICH MEANS THAT they do not care about it and do not pay attention to it, because they dislike this language more than any other language.

292. You may ask, "If it is despised by the angels above, why did Onkelos translate the Torah to that language, and Yonatan ben Uziel the Scriptures?" AND HE REPLIES: It was repulsive only to the angels. And so it should be, so that the angels of above should not envy Yisrael WHEN THEY SAY THE PRAYERS CALLED KEDUSHA DESIDRA. BUT TO US, IT IS NOT DESPICABLE. And this is why they translated Torah and the Scriptures TO THIS LANGUAGE. And it is not despised, because the Holy One, blessed be He, has written it in many places in the Torah USING THIS LANGUAGE.

293. Because this language is incomprehensible to the holy angels above, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to Avraham in this concealed manner, so that the holy angels would not look upon him and have an excuse to accuse the Holy One, blessed be He, for appearing before an uncircumcised man.

294. HE ASKS: When did He openly reveal Himself to him, in front of the angels of above? AND HE RESPONDS: At the time when He gave him the sign of the Holy covenant. As it is written: "And Elohim talked with him saying..." (Beresheet 17:3). Elohim is a holy name. It is not written: "in a vision," BUT "ELOHIM," WHICH IS a revealed name.

289. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, סִגְיָאִין אֵינּוּן בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, וְעַל דְּאִהוּ לִיה רְשׁוֹ לְאוֹנְקֵלוֹס, לְתַרְגָּם בְּהוּא לִישָׁנָא דְגַלִּי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּאוֹרֵייתָא. וְלִישָׁנָא דָּא סְתִים אִיהוּ מִגּוּ מְלָאכִי עֲלָא. בְּמַחְזָה, דְּהוּא סְתִים מְמַלְאכִי עֲלָאִי דְּלֹא יָדְעִי בְּדָא, כִּד מְמַלִּיל בֵּיה בְּאַבְרָהָם.

290. מ"ט, בְּגִין דְּאַבְרָהָם לֹא הוּא מְהוּל, וְהוּא עֲרַל, סְתִים בְּשָׂרָא. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ הוּא סְתִים מְגִייהוּ, בְּלִשׁוֹן תַּרְגּוּם. כְּגֻוְנָא דָּא בְּלָעָם, דְּכַתִּיב אֲשֶׁר מַחֲזֶה שְׂדֵי יַחֲזֶה. סְתִים הוּא מְלָא מִגּוּ מְלָאכִי הַשָּׁרָת, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יָהֵא לֹון פְּטָרָא, דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מְמַלִּל בְּהוּא עֲרַל מְסַבָּא. דְּהָא מְלָאכִי קְדִישִׁי לֹאֻ נִזְקְקִין בְּלִשׁוֹן תַּרְגּוּם.

291. אִי תִימָא דְּלֹא יָדְעִי, וְהָא גְבֻרִיָּאל אוֹלִיף לְיוֹסֵף ע' לִשׁוֹן, וְתַרְגּוּם חֹד מַע' לִשׁוֹן הוּא. אֲלֹא מְנַדַּע יָדְעִי, אֲבָל לֹא נִזְקְקִין תְּנֻן, דְּלֹא חִיּוּשִׁי וְלֹא מְשִׁיחִין עֲלֵיהּ, דְּהָא מָאִיס אִיהוּ קְמִייהוּ, מְכָל שָׂאָר לִשׁוֹן.

292. וְאִי תִימָא, הוּאִיל וּמָאִיס אִיהוּ מְמַלְאכִי עֲלָאִי, אֲמָאִי תַרְגּוּם אוֹנְקֵלוֹס אוֹרֵייתָא בְּהָאִי לִשׁוֹן, וְיוֹנָתָן בֶּן עֻזִּיָּאל הַמִּקְרָא. אֲלֹא מָאִיס הוּא קְמִייהוּ, וְהָכִי אֲצַטְרִיךְ דְּלִית קְנָאָה לְמְלָאכִי עֲלָאִי בְּהַדְרִייהוּ דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִיר, וְעַל דָּא תַרְגּוּם תּוֹרָה וּמִקְרָא כֵךְ, וְלֹאֻ מָאִיס אִיהוּ, דְּהָא בְּכַמָּה דּוֹכְתִי בְּתַב קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּאוֹרֵייתָא הָכִי.

293. וּבְגִין כִּרְסְתִים אִיהוּ מִגּוּ מְלָאכִי עֲלָאִי קְדִישִׁי. וְעַל דָּא אֲתַגְלִי בֵיה בְּאַבְרָהָם בְּאוֹרַח סְתִים, דְּלֹא יִשְׁגָּחוּן בֵּיה מְלָאכִין קְדִישִׁין, וְלֹא יָהֵא לֹון פְּטָרָא, דְּקוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתַגְלִי עַל בֶּר נֶשׁ עֲרַל.

294. אִימְתִי אֲתַגְלִי לִיה בְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא דְּמְלָאכִי עֲלָאִי, כִּד יְהִיב לִיה בְּרִית קְיִימָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּכַתִּיב וַיִּדְבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹקִים לֵאמֹר. אֱלֹקִים שְׁמָא דְּקוֹדְשָׁא, וְלֹא כְתִיב בְּמַחְזָה, שְׁמָא בְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא.

295. AND HE ASKS: What is 'saying'?" AND HE REPLIES: "saying" MEANS to announce and declare in all languages, WHICH THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SPOKE WITH AVRAHAM, so that he was no longer concealed FROM THE ANGELS. He did not speak in any other language-REFERRING TO ARAMAIC-but in a language that all use, so that they were able to talk to each other, and no one would be able to blame or have any pretext. Therefore, "and Elohim talked with him, saying," 'Elohim' and not 'a vision,' as He has brought him to the holy covenant, close to Him.

295. לֵאמֹר. מֵאִי לֵאמֹר, לֵאמֹר וּלְאַכְרָזָא בְּכָל לְשׁוֹן, דְּלֵא תְהֵא בְּאַתְבָּסְיָא, לָאו בְּלִישְנָא אַחְרָא, אֲלֵא בְלִישְנָא דְכָלֵא מִשְׁתַּעֲיִין בְּה, דִּיכְלִי לְמִימַר דָּא לְדָא, וְלֵא יכְלִי לְקִטְרָגָא וּלְמִימַר פִּטְרָא, וְעַל דָּא וַיְדַבֵּר אֶתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר. אֱלֹהִים, וְלֵא מַחְזָה. בְּגִין דְּהוּה מַעֲיִיל לִיה בְּבְרִית קְיִימָא קְדִישָׁא, וְקָרִיב לִיה לְגַבִּיה.

296. Rabbi Yehuda said: According to this, the letter Hei, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, was not given to him, until he was circumcised! Why? Because She is called the actual covenant. Therefore because he entered the covenant, he was given the letter Hei IN HIS NAME. As it is written: "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. Neither shall your name any more be called Avram..." (Beresheet 17: 4-5).

296. ר' יְהוּדָה אָמַר, בְּגִין כְּרָאת ה' לֹא אֲתִיְהֵב לִיה עַד דְּאַתְגִּזֹּר. מ"ט. דְּאִיהִי מִמֶּשׁ בְּרִית אֲקָרִי. וְעַל דְּאִפִּיּוֹן דְּעָאֵל בְּבְרִית, כְּדִין אֲתִיְהֵיבַת לִיה אֵת ה"א. דְּכְתִיב, אֲנִי הֵנָּה בְּרִיתִי אִתְךָ וְהָיִיתָ לְאָב הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם וְלֹא יִקְרָא עוֹד שְׁמֶךָ אֲבְרָם וְגו'.

28. Rabbi Chiya went to visit Rabbi Elazar

The Zohar offers a story about the travels of Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Chagai to visit Rabbi Elazar, the son of Kabbalist Rabbi Shimon bar Yokhai, author of the Zohar. Kabbalistically, the concept of travelling really concerns a spiritual journey of the mind and soul between two sages. As the two mystics embark on their excursion, their discussion of various spiritual matters is intended to attract particular levels of energy into their lives, and ultimately, to raise them to the very spiritual levels they are discussing.

Rabbi Chiya is concerned that his colleague Rabbi Chagai may not be worthy to enter this higher realm, which is symbolized by the mention of Rabbi Elazar. As they begin to approach Rabbi Elazar, who represents the next dimension, Rabbi Chiya suddenly realizes that Rabbi Chagai is actually more worthy than himself. When the two sages reach Rabbi Elazar's home, he does not immediately let them in. He wants to appraise their level of spiritual consciousness. The sages, therefore, wait and sit in silence. After a while, Rabbi Elazar gets up and enters his room. While in his quarters, he hears a voice telling him that the sages are ready and that he should reveal to them all the mysteries and spiritual Light they seek. A study session ensues, and suddenly a great fire encircles Rabbi Elazar. The sages then leave, realizing they are not yet ready to receive the full revelation of spiritual energy that occupies the next realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

Each of us must prepare our own internal vessel in order to continue our growth and spiritual work. The words of this story assist in expanding our vessel and furthering our preparation.

297. "After these things...": On his way to visit Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Chiya met Rabbi Chagai. He said to him: This route, which is set before you, sir, where does it lead to? He answered: IT LEADS to my visiting Rabbi Elazar. He said to him: I shall go along with you. He said: If you will be able to understand the wisdom and the reason behind what you will hear, then come along. But if not, then turn back! He said to him, sir, do not worry about this, because I have heard many secrets of Torah, and I was able to understand them.

297. אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה. רַבִּי חִיָּיָא הוּה אָזִיל לְמַחְמֵי לְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, פִּגְעַ בֵּיה רַבִּי חַגַּי, אֲמַרְלוּהֵא אֶרְחָא דְּמִתְקַנָּא קַמֵּיה דְּמַר, לֹאֵן אִיהוּ אָזִיל. אֲמַרְלוּ לְמַחְמֵי לְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר. אֲמַרְלוּ אֲנָא נְמִי אִיזִיל בְּהַדָּךְ. אֲמַרְלוּ, אִי תִיכּוֹל לְמַסְבֵּר סִבְרָא לְמֵאִי דְּתַשְׁמַע, זִיל. וְאִי לֹאוּ תוֹב אֲבַתְרָךְ. אֲמַרְלוּ, לֹא יִלְחוּשׁ מִר לְהֵאִי, דְּהָא אֲנָא שְׁמַעְנָא כְּמָה רַזִּי דְּאוּרִייתָא, וְיִכְלִנָּא לְמִיקָם בְּהוּ.

298. Rabbi Chagai opened the discussion, saying: This is the meaning of 'My offering, the provision of my sacrifices made by fire...' (Bemidbar 28:2). "My offering" refers to an offering of flesh, which is given for atonement; blood OF THE SACRIFICE for the blood OF MAN; flesh OF THE SACRIFICE for the flesh OF MAN. All sacrifices are offered only for the flesh, THAT IS, to atone for the flesh.

298. פִּתַּח ר' חַגַּי וְאָמַר מֵאִי דְּכְתִיב אֵת קִרְבְּנִי לְחִמִּי לְאַשִּׁי וְגו'. אֵת קִרְבְּנִי, דָּא קִרְבֵּן בְּשָׂרָא, דְּאַתְקִרֵּב לְכַפָּרָא, דְּמָא עַל דְּמָא, בְּשָׂרָא עַל בְּשָׂרָא, בְּגִין דְּכָל קִרְבָּנִין לָאו מִתְקִרְבִּין אֲלֵא עַל בְּשָׂרָא, לְכַפָּרָא עַל בְּשָׂרָא.

299. And I heard thus: if a man sinned, what is the sin of the animal, that the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "If any man of you bring an offering to Hashem, of the cattle..." (Vayikra 1:2)? AND HE REPLIES: The Holy One, blessed be He, formed the spirit of men and the spirit of animals, and then separated them from each other. Therefore, "the spirit of man goes upwards, and the spirit of the beast goes downwards," (Kohelet 3:21) so they are definitely separated from each other!

300. Before Adam sinned, it is written: "And Elohim said: Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed..." (Beresheet 1:29) and "to you it shall be for food" and no more THAN THIS. SO HE WAS NOT PERMITTED TO EAT ANIMALS. But since he had sinned and the Evil Inclination was absorbed to his body and to all of his offspring, He passed His judgment over them; IN OTHER WORDS, HE BROUGHT THE GREAT FLOOD UPON THEM.

301. Later, Noach came and saw that the body is built by the Evil Inclination, so he offered a sacrifice as Adam did. And it is written: "And Hashem smelled a sweet savor...for the impulse of man's heart is evil from his youth." (Beresheet 8:21). The Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'From here onward, because the body is already absorbed by that Evil Inclination, let the body enjoy itself as much as it wants and eat meat.' HE SAID: "even as the green herb have I given you all" (Beresheet 9:3).

302. When man eats meat, the flesh of man receives pleasure from that flesh, and they mix together-THE FLESH OF MAN COMBINES WITH THE FLESH OF THE ANIMAL. And the body grows and is built by it. But as a result of the pleasure, WHICH MAN RECEIVED FROM EATING MEAT, his body commits many sins. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: "The meat," REFERRING TO THE MEAT OF THE OFFERING, "shall be atonement for the body". Because one had eaten flesh, and had grown flesh through it IN THE BODY, and by it one had sinned, therefore the meat OF THE OFFERING shall be atonement for the body. So the meat-NAMELY THE FLESH OF THE BODY-that eats meat forms the blood in the body. And because of this, the purpose of the blood that remains outside of the meat OF THE OFFERING is to atone for the blood OF MAN, which was formed by that same meat OF THE ANIMAL. As it is written: "for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul" (Vayikra 17:11).

303. It is written: "My offering" and "your offering," as it is written: "shall you bring your offering" (Vayikra 1:2). What is the difference between these two phrases? AND HE REPLIES: "My offering" is like peace-offerings that are brought for peace. "Your offering" is like sin or guilt offerings brought to ATONE for sin or guilt. Therefore, "My offering" is meat, "the provision" is bread and wine, "savor" is incense. "Sweet" (Heb. nichoach) is satisfaction (Heb. nachat) that the priest experiences when meditating on the Holy Name, WHICH HE UTTERS OUT LOUD DURING THE RITUAL OF THE SACRIFICE. And the Levites HAVE THE SAME EXPERIENCE when meditating during the songs and praises, WHICH THEY RECITE DURING THE SACRIFICE.

299. וְהָיוּ שִׁמְעָנָא, אִי בִר נֶשׁ חָטָא, בְּהֵמָה מַה חָטָא, דְּקִדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא אָמַר אֲדָם בִּי יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֶרֶבֶן וְגו'. אִמְאִי. אֵלָא קִדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא עֲבִיד רוּחַ בְּנֵי נֶשָׁא, וְרוּחַ הַבְּהֵמָה, וְאִפְרִישׁ דָּא מִן דָּא. וּבִגְיוֹן בְּכִרוּחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם הָעוֹלָה הִיא לְמַעַלָּה וְרוּחַ הַבְּהֵמָה וְגו'. וְדָאִי מִתְפָּרֵשׁ דָּא מִן דָּא.

300. עַד לֹא חָטָא אָדָם, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים הִנֵּה נִתְּתִי לָכֶם אֶת כָּל עֵשֶׂב זֹרֵעַ זֹרֵעַ וְגו', וּכְתִיב לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ, וְלֹא יִתִּיר. כִּיּוֹן דְּחָטָא, וַיֵּצֵר הָרַע אֲשֶׁתַּאִיב בְּגוֹפָא דִּילִיָּהּ, וּבְכָל אִינוֹן תּוֹלְדִין, עֲבִד בְּהוּ דִּינָא.

301. וּלְבַתֵּר אֶתָּא נֹחַ, וְחָמָא דְּהָא גּוֹפָא אֶתְבְּנִי מֵאֲתָרָא דִּיצֵה"ר אֶקְרִיב קֶרֶבֶן, כְּמַה דְּאֶקְרִיב אֲדָם, מַה כְּתִיב וַיֵּרַח ה' אֶת רֵיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ וְגו'. כִּי יֵצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רַע מִנְּעוּרָיו. אָמַר קִדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, מִכָּאֵן וְלַהֲלָאָה, הוּאִיל וְגוֹפָא אֲשֶׁתַּאִיב מֵהָהוּא יֵצֵה"ר יִתְעַנֵּג גּוֹפָא כְּמַה דְּאֶתְחַזִּי לִיָּהּ, יִיכּוֹל בְּשָׂרָא. כִּיּוֹן עֵשֶׂב נִתְּתִי לָכֶם אֶת כָּל.

302. בִּד אָכִיל בְּשָׂרָא, מֵהָהוּא בְּשָׂרָא אֶתְעַנֵּג בְּשָׂרָא דִּילִיָּהּ, וְאֶתְעַרְבַּ דָּא בְּדָא, וְאֶתְרַבִּי גּוֹפָא מִיָּנִיָּה, וּמֵהָהוּא עֲנֵג, גּוֹפָא חָטָא בְּכְמַה חָטָאִין. אָמַר קִדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא כְּפָרָה עַל גּוֹפָא בְּשָׂרָא. בְּשָׂרָא אָכִיל, וּבְשָׂרָא אֶתְרַבִּי מִיָּנִיָּה, וּבִיָּה חָטָא, בְּגִין כְּלָלְכְּפָרָא עַל גּוֹפִיָּה בְּשָׂרָא. וּבְשָׂרָא דְאָכִיל בְּשָׂרָא, עֲבִיד דְּמָא לְגוֹפָא, בְּגִין כְּדִמָּא דְאֶשְׁתָּאֵר מֵהָהוּא בְּשָׂרָא לְבַר, אֶתְעַתֵּד לְכְּפָרָא עַל דְּמָא, דְּאֶתְעַבִּיד מֵהָהוּא בְּשָׂרָא דִּילִיָּהּ, דְּכְתִיב בִּי הָדֵם הוּא בְּנֶפֶשׁ יִכְפֹּר.

303. כְּתִיב קֶרֶבֶנִי, וּכְתִיב קֶרֶבְנֵכֶם, דְּכְתִיב תְּקַרְיָבוּ אֶת קֶרֶבְנֵכֶם, מַה בֵּין הָאֵי לְהָאֵי. אֵלָא קֶרֶבְנִי, כְּגוֹן שְׁלָמִים דְּאֶתִּיּוֹן עַל שְׁלוֹם. קֶרֶבְנֵכֶם: כְּגוֹן חָטָאוֹת וְאֲשָׁמוֹת דְּאֶתִּיּוֹן עַל חָטָא וְאֲשָׁם, בְּגִין כְּרָאת קֶרֶבְנִי: בְּשָׂרָא. לְחָמִי: נִהְמָא וְחִמְרָא. רֵיחִ: דָּא קְטוֹרֶת. נִיחֹחִי: דָּא נִחַת רוּחַ, דְּעֲבִיד כְּהֵנָּא בְּרַעוּתָא דְּשָׁמָא קִדְשָׁא, וְלִיוָאִי, בְּרַעוּתָא דְּשִׁיר וְשִׁבְחָה.

304. Of the verse, "shall you observe to offer to me in their (lit. 'its') due season," HE ASKS: What is meant by "due season?" If you say THAT THE MEANING IS TO OFFER A SACRIFICE every day-morning and evening-why then is it called "its due season?" AND HE REPLIES: "its due season" APPLIES to the desire that rules at that certain moment-NAMELY, THE MOMENT OF THE SACRIFICE. This is the desire that prevails above in that certain grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. And for this reason, it is written: 'its due season.'

305. When an offering is sacrificed, all the worlds receive a part of it, and the Klipot are scattered in all directions. The union OF THE MALE AND FEMALE grows closer and is completed, and the candles, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF THE UPPER GRADES, shine. And there is one desire and full companionship in all the worlds. And the Holy One, blessed be He, is in a state of the secret of unity as should properly be. Rabbi Chiya came forward, kissed him, and said: You are more worthy than I to go and see him, REFERRING TO RABBI ELAZAR.

306. They went along. When they reached RABBI ELAZAR, he saw them sitting beside the gate. He said to his attendant, Go and ask them what is the significance OF EACH of the three legs of this throne? They told him: Go and tell our master that it is not in vain that King David, who is the fourth LEG OF THE THRONE, said, "The stone which the builders rejected" (Tehilim 118:22). AND WITH THIS VERSE, THEY GAVE HIM A HINT ABOUT THE THREE COLUMNS THAT PRECEDE DAVID, WHICH ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. He said to him, TO HIS ATTENDANT: Go and tell them, where David was 'rejected' BY THE BUILDERS, that he said, "The stone which the builders rejected?"

307. Rabbi Chiya turned to Rabbi Chagai and said: Have you heard anything about this? He said: I have heard about the verse that reads "my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards..." (Shir Hashirim 1:6), which King Solomon used to say. It speaks of King David when he was rejected by his brothers.

308. And furthermore, we have heard: What was the reason that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the kingdom to Yehuda and not to any of the other brothers? AND HE REPLIES: Because the letters of His Holy name are engraved in him. BECAUSE YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI APPEAR IN THE NAME OF YEHUDA (YUD-HEI-VAV-DALET-HEI). So the Holy One, blessed be He, glorified his name. And this is why he inherited the kingdom. And I have also heard that the name Yehuda definitely contains the letters of His HOLY Name, but there is no letter Dalet IN YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. AND HE ASKS: Why? AND HE REPLIES: This LETTER DALET OF YEHUDA represents King David, who is attached to His Name more than all other people of the world. As it is written: "and seek Hashem their Elohim, and David their king" (Hoshea 3:5). So King David is actually attached to His HOLY Name. Furthermore, he is the knot of the Tfilin, AS KING DAVID IS THE SECRET OF THE KNOT OF THE TFILIN OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. AND THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. So certainly the letter Dalet IN YEHUDA is King David. And because of this David is attached to His HOLY Name. BECAUSE THE NAME YEHUDA INCLUDES YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH ALLUDE TO ZEIR ANPIN, AND THE LETTER DALET, WHICH ALLUDES TO KING DAVID, WHO IS THE SECRET OF NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN.

304. תִּשְׁמְרוּ לְהִקְרִיב לִי בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ. בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ מֵאִי הוּא, אִי תִּימָא בְּכָל יוֹמָא בְּבֹקֶר וּבְעֶרֶב, מֵאִי אִיהוּ בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ. אֵלָא מוֹעֵדוֹ, דְּשִׁלְטָא בְּהוּא זְמַנָּא רַעָא. רַעָא דְּאַשְׁתַּכַּח לְעִילָא בְּדִרְגָּא יְדִיעָא. וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ.

305. בְּדִ קֶרְבֵּן אֲתִקְרִיב, כֹּלָא נְטִלִין חוּלְקָא, וְאַתְבַּדְרִין קְלִיפִין לְכָל סְטָרָא, וְיִיחודָא אֲתִקְרִיב וְאַתְיִיחֵד, וּבּוֹצִינִין אֲתִנְהִירִין, וְאַשְׁתַּכַּח רַעָא וְרַעָא בְּכָל עֲלָמִין, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲשִׁתַּכַּח בְּרִזָּא דִּיחודָא חֲדָא בְּדִקָּא חֲזִי. אַתָּא ר' חֲזִינָא וְנִשְׁקִינָה, אָמַר לִיה, יָאוּת אַנְתָּ בְּרִי מִנִּי, לְמִיָּהֵךְ לְמַחְמִי לִיָּה.

306. אָזְלוּ, בְּדִ מְטוֹן לְגִבְיָה, חֲמָא לֹון יְתִבִּי עַל תַּרְעָא, אֲמַרְלוּלְשִׁמְשָׁא, זִיל וְאִימָא לֹון, הָאִי כְּרִסְיָא דְּתִלַּת קְיִימִין, מַהוּ כָּל אַחֵד. אָמְרוּ לִיָּה, זִיל וְאִימָא לִיָּה לְמַר, דְּלָאוּ לְמַגְנָא אָמַר דְּוֹד מְלָכָא דְּאִיָּהוּ רַבִּיעָאָה, אֲבָן מְאָסוּ הַבּוֹנִים. אֲמַרְלוּזִיל וְאִימָא לֹון דָּאן גַּעְלוּ בֵּיהּ בְּדוֹד, דְּאִיָּהוּ אָמַר אֲבָן מְאָסוּ הַבּוֹנִים.

307. אַהֲדַר רַבִּי חֲזִינָא רִישִׁיָּה לְגִבִּי ר' חֲגַאי, וְאָמַר לִיָּה שְׁמַעַת בְּהָאִי מְדִי. אָמַר שְׁמַעְנָא, בְּהָאִי קְרָא דְּכְתִיב בְּנִי אֲמִי נִחְרוּ בִּי שְׁמוֹנִי וְגו'. דְּהָאִי קְרָא שְׁלֹמָה מְלָכָא אָמְרוּ, וְעַל דְּוֹד מְלָכָא אֲתַמַּר, בְּדִ דְּחוּ לִיָּה אַחוּהִי מְנִיָּהוּ.

308. וְתוּ שְׁמַעְנָא, מֵאִי חֲמָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְמִיָּהֵב מְלָכוּתָא לִיהוּדָה מְכָל אַחוּהִי, אֵלָא אֲתוּן דְּשִׁמְיָה חֲקִיקִין בֵּיהּ, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאִיָּהֵב יְקָרָא לְשִׁמְיָה, וּבְגִין כְּרָאחְסִין מְלָכוּתָא. וְתוּ שְׁמַעְנָא, יְהוּדָה הָא אֲתוּן דְּשִׁמְיָה וְדָאִי, ד' לִיתִיָּה אֲמָאִי. אֵלָא דָּא דְּוֹד מְלָכָא, דְּאַתְקִשֵּׁר בְּשִׁמְיָה מְכָל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא, דְּכְתִיב, וּבִקְשׁוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹקֵיהֶם וְאֶת דְּוֹד מְלָכֶם וְגו', הָא דְּוֹד קִשִּׁיר בְּשִׁמְיָה, תוּ, דְּאִיָּהוּ קִשִּׁיר שֶׁל תַּפְלִין, וְדָאִי ד' דְּוֹד מְלָכָא, וּבְגִין כְּרָדְוֹד אֲתַקְשֵׁר בְּשִׁמְיָה.

309. They entered. Once they were inside, they sat in front of him. Rabbi Elazar was silent, so they remained silent as well. Rabbi Elazar entered his room, he heard a certain voice there that said: 'Go and tell them what they want, because they are righteous men!' He then returned to them and said: If one of you has heard something, let him say it to me! They responded: We are waiting to shine by the purity of the upper candle, and let us grasp knowledge.

310. He opened the discussion with the verse: "But Hashem is in His holy chamber, let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Chavakuk 2:20). When the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS THE SECRET OF BINAH, desired to create the world, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN AND HIS NUKVA, THAT ARE CALLED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, He looked to the thought, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, the secret of the Torah, and took down records. THIS MEANS THAT HE RECORDED, AND DREW THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH TO MALE AND FEMALE, but the world was not able to exist. Then He created repentance, which is the sublime and inner chamber, and a guarded secret. And there, IN THE AFOREMENTIONED CHAMBER, the letters, WHICH ARE MALE AND FEMALE, are engraved, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY WERE PREPARED AND MADE WORTHY OF RECEIVING MOCHIN FROM THERE.

311. As THE CHAMBER was created, He looked to this chamber and drew figures, NAMELY THE MOCHIN that exists in the entire world. This is why it is written: "let all the earth keep silence before Him." He desired to create the heavens, WHICH ARE ZEIR ANPIN. What did He do? He looked upon the First Light, THE FIRST CHAMBER, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ABA AND IMA, covered Himself with it, and created the heavens. As it is written: "Who covers himself with light as with a garment," and then, "Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain" (Tehilim 104:2).

312. He studied how to create the lower world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN THAT NEEDS THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH, WHICH IS NOT RECEIVED FROM THE FIRST CHAMBER. So He created another chamber and entered to it. And from inside He looked out and drew in front of Himself all the worlds that are below; NAMELY ALL THE QUANTITY OF MOCHIN THAT THEY REQUIRE and created them. Therefore it is written: "But Hashem is in His holy chamber, let all the earth keep silence (Heb. has) before Him." Has (Hei-Samech) is recorded "before him," WHICH MEANS THAT THE NUMERICAL VALUE OF HEI-SAMECH IS DRAWN BEFORE HIM, WHICH IS THE NUMBER OF all the "points," WHICH ARE THE SFIROT that exist in every world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. And they are sixty-five points, a number equivalent to the numerical value of Hei-Samech.

Sixty are THE SIX SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD, EACH OF WHICH INCLUDES TEN, and five are HALF OF MALCHUT; SHE LACKS THE LAST FIVE-THOSE FROM THE CHEST DOWNWARD. He recorded before Him these sixty-five "POINTS" OF THE NUKVA IN ORDER TO BESTOW ON HER HIS ABUNDANCE when He created the world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. For this reason, the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH, is destined only to those who know His ways and go along them -in a true manner, as is proper!

309. עָאֵל, בֵּינוֹן דְּעָאֵלּוּ יְתִיבוּ קָמִיָּה, אֲשֶׁתִּיק רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, וְאִינוֹן אֲשֶׁתִּיקוּ. עָאֵל ר' אֶלְעָזָר לְאֶדְרִיָּה, שְׁמַע חַד קֵלָא דְּהוּה אָמַר, זִיל וְאִימָא לֹון מַה דְּאִינוֹן בְּעִיִּין דְּכִשְׁרִין אִינוֹן. אֶהְדֵּר לְגַבִּיָּהּ. אָמַר לֹון, אִית מָאן דְּשְׁמַע מְלָה לִימָא לִי. אָמְרוּ לִיה אֲנִן מַחְכָּאן לְאַנְהָרָא מְגוּ צַחוּתָא דְּבוּצִינָא עֲלָאָה וְסִבְרָא נְסִבְרָא.

310. פִּתַּח וְאָמַר וְה' בְּהִיבֵל קִדְשׁוֹ הִס מִפְּנֵיו כָּל הָאָרֶץ. בַּד בְּעֵי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאִלְמַבְרִי עֲלֵמָא, אֶסְתַּבֵּל גּוּ מַחְשְׁבָהּ, רְזָא דְּאוּרִיָּתָא, וְרָשִׁים רְשׁוּמִין, וְלֹא הוּה יָכִיל לְמִיקָם עַד דְּבִרָא תְּשׁוּבָה, דְּאִיהִי הִיכְלָא פְּנִימָאָה עֲלָאָה, וְרְזָא סְתִימָא, וְתַמָּן אֲתַרְשִׁימוּ וְאֲתַצִּירוּ אֶתְוֹן בְּגִלּוּפִיָּהּ.

311. בֵּינוֹן דְּאֲתַבְּרִי דָּא, הוּה מְסַתַּבֵּל בְּהֵאִי הִיכְלָא, וְרָשִׁים קָמִיָּה צִיּוּרִין דְּכָל עֲלֵמָא, דְּכִתִּיב הִס מִפְּנֵיו כָּל הָאָרֶץ. רָשִׁים קָמִיָּה רְשׁוּמִין וְצִיּוּרִין דְּכָל עֲלֵמָא. בְּעֵי לְמַבְרִי שְׁמִים, מַה עֲבַד, אֶסְתַּבֵּל בְּאוּר קִדְמָאָה וְאֲתַעֲטָף בֵּיהּ, וּבִרָא שְׁמִים. דְּכִתִּיב עוֹטָה אֹור בְּשִׁלְמָה, וְאַחֲר כֵּךְ נוֹטָה שְׁמִים בִּירִיעָה.

312. אֶסְתַּבֵּל לְמַעַבְד עֲלֵמָא תַתָּאָה, עֲבַד הִיכְלָא אֲוִחְרָא, וְעָאֵל בֵּיהּ, וּמִנִּיָּה אֶסְתַּבֵּל וְרָשִׁים קָמִיָּה כָּל עֲלָמִין לְתַתָּא, וּבִרָא לֹון. הֵה"ר וְה' בְּהִיבֵל קִדְשׁוֹ הִס מִפְּנֵיו כָּל הָאָרֶץ. הִס מִפְּנֵיו: ה"ס רָשִׁים קָמִיָּה, כָּל נְקוּדִין דְּכָל עֲלֵמָא, דְּאִינוֹן שְׁתִּין וְחֲמִשׁ, כְּחוּשְׁבָן ה"ס, שְׁתִּין אִינוֹן, וְחֲמִשׁ אִינוֹן, וְכִלְהוּ רָשִׁים קָמִיָּה, בַּד בִּרָא עֲלֵמָא. בְּגִין כְּרִיקְרָא דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאִלְאֹו אִיהוּ, אֵלָא לְאִינוֹן דִּידְעִין אֲרַחוּי, וּמֵהֲכִין בַּה בְּאוּרַח קְשׁוּט, בְּדִקָּא וְאוֹת.

313. While he was talking with them, a fire encircled him, and they remained sitting outside. They heard a voice call out, 'O you holy man, "The king has brought me to his chambers"' (Shir Hashirim 1:4)-to all those chambers whose keys have been given to the favored and holy lad, NAMELY MATATRON, WHO IS CALLED "LAD." And all are ready for you and for those who achieve merit through you. And in your life, holy man, all the hosts of the heavens, "we will be glad and rejoice in you!" (Ibid). THIS WAS THE VOICE OF THE SHECHINAH.

314. When these two saw this, they trembled and were overtaken by a great fear. They said: We are not worthy of this. Let us get out of here and go on our way! They sat there that entire day but were unable to see him. Then they said: The Holy One, blessed be He, does not wish us to stay here. They left that place and went away.

29. "Bless Hashem, you angels of His"

After the awesome experience with Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Chiya speaks about the giving of the Torah, and how, after the moment of revelation, power over the physical world was placed in the hands of mankind. Prior to the Revelation, the vast network of angels was in control of our physical realm. The Relevance of this Passage

Our individual deeds and behavior have an accumulated effect on the world as well as on our personal life. The universal responsibility for our actions is stirred within us by this portion.

315. As they were walking along, Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion, saying, "'Bless Hashem, you angels of His, you mighty ones who perform His bidding..." (Tehilim 103:20). Happy are Yisrael of all the peoples of the world, because the Holy One, blessed be He, chose them from among all the other nations, and He made them His part and portion. This is why He gave them the Holy Torah, since they shared one desire on Mount Sinai. And their "doing" preceded their "hearing," AS THEY SAID, "WILL WE DO" AND THEN THEY SAID, "AND OBEY (LIT. 'HEAR')" (SHEMOT 24:7).

316. Because their "doing" preceded their "hearing," the Holy One, blessed be He, called upon His retinue, THE ANGELS; and said to them: 'Until now, you alone have stood before Me. But from now on, My children on earth are your companions in everything. You have no permission to sanctify My Name until Yisrael on earth joins you. And all of you together shall become colleagues to sanctify My Name.' Because they put "doing" before "hearing," just as the angels do in the heavens above, as it is written: "Bless Hashem, you angels of His, you mighty ones who perform His bidding, hearkening to the voice of His word." "Who perform his bidding" is first; only then is, "hearkening."

313. אֲרַחֲבִי דִּהְיָה מִשְׁתַּעֲי בַּהֲדוּיָהוּ, אֶתָּא נֹרָא וְאַסְחָר לִיה, וְאִינוּן יִתְּבוּ לְבַר. שְׁמָעוּ חַד קֵלָא דִּהְיָה אָמַר, אִי קְדִישָׁא, הִבִּיאֲנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ חֲדָרָיו, בְּכָל אִינוּן אִידָרִין, דְּסִבֵּר דְּאַנְפִּין עוֹלִימָא קְדִישָׁא אֶתְמַסְרוּ מִמִּתְחָן דִּלְהוֹן בִּידֵיהּ, וְכָלְהוּ מִתְקַנְן לָךְ, וְלֹאִינוּן דְּבִגִּינָךְ. וּבְחִינָךְ קְדִישָׁא כָּל חֵילָא דְשָׁמַיָא, נְגִילָה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בָּךְ.

314. בְּדַ חֲמוּ אֵלִין הָבִי, אֲזִדְעָזְעוּ, וְדַחֲלוּ סְגִי נָפִל עֲלֵיָהוּ, אָמַרִי לִית אָנָּן חֲזוּיִן לְהָאִי, נְפֻק מְכָאן, וְנִהָךְ לְאוֹרְחִין, יִתְּבוּ תַּמָּן כָּל הֵהוּא יוֹמָא, וְלֹא זְכִילוּ לְמַחְמֵי לִיה, וְאָמְרוּ לִית רַעוּתָא דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּנִיתִיב הָכָא, נִפְקוּ מִתַּמָּן וְאֲזִלִּי.

315. עַד דִּהְיָו אֲזִלִּי, פִּתַּח רַבִּי חֵיָא וְאָמַר בְּרָכוּ ה' מְלֹאכֵינוּ גְבוּרֵי כַח עוֹשֵׂי דְבָרוּ וּגּו'. זְכָאִין אִינוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל שָׂאָר עַמִּין דְּעֻלְמָא, דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֶתְרַעֵי בְּהוּ מִכָּל שָׂאָר עַמִּין, וְעֵבֵד לוֹן חוֹלְקִיהּ וְאַחֲסַנְתִּיהּ, וְעַל דָּא יְהִיב לוֹן אוֹרֵייתָא קְדִישָׁא, בְּגִין דְּכָלְהוּ הָווּ בְּרַעוּתָא חָדָא עַל טוֹרָא דְסִינֵי וְאַקְדִּימוּ עֲשִׂיהָ לְשִׁמְיעָה.

316. בֵּינוּן דְּאַקְדִּימוּ עֲשִׂיָה לְשִׁמְיעָה, קִרָּא קְדִישָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְמַלְפְּלִיא דִּילִיָהּ, אָמַר לוֹן, עַד הָכָא אֶתוּן הֵוִיתוּן יַחֲדָאִין קַמָּאִי בְּעֻלְמָא, מְכָאן וְלִהְלָאָה הָא בְּנֵי בָּאָרְעָא חֲבֵרִים בַּהֲדִיכּוּ בְּכָלָא. לִית לְכוּ רְשׁוּ לְקִדְשָׁא שְׁמִי, עַד דִּישְׂרָאֵל יִתְחַבְּרוּן בַּהֲדִיכּוּ בָּאָרְעָא, וְכָלְהוּ תַּהוּוֹן בְּחָדָא חֲבֵרִים לְקִדְשָׁא שְׁמִי, בְּגִין דְּאַקְדִּימוּ עֲשִׂיָה לְשִׁמְיעָה, בְּגוּוּנָא דְּמְלָאכֵי עֲלָאִי עֲבָדֵי בְּרִקְיעָא, דְּכִתִּיב בְּרָכוּ ה' מְלֹאכֵינוּ גְבוּרֵי כַח עוֹשֵׂי דְבָרוּ לְשִׁמְעַע בְּקוֹל דְּבָרוּ. עוֹשֵׂי דְבָרוּ בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וְלִבְתָּר לְשִׁמְעַע.

317. Another explanation of the verse "Bless Hashem, you angels of His" is that these are the righteous people on earth, who are important to the Holy One, blessed be He, as the supernal angels in heaven. They are "mighty ones," as they overcome their inclination like a mighty man who overcomes all his enemies, "hearkening to the voice of His word." This means that they have the merit of hearing a voice from heaven every day and every time they need to!

318. "Now, who is able to be among them-among all those holy and sublime beings? Happy are those who are able to stand before them; Happy are those who are able to save themselves from them. The Holy One, blessed be He, supervises them every day; how can we stand before them?" ALL THIS WAS SAID BY RABBI CHIYA IN PRAISE OF RABBI ELAZAR, WITH WHOM THEY COULD NOT STAY. Therefore it is written: "Blessed is the man whom You choose, and cause to approach to You, that he may dwell in your courts" (Tehilim 65:5), and also: "Blessed is the man whose strength is in you" (Tehilim. 84:6).
End of Sitrei Torah

317. דְּבַר אַחֵר, בָּרְכוּ ה' מְלָאכָיו. אֵלֶּיךָ אֵינוֹן
צְדִיקָא בְּאַרְעָא, דְּאֵינוֹן חֲשׁוּבִין קָמִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ
הוּא, בְּמִלְאכֵי עֲלָיִי בְּרִיקְעָא, בְּגִין, דְּאֵינוֹן גְּבוּרֵי
כַּח, דְּמִתְגַּבְּרִי עַל יִצְרֵיהֶון בְּגִבּוּר טַב דְּמִתְגַּבְּרִי עַל
שְׁנֵאִיָּה. לְשִׁמוּעַ בְּקוֹל דְּבָרוֹ. דְּזָכָן בְּכָל יוֹמָא
לְמִשְׁמַע קָלָא מְלַעִילָא, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּאַצְטְרִיכוּ.

318. הַשְׁתָּא מָאן יָכִיל לְמִיקָם בְּהַדְרֵיהֶון, דְּאֵינוֹן
קְדִישִׁין עֲלִיוֹנִין, וְכַאֲיִן אֵינוֹן דְּיָכִילִי לְמִיקָם קְמִיָּהוּ,
וְכַאֲיִן אֵינוֹן דְּיָכִילִי לְאַשְׁתַּזְבָּא מִקְמִיָּהוּ, אֲשַׁגְחוּתָא
דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲלֵיהֶון בְּכָל יוֹמָא, הֵיךְ אֲנִי יָכִילִין
לְמִיעַל קְמִיָּהוּ. וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחָר וּתְקַרֵּב,
וְכְּתִיב אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם עֹז לוֹ כִּךְ וְגו'.
(עַד כָּאן סִתְרֵי תוֹרָה)

30. "And Avram said, Adonai Hashem Elohim, what will You give me?"

Avraham cries out to God, lamenting his inability to have children. The Creator explains that all people have certain judgments and decrees hanging over them. These decrees and judgments fall under the influence of the stars and planets. However, God tells Avraham that it is up to him to rise above planetary influences by transforming his very nature. When man changes his internal nature, nature mirrors that action and judgments can be removed. Herein lies the secret behind the name change of Avraham. While he is under the influence of the stars, he is called, Avram ?????. When he undergoes spiritual transformation, the Hebrew letter Hei ? is added to his name changing it from Avram to Avraham ?????.

The Relevance of this Passage

The profound Kabbalistic concept of altering a person's name alphabetically, can be compared to the science of genetic engineering, in which the genetic code of a person is altered in order to reduce predisposition to various diseases and ailments. Interestingly, all DNA is structured and consequently, classified alphabetically. The mysteries contained within this passage give us the power to alter our own spiritual DNA, thereby changing our destiny. By transforming the negative aspects of our nature, we rise above cosmic influences and remove judgments that may be hanging over us.

319. Come and behold: "I am your shield." "I" is the first grade, to which he cleaved at the beginning." "And Avram said, Adonai Elohim, what will You give me?" (Beresheet 16:2). YUD HEI VAV HEI IS SPELLED WITH THE VOWELS OF ELOHIM. Adonai is spelled Aleph-Dalet-Nun-Yud, FULLY SPELLED AS Aleph-Lamed-final Pe, Dalet-Lamed-Tav, Nun-Vav-Nun, Yud-Vav-Dalet, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA; AND YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI IS WRITTEN WITH THE SAME VOWELS AS Elohim, FULLY SPELLED Yud-Vav-Dalet, Hei-Yud, Vav-Aleph-Vav, Hei-Yud, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF BINAH. SO HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY BOTH THESE NAMES ARE MENTIONED IN THE SAME VERSE. AND IN REFERENCE TO THIS HE SAYS: The secret is to unify both the lower and upper worlds. ADONAI IS THE LOWER WORLD, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, WHILE YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS WRITTEN WITH THE SAME VOWELS AS ELOHIM, IS THE UPPER WORLD, WHICH IS BINAH. AND IN THIS VERSE BOTH ARE COMBINED TO ONE.

320. "What will You give me, seeing I go childless" MEANS I have no child. As we have learned, he who has no child in this world is called childless, as it is written: "they shall be childless" (Vayikra 20:21). AND HE ASKS: But why then did Avraham say, 'what will You give me?' It is as if he had no faith in the Holy One, blessed be He!

אֲבֵרָם הַאֲבֵרָה

319. תָּא חַיִּי, אֲנֹכִי מִגֵּן לָךְ. אֲנֹכִי, דָּא הוּא דְּרִגָּא
קְדָמָא, דְּאַתְאַחִיד בֵּיה בְּקִדְמִיתָא. וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבֵרָם,
אֲדֹנִי ה' מַה תֵּתֵן לִי. אֲדֹנִי: אֵלֶּךָ דְּלֵת נֹון יוֹד.
אֵלֶּקִים יוֹד הָא וְיוֹ הָא. אֵלָא רָזָא דְּמִלָּה, חֲבוּרָא
דְּתֵרִין עֲלִמִין בְּחָדָא, עֲלִמָא תַתָּא, וְעֲלִמָא עֲלָאָה.

320. מַה תֵּתֵן לִי וְאֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי. דְּלִית לִי בֵּר,
וְאוֹלִימָנָא דְּכָל מָאן דְּלִית לֵיה בְּרָא בְּהָאֵי עֲלִמָא,
אֲקָרִי עֲרִירִי. כְּדִ"א עֲרִירִים יִהְיוּ. וְאַבְרָהָם עַל מַה
אָמַר מִלָּה דָּא, דְּאָמַר מַה תֵּתֵן לִי, כְּבִיכּוֹל כְּאִילוֹ
לְאַהֲאֵמִין בֵּיה בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

321. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "I am your shield" in this world, "your reward will be very great" in the world to come. Immediately then, Avraham was infused with the secret of the Wisdom. He said: "What will You give me?" Because he knew that if a person has not fathered a son, he does not receive a reward when he reaches the world to come. Therefore he said: "What will You give me, seeing I go childless," as you shall not give me what I am not worthy of. And from this, WE LEARN that a person who is not worthy of having children in this world shall not be worthy in the world to come to be in the presence OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE!

322. And Avraham saw through astrology that he will not have a child. What is written: "And He brought him outside" (Beresheet 15:5). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "Do not look to this-THE WISDOM OF THE STARS-but rather to the secret of My Name, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. "You shall father a son!" This is why it is written: "So (Heb. koh) shall your seed be" (Ibid.). KOH is the secret of the Holy Name, through which a son was born to him; HIS SON DID not COME from the Other Side, WHICH IS OF THE STARS AND CONSTELLATIONS.

323. Koh is the gate through which prayers are accepted, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. There the blessing abides; there a person shall fulfill his request! Koh is related to the side of Gvurah, WHICH IS AN ALLUSION TO THE NUKVA, WHICH IS BUILT FROM THE LEFT, WHICH IS GVURAH, because Yitzchak was born from the side of Gvurah. And the side of Gvurah is called Koh, because it produces all the seeds and fruits that come to the world; THEY COME not from the lower aspect of the stars and constellations.

324. Then it is written: "And he believed in Hashem," WHICH MEANS THAT he cleaved above and not below. He "believed in Hashem" and not in the stars and the constellations, he believed that his reward in the next world would be great, and he believed in Hashem that from the grade that was given to him, NAMELY KOH, he would be able to bring children to the world.

325. "And he counted it to him for righteousness" (Ibid. 6), he counted it to the name Koh as mercy, though it is of judgment. Another meaning of the verse, "and he counted it to him for righteousness," is that he bound the upper, WHICH IS BINAH, with the lower one, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and combined them as one.

326. Come and behold: It has been said that 'Avraham,' SPELLED WITH THE LETTER HEI, shall father a son, while 'Avram' shall not. If you say that he fathered Yishmael while he was still 'Avram,' THE RESPONSE IS THAT the son promised by the Holy One, blessed be He, was not born while he was 'Avram,' because as long as he was 'Avram' he begot only down below-REFERRING TO YISHMAEL. But once he was called 'Avraham' and entered the covenant, he begot above-IN HOLINESS. Therefore, 'Avram' begets only down below, while 'Avraham' begets in the upper world, as we have stated, because he was attached above to Yitzchak.

321. אֵלָא, אִמְרִלְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲנֹכִי מִגֵּן לְךָ, בְּהָא עֲלָמָא. שְׂכָרְךָ הִרְבָּה מְאֹד, בְּעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי. מִיָּד אֲתַעֲר אֲבִרְהָם בְּרָזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא, וְאָמַר מַה תִּתֵּן לִי, דִּהָא יָדְעָנָא, דְּלֹא קָבִיל אֲגֵר לְמִיַּעַל בֵּיהּ בְּהִהוּא עֲלָמָא, בַּר נֶשׁ דְּלֹא אוֹלִיד בַּר, וְעַל דְּאָמַר מַה תִּתֵּן לִי וְאֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי, דִּהָא לֹא תִתֵּן לִי דְּלֹא זְכִינָא בֵּיהּ. מִכָּאן, דְּבַר נֶשׁ דְּלֹא זְכִי בְּבִנּוּן בְּהָא עֲלָמָא, לֹא זְכִי בְּהִהוּא עֲלָמָא, לֹא עֲלָא גּוּ פְּרָגוּדָא.

322. וְאֲבִרְהָם הוּא חָמִי בְּאַצְטְגִּינּוֹת דִּילִיָּה דְּלֹא יוֹלִיד. מַה כְּתִיב וְיֹוצֵא אוֹתוֹ הַחוּצָה וְגו'. אִמְרִלְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לֹא תִסְתַּבֵּל בְּהָא, אֵלָא בְּרָזָא דְּשָׁמַי, יְהֵא לְךָ בַּר. הָה"ד כֹּה יִהְיֶה זֶרַעְךָ. רָזָא דְּשָׁמָא קִדִּישָׁא, דְּמִתְמָן אֲתַקְשֵׁר לִיָּה בְּדָא, וְלֹא מִסְטָרָא אַחֲרָא.

323. כֹּה: דִּהוּא תִרְעָא לְצִלּוֹתָא, בֵּהּ יִשְׁכַּח בְּרָכָה, בֵּהּ יִשְׁכַּח בַּר נִשְׁשָׁלְתִּיָּה. כֹּה: הֵהוּא סְטָרָא דְּאִתִּיָּא מִסְטָרָא דְּגְבוּרָה, דִּהָא מִסְטָרָא דְּגְבוּרָה קָא אֲתָא יִצְחָק. וְהֵהוּא סְטָרָא דְּגְבוּרָה כֹּה אֲקָרִי, דְּמִתְמָן אֲתִיָּן אִיבִין וּפִירִי לְעֲלָמָא, וְלֹא מִסְטָרָא דִּלְתַתָּא, דִּכְכְּבִיא וּמִזְלוֹת.

324. בְּדִין וְהָאִמִּין בֵּה'. אֲתַדְּבֵק לְעִילָא, וְלֹא אֲתַדְּבֵק לְתַתָּא. וְהָאִמִּין בֵּה', וְלֹא בְּכַכְּבִיא וּמִזְלוֹ. וְהָאִמִּין בֵּה', דְּאֲבָטַח לִיָּה דִּיִּסְגִּי אֲגִרִיָּה לְעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי. וְהָאִמִּין בֵּה', בְּהִהוּא דְּרָגָא דְּאִתִּיָּהִיב לִיָּה, דְּמִתְמָן יִיתִי לִיָּה זֶרַעָא לְאוֹלָדָא בְּעֲלָמָא.

325. וַיַּחֲשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ צְדָקָה. וַיַּחֲשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ: דָּאף עַל גְּבֻדָּתֶיהּ דִּינָא בְּאִילוֹ הִיא רַחֲמֵי הָאִי כֹה. דְּבַר אַחֲר, וַיַּחֲשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ צְדָקָה, דְּקָשִׁיר קָשְׁרָא עֲלָא בְּתַתָּא, לְחַבְרָא לֹון כְּחָדָא.

326. תָּא חֲזִי, הָא אֲתַעֲרֹ אֲבִרְהָם מוֹלִיד, אֲבִרְם אִינוּ מוֹלִיד, וְכִי תִימָא דִּהָא אוֹלִיד יִשְׁמַעֵאל בְּעוֹד דְּאִיָּהוּ אֲבִרְם. אֵלָא הֵהוּא בְּרָא דְּאֲבָטַח לִיָּה קֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לֹא אוֹלִיד, בְּעוֹד דְּאִיָּהוּ אֲבִרְם, דִּהָא בְּעוֹד דְּאִיָּהוּ אֲבִרְם, אוֹלִיד לְתַתָּא, בִּינּוֹן דְּאֲתַקְרִי אֲבִרְהָם, וְעַל בְּבִרִית, בְּדִין אוֹלִיד לְעִילָא, וּבִגִּין כְּרִאֲבִרְם אִינוּ מוֹלִיד בְּקָשׁוּרָא עֲלָא, אֲבִרְהָם מוֹלִיד, כְּמָה דְּאָמַרְן וְאֲתַקְשֵׁר לְעִילָא בִּיצְחָק.

31. "For who is El...and who is a rock, save our Elohim"

Every human being is a microcosm of the entire universe. Just as every human cell of the body contains the entire genetic code, each of us contains the entire universe within our soul. We are all individual cells of the cosmos. Accordingly, our influence extends throughout the entire universe: Each part contains the whole, and therefore, each part affects the whole. When the Zohar tells us that Adam saw all the souls who would ever come into existence, we are meant to understand that each of us has a definite purpose and role in the world that was known from the moment of creation. The Relevance of this Passage

Each individual existence has unique importance and purpose in the overall design and development of the universe. Through these passages, true understanding of our power and influence in this world is aroused within us. We gain awareness of the value and magnitude of every action. Moreover, we connect ourselves to our personal mission that was set forth at the moment of creation.

327. "And when Avram was ninety nine years old..." (Beresheet 17:1). In discussing this verse, Rabbi Aba said: "For who is El, save Hashem? And who is a rock, save our Elohim?" (Il Shmuel 22:32). King David said this verse, "For who is El, save Hashem?" meaning who is the governor or ruler over things, "save Hashem." EVERYONE DOES what the Holy One, blessed be He commands, as no one can stand on his own or does anything without Hashem. "And who is a rock"-who is strong enough to perform a mighty deed with his own strength-"save our Elohim?" Therefore, everyone is in the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He, and none can do anything without His permission.

328. According to another explanation of "For who is El, save Hashem?" everything lies in the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He, and not in what is seen in the stars and their signs. The stars may show a particular thing, but the Holy One, blessed be He, changes it to something else. The verse "And who is a rock (Heb. tzur), save our Elohim?" has been explained. There is no "portrayer" (Heb. tzayar) like the Holy One, blessed be He, who portrays an image within an image, REFERRING TO A FETUS WITHIN HIS MOTHER'S WOMB, completes that image in all its perfection, and inserts to it a heavenly soul that is similar to the Holy One, blessed be He. This is why there is no "portrayer" like the Holy One, blessed be He.

329. Come and behold: when a man and a woman desire each other and join as one, the sperm of man produces a child in whom both of their images are combined. For the Holy One, blessed be He created the child in an image that included both. This is why a person should sanctify himself, at that time, so that this image may be as perfect as should be!

330. Rabbi Chiya said, Come and behold: How great are the deeds that the Holy One, blessed be He, performs. Because He creates and portrays human beings in a similar way to THE ART AND PAINTING OF the world. THIS MEANS THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING REFLECTS THE ENTIRE WORLD WITHIN HIMSELF AND THUS IS CALLED A MICROCOSMOS. Every day, the Holy One, blessed be He, creates a world by mating couples, according to their worth. THROUGH THEM, HE CREATES WORLDS. And He forms the images of all offspring, before they come to the world.

327. וַיְהִי אַבְרָם בֶּן תְּשַׁע שָׁנָה וַתֵּשַׁע שָׁנִים וְגו'. רַבִּי אֲבָא פָתַח בִּי מִי אֵל מִבְּלַעְדֵּי ה' וּמִי צוּר וְגו'. דָּוִד מַלְכָּא אָמַר הָאִי קָרָא בִּי מִי אֵל מִבְּלַעְדֵּי ה'. מָאן הוּא שְׁלִיטָא אוּ מִמָּנָא דִּיכּוּל לְמַעַבְד מְדֵי מִבְּלַעְדֵּי ה', אֵלָא מַה דְּאַתְפַּקֵּד מֵעַם קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִין דְּכָלְהוּ לָא בְּרִשׁוּתֵיהּוּ קִיּוּמִי, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמַעַבְד מְדֵי. וּמִי צוּר: וּמָאן אִיהוּ תַקִּיף דִּיכּוּל לְמַעַבְד תּוֹקְפָא וּגְבוּרָה מִגְרָמִיָּה, מִבְּלַעְדֵּי אֱלֹקֵינוּ. אֵלָא כָלְהוּ בִּידָא דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמַעַבְד מְדֵי בִּרְשׁוּתֵיהּ.

328. דְּבַר אַחֵר, בִּי מִי אֵל מִבְּלַעְדֵּי ה'. דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא כְּלָא בְּרִשׁוּתֵיהּ, וְלֹא כְּמָאן דְּאַתְחִזִּי בְּחִיּוֹ דְּכַכְבִּיָּא וּמִזְלֵי, דְּכָלְהוּ אַחֲזִיין מְלָה, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אַחֲלָף לִיהּ לְגוּנָא אַחֲרָא. וּמִי צוּר זִוְלָתִי אֱלֹקֵינוּ. הָא אוֹקְמָהּ, דְּלִית צִיּוּר כְּמַה דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּאִיהוּ צִיּוּר שְׁלִים, עֲבִיד וְצִיּוּר דִּיּוֹקְנָא גו' דִּיּוֹקְנָא, וְאֲשֵׁלִים לְהוּא דִּיּוֹקְנָא בְּכָל תְּקוּנָהּ, וְאֵעִיל בָּהּ נֶפֶשׁ עֲלָא, דְּרַמִּי לְתַקְנָא עֲלָא, בְּגִין כְּרָלִית צִיּוּר כְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

329. תָּא חֲזִי, מִהֵּוּא זִרְעָא דְּבַר נֶשׁ, כִּד אַתְרַּע תִּיאֻבְתִּיָּה לְגַבִּי נֻקְבִיָּה, וְנוֹקְבִיָּה אַתְרַּע לְגַבִּיָּה, כְּדִין מִתְחַבְּרִין תִּירוּוִיָּהּ כְּחָדָא, וְנֶמֶק מְנִיָּהּ בִּרְחֵד, דְּכָלִיל מִתִּירִין דִּיּוֹקְנִין כְּחָד, בְּגִין דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא צִיּוּר לִיהּ בְּצִיּוּרָא דְּאַתְכָּלִיל מִתִּירוּוִיָּהּ. וְעַל דְּאַבְעִי בִּרְ נִשְׁלַקְדָּשָׁא גְרָמִיָּה בְּהוּא זְמָנָא, בְּגִין דִּישְׁתַּכַּח הוּא דִּיּוֹקְנָא בְּצִיּוּרָא שְׁלִים כְּדָקָא חֲזִי.

330. אָמַר רַבִּי חֲזִיָּא תָּא חֲזִי, כְּמַה אֵינֻן רַבְרַבִּין עוֹבְדֵי דְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּהָא אוּמָנוּתָא וְצִיּוּרָא דְּבַר נֶשׁ אִיהוּ כְּגוּנָא דְּעֲלָמָא, וּבְכָל יוֹמָא וְיוֹמָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּרִי עֲלָמָא, מְצוּג וְזוּגִין כָּל חָד וְחָד כְּדָקָא חֲזִי לִיהּ, וְהוּא צִיּוּר דִּיּוֹקְנֵיהוֹן עַד לָא יִיתוֹן לְעֲלָמָא.

331. Come and behold. Rabbi Shimon said that it is written: "This is the book of the generations of Adam" (Beresheet 5:1). AND HE INQUIRES, "Did he actually have a book?" AND HE REPLIES: This has been explained. The Holy One, blessed be He, showed Adam every generation and its leaders. But how did He show him ALL OF THEIR IMAGES? If you say that he saw through the Holy Spirit that they are destined to appear in the world, just like a person who sees through wisdom can tell the future of the world, it is not so! Rather, he saw them all with his eyes; he literally saw the image of their forms in the world with his eyes. AND HE ASKS: Why WAS HE ABLE TO SEE THEM ALL WITH HIS EYES? AND HE REPLIES: Because since the day the world was created, all the Souls that were to appear in future human beings stand before the Holy One, blessed be He, in the same image and form that they will have in the world.

332. In the same manner, after all these righteous people depart from this world, their souls rise, and the Holy One, blessed be He, creates for each of them another form in which to be clothed, just as they were clothed and covered while in this world. Therefore, all the souls stand before Him, and so Adam saw them, with his eyes!

333. You might say that after he had seen them, they ceased to exist and disappeared, but all that the Holy One, blessed be He, does, remains in existence. So they stand before Him until their time comes to go down to the world. And according to this, it is written: "But with him that stands here" (Devarim 29:14). And this has been explained -- all the human beings, who were destined to appear in the world in the future, were standing there.

334. This should be examined, because it is written: "and also with him that is not here..." which leads us to conclude that it refers only to those who will be born from those standing there. Therefore, it does not say, "standing with us this day," WHICH WOULD HAVE MEANT THAT THEY WERE STANDING THERE WITH THEM. Instead, it is written: "with us this day," WHICH MEANS THAT THEY ARE NOT WITH THEM! AND HE EXPLAINS, "Assuredly, everyone was standing there, but because they were not seen by the eye, the verse reads "with us this day", WHICH MEANS even though they are unseen. BECAUSE OF THIS, HE COULD NOT SAY "STANDING HERE WITH US THIS DAY."

335. You might say, "What is the reason that they were not seen here-ON MOUNT SINAI-just as they were seen by Adam's own eye. DURING THE GIVING OF THE TORAH, it would have been more proper FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS to be seen?" AND HE REPLIES: Here, when the Torah was given to Yisrael, they were looking at a different mirror, in which they saw the supernal grades eye to eye. And they were craving to look upon the glory of their Master. Therefore they saw the supernal glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself alone, and nothing else besides Him!

331. תָּא חֲזִי, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, כְּתִיב זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדוֹת אָדָם. וְכִי סֵפֶר הוּא לִיה. אֲלָא אוֹקְמוּהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אַחֲמֵי לִיה לְאָדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן, דּוֹר דּוֹר וְדוֹרְשֵׁינּוּ וכו'. הֵינָךְ אַחֲמֵי לִיה, אִי תִימָא דְחָמָא בְּרוּחַ קוֹדֶשָׁא, דְּאֵינּוּן זְמִינִין לְמִיתִי לְעֵלְמָא. כְּמָאן דְּחָמָא בְּחֻכְמָתָא, מַה דְּוִיתִי לְעֵלְמָא, לָאוּ הֲכִי. אֲלָא חָמָא בְּעֵינָא, כְּלָהּ. וְהָוָא דְּיוֹקְנָא דְּזְמִינִין לְמִיקָם בֵּיהּ בְּעֵלְמָא, כְּלָהּ חָמָא בְּעֵינָא, מ"ט, בְּגִין דְּמִיּוּמָא דְּאַתְבָּרִי עֲלָמָא, כְּלָהּ נַפְשָׁאן דְּזְמִינִין לְמִיקָם בְּבִנֵי נָשָׂא כְּלָהּ קִיּוּמִין קָמִי קֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּהָוָא דְּיוֹקְנָא מִמֶּשׁ, דְּזְמִינִין לְמִיקָם בֵּיהּ בְּעֵלְמָא.

332. בְּגִוּוּנָא דָּא, כָּל אֵינּוּן צְדִיקָיָא בְּתַר דְּנַפְקִין מִהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, כְּלָהּ נַפְשָׁאן סֻלְקִין, וְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אִימָא זְמִינִין לֹון דְּיוֹקְנָא אַחֲרָא לְאַתְלָבְשָׁא בְּהוּ, בְּגִוּוּנָא דְּהוּ בְּהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, בְּגִין כְּרַכְלָהּ קִיּוּמִין קָמִיהּ, וְחָמָא לֹון אָדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן בְּעֵינָא.

333. וְאִי תִימָא, בְּתַר דְּחָמָא לֹון, לָא קִיּוּמִי בְּקִיּוּמֵיהוּ. תָּא חֲזִיבֵל מְלוּי דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּקִיּוּמָא אֵינּוּן, וְקִיּוּמִי קָמִיהּ עַד דְּנַחֲתוּ לְעֵלְמָא, בְּגִוּוּנָא דָּא כְּתִיב כִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁנֻ פֹה וְגו'. הָא אוֹקְמוּהּ דְּכְלָהּ בְּנֵי נָשָׂא דְּזְמִינִין לְמַהֲוֵי בְּעֵלְמָא, כְּלָהּ אֲשֶׁתְּכֹחוּ תַמָּן.

334. הֲכָא אֵית לְאַסְתַּבְּלָא, דְּהָא כְּתִיב, אֵת אֲשֶׁר אֵינְנוּ פֹה וְגו', וּמִשְׁמַע הִנְהוּ דְּיַפְקוֹן מֵאֵינּוּן דְּקִיּוּמִי תַמָּן, בְּגִין דְּכְתִיב עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם, וְלָא כְּתִיב עִמָּנוּ עוֹמְדֵי הַיּוֹם. אֲלָא וְדָאֵי כְּלָהּ קִיּוּמִי תַמָּן, אֲלָא דְּלָא אֲתַחְזוּ לְעֵינָא, בְּגִין כְּרַכְתִּיב עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם, אֶף עַל גַּב דְּלָא אֲתַחְזוּן.

335. וְאִי תִימָא, מ"ט לָא אֲתַחְזוּן הֲכָא, כְּמַה דְּאַתַּחְזוּן לְאָדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן, דְּחָמָא לֹון עֵינָא בְּעֵינָא, וְהָא הֲכָא אֲתַחְזִי יְתִיר. אֲלָא, הֲכָא כִּד אֲתִיבְהִיבְת אֲוִרִיתָא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, חִיּוּ אַחֲרָא, וְדִרְגִין עֲלָאִין, הוּא חָמָאן וּמִסְתַּבְּלָאן עֵינָא בְּעֵינָא, וְהוּא תְּאִיבִין לְאַסְתַּבְּלָא וּלְמַחְמֵי בִיקְרָא דְּמִרְיָהוֹן, וּבְגִין כְּרַחְמוּ יְקָרָא עֲלָאָה דְּקוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּלַחֲדוּי, וְלָא מֵאַחֲרָא.

336. Accordingly, all human beings who shall appear in the future in the world stand before the Holy One, blessed be He, clothed in the actual images in which they shall eventually appear. Therefore, it is written: "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh: for in Your book all things are written..." (Tehilim 139:16). What is the reason THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SAW HIS UNSHAPED FLESH?

"Because another supernal image THAT WAS STANDING BEFORE HIM-EVEN BEFORE THE WORLD WAS CREATED-was similar to this one. AND THIS IS WHY HE SAW IT. Thus, it is written: "and who is a rock (tzur), save our Elohim? IN OTHER WORDS, who is such a good "portrayer" (tzayar) that he is able to draw everything as does the Holy One, blessed be He!

337. Another explanation for "For who is Eloha," is the secret of the matter. THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED EI, is inclusive, because it includes all the grades within it-THE GRADES OF THE RIGHT, WHICH ARE CHASSADIM, TOGETHER WITH THE GRADES OF THE LEFT, WHICH ARE GVUROT. You might say that the name EI represents a different grade-NOT THE ASPECT OF THE RIGHT-because it is written that, "and an El who has indignation every day" (Tehilim 7:12). HE EXPLAINS, "Come and behold: "For who is EI, save Hashem" MEANS THAT THE NUKVA is not separate, BUT IS UNITED WITH YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI (HASHEM), WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, IN A UNISON THAT is never interrupted." This is described by the words, "For who is EI save Hashem, and who is a rock..." because "a rock," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT OF THE NUKVA, is not alone, but everything is one, as it is written: "Know therefore this day, and consider it in your heart, that Hashem He is the Elohim ..." (Devarim 4:39).

32. The vision of Shadai-an ordinary vision

There are two different levels of connection to the infinite Light and spiritual energy of the Upper Worlds.

"The Vision" ???? -- the lower level

"Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei" ???? -- the higher level

Before he underwent the ritual of circumcision, Avraham could only connect to and experience the level of The vision. After circumcision, however, Avraham was able to attain the level of the Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei ????

The Relevance of this Passage

An ability to connect to a higher realm of Light--the level of Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei--is made available to us through forces that are unlocked in this mystical passage. We are drawing upon the purification power of circumcision and Avraham's elevated consciousness to ascend to this exalted realm.

338. Come and behold: As long as Avraham was not circumcised, the Holy One, blessed be He, spoke to him only through a "vision," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA WHILE SHE IS AT HER PLACE AND IS DESCRIBED BY THE WORDS, "AND AN EL WHO HAS INDIGNATION EVERY DAY." As we have learned, it is written: "the word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision..." (Beresheet 15:1). The words "in a vision" ALLUDE TO the mirror, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS the grade where all the figures, REFERRING TO THE THREE COLUMNS, RIGHT, LEFT, AND CENTRAL, are seen. And this "vision" is the secret of the covenant of circumcision, NAMELY THE NUKVA IN WHICH THE COVENANT SHINES.

339. AND HE ASKS: How can you say that THE NUKVA is called a vision because it is a grade of a mirror in which all figures appear! Previously, you said that as long as Avraham was not circumcised, the Holy One, blessed be He, spoke to him through the grade OF THE VISION alone, upon which no other grade did dwell. Now you say that 'in a vision' refers to the mirror in which all supernal grades are reflected. And, before Avraham was circumcised, it says, "the word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision.

336. וְעַל דָּא, כְּלָהּ בְּנֵי נֶשָׁא דְזַמִּינִין לְקַיִמָא בְּעֵלְמָא, כְּלָהּ קַיִמִי קַמִּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּאִינוּן דְּיוֹקְנִין מִמֶּשׁ, דְּזַמִּינִין לְקַיִמָא בֵּיהּ, הֵה־דְּ גִלְמֵי רָאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וְעַל סַפְרָךְ וּגו'. גִּלְמֵי רָאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם. מ"ט, בְּגִין דְּיוֹקְנָא אַחְרָא עֲלָא הָיִי כְּהָאִי, וּבְגִין כְּכַתִּיב וּמִי צוּר זֹלָתִי אֶלְקִינוּ. מֵאֵן צִיֵּיר טַב, דְּצִיֵּיר כְּלָא כְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

337. דְּבַר אַחֵר, בֵּי מִי אֱלוֹהִי. דָּא רְזָא דְמַלְהָ, דְּהָא אֵל כְּלָלָא הוּא, דְּאִתְכַּלִּיל מִכְּלָהּ דְּרִגִּין, וְאִי תִימָא, דְּהָא אֵל אִיהוּ דְּרִגָּא אַחְרָא, בְּגִין דְּכַתִּיב אֵל זֹעֵם בְּכָל יוֹם. תָּא חֲזִי, דְּהָא לִית אֵל מִבְּלַעְדֵּי ה', דְּלָאו אִיהוּ בְּלַחֲדוּי, וְלֹא אִתְפָּרֵשׁ לְעֵלְמִין. וְעַל דְּאִתְכַּתִּיב בֵּי מִי אֵל מִבְּלַעְדֵּי ה' וּגו' וּמִי צוּר וּגו'. דְּהָא צוּר לָאו אִיהוּ בְּלַחֲדוּי, אֱלָא כְּלָא חָד, בְּכַתִּיב וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהִשְׁבוֹתָ אֵל לִבְכֹּךְ בִּי ה' הוּא הָאֱלֹקִים וּגו'.

מחזה יהוה יהוה

338. תָּא חֲזִי, עַד לֹא אִתְגַּזַּר אַבְרָהָם, הָוָה מִמְּלִיל עֲמִיה מְגוּ מַחְזָה בְּלַחֲדוּי, כְּמָה דְּאִתְמַר, דְּכַתִּיב הִיָּה דְּבַר ה' אֵל אַבְרָם בְּמַחְזָה וּגו'. בְּמַחְזָה: בְּהָוָה חִיזוּ דְּרִגָּא דְּכָל דְּיוֹקְנִין אִתְחַזְּיוּן בֵּיהּ, כְּמָה דְּאִתְמַר. וְהָאִי מַחְזָה אִיהוּ רְזָא דְּבִרְיָת.

339. וְאִי תִימָא, דְּבְגִין כֶּךָ אֶקְרִי מַחְזָה, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ דְּרִגָּא חִיזוּ דְּכָל דְּיוֹקְנִין אִתְחַזְּיוּן בֵּיהּ, הָא אֲמַרְתָּ בְּקִדְמִיתָא, דְּעַד לֹא אִתְגַּזַּר אַבְרָהָם, לֹא הָוָה מִמְּלִיל עֲמִיה בְּרִי הָאִי דְּרִגָּא, דְּלֹא שְׂרָאן עֲלוּי דְּרִגִּין אַחֲרָנִין, וְהִשְׁתָּא אֲמַרְתָּ בְּמַחְזָה, חִיזוּ דְּכָל דְּרִגִּין עֲלָאִין, וְהָא עַד לֹא אִתְגַּזַּר כְּתִיב, הִיָּה דְּבַר ה' אֵל אַבְרָם בְּמַחְזָה.

340. AND HE REPLIES: This grade, which is definitely the mirror of all the supernal grades, is completed by the mirror of all the supernal grades. Even before Avraham was circumcised, this grade mirrored all of the supernal grades and was completed by the colors OF THE SUPERNAL GRADES. AND ALSO the mirror made of these colors is below Her, BELOW THE NUKVA: white, CHESED, is to the right; red, GVURAH, is to the left; and a third color-GREEN, TIFERET-is composed of all remaining colors. AND TO THE NUKVA THAT IS CALLED A VISION, all the supernal colors-WHITE, RED, AND GREEN-are built on this mirror. Therefore He was reflected in this mirror, which stood upon Avraham, and spoke with him, even though he was not circumcised. As soon as he was circumcised, it is written: 'Hashem appeared to Avram...' (Beresheet 17:1). BECAUSE THE NAME OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI BECAME ATTACHED TO HER, MEANING THAT THE ESSENCE OF ALL SUPERNAL GRADES WERE INCLUDED WITHIN HER. THIS WAS NOT TRUE BEFORE AVRAHAM WAS CIRCUMCISED; AT THAT TIME, ONLY THE THREE COLORS WERE INCLUDED WITHIN HER.

341. Come and behold: In reference to Bilaam, it is written that he saw "the vision of Shadai" (Bemidbar 24:16), but with Avraham, it is written only "in a vision." AND HE ASKS: What is the difference between these two? AND HE REPLIES: The 'vision of the Shadai' refers to THE COLORS below THE NUKVA that are Her mirror. The ordinary 'vision' is the letter Hei OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, THE NUKVA, in which all the supernal figures, WHICH ARE THE THREE COLORS, appear. Because of this, it is written 'in a vision' only when referring to Avraham, in the 'vision of Shadai' when referring to Bilaam. HOWEVER, AS ALREADY EXPLAINED, SHE INCLUDES THE THREE COLORS-WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, AND ALSO THE MIRROR COMPOSED OF THESE COLORS UNDERNEATH HER.

342. Therefore, before Avraham was circumcised, he reached the grade THAT IS SIMPLY CALLED, "A VISION." Immediately after he was circumcised, however, "Hashem appeared to Avram..." So all the grades OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI appeared upon this grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, THE ESSENCE OF THESE GRADES. And the grade spoke to him properly, without reservation, BECAUSE THE NUKVA IS THE SECRET OF "SPEAKING." And Avraham clung on to one grade after the other until he became attached to the holy covenant in full perfection, as should properly be!

343. Come and behold: As Avraham was circumcised, he left THE KLIPAH OF the foreskin and entered to the holy covenant. He was adorned with the holy crown and entered the covenant upon which the world is based. Then the world was firmly established for his sake, as it is written: "If My covenant be not day and night, it were as if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Yirmeyah 33:25). SO IT IS FOR THE SAKE OF CIRCUMCISION THAT THE WORLD EXISTS. And it is also written: "These are the generations of heaven and earth when they were created (Heb. behibar'am)" (Beresheet 2:4). Behibar'am constitutes the letters of be-hei-bra'am (he created them with Hei). It can also be read beAvraham (lit. 'with Avraham'). Both are related to the same secret, WHICH IS CIRCUMCISION. THEREFORE THE WORLD WAS CREATED FOR AVRAHAM BECAUSE HE HAD ENTERED THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION, WHICH IS REFERRED TO BY THE VERSE, "IF MY COVENANT BE NOT DAY AND NIGHT..."

340. אֵלָא, הָאִי דְרָגָא, חִיּוּ דְכָל דְרָגִין עֲלָאִין אִיהוּ, וּבְחִיּוּ דְרָגִין עֲלָאִין אֲתַתְקֵן. וְאַף עַל גְּבִדְבִהּוּא זְמַנָּא דְאַבְרָהָם לֹא הוּא גְזִיר, הָאִי דְרָגָא בְּחִיּוּ דְרָגִין עֲלָאִין אִיהוּ, וּבְכָל אִינוּן גּוּוּנִין אִיהוּ קָאִים. וְחִיּוּ דְאִינוּן גּוּוּנִין קִיּוּמִי תַּחֲוִיתִיהּ, חָד מִיַּמִּינָא, גּוּוּן חֲוָר. חָד מִשְׁמָאלָא, גּוּוּן סוּמָק. חָד דְכָלִּיל מִכָּל גּוּוּנִין, וְאִיהוּ חִיּוּ, דְכָל גּוּוּנִין עֲלָאִין דְקִיּוּמִי עֲלִיהּ. וְעַל דָּא בְּהָאִי חִיּוּ קָאִים עֲלִיהּ דְאַבְרָהָם, וּמַלִּיל עֲמִיהּ, וְאַף עַל גַּב דְּלֹא אֲתַגְזֹר. בֵּינָן דְאַתַּגְזֹר, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אַבְרָם.

341. תָּא חֲזִי, מַחְזָה שְׂדֵי כְתִיב בְּבִלְעָם, וּבְאַבְרָהָם כְּתִיב מַחְזָה סִתָּם, מַה בֵּין הָאִי לְהָאִי. אֵלָא, מַחְזָה שְׂדֵי, אֲלִין דְלִתְתָּא מַגִּיה, וְאִינוּן חִיּוּ דִילִיהּ. מַחְזָה סִתָּם, מַחְזָה דָּא הוּא ה', דְכָל דִּיּוֹקְנִין עֲלָאִין אֲתַחֲזִיין בֵּיהּ, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ כְּתִיב בְּאַבְרָהָם, מַחְזָה סִתָּם, וּבְבִלְעָם מַחְזָה שְׂדֵי.

342. וְעַל דָּא עַד לֹא אֲתַגְזֹר אַבְרָהָם, הוּא לִיהּ הָאִי דְרָגָא כְּדָאֲמַרְן. בֵּינָן דְאַתַּגְזֹר, מִדֵּר וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אַבְרָם וגו'. אֲתַחֲזִין כְּלָהוּ דְרָגִין, עַל הָאִי דְרָגָא, וְהָאִי דְרָגָא מַלִּיל עֲמִיהּ, כְּדָקָא חֲזִי בְשְׁלִימוּ. וְאַבְרָהָם אֲתַקְטֹר מִדְּרָגָא לְדְרָגָא, וְעַל בְּבִרִית קִיּוּמָא קְדִישָׁא, כְּדָקָא חֲזִי בְשְׁלִימוּ.

343. תָּא חֲזִי, בֵּינָן דְאַתַּגְזֹר אַבְרָהָם, נִמְקַ מְעַרְלָה, וְעַל בְּקִיּוּמָא קְדִישָׁא, וְאַתַּעֲטֹר בְּעֵטְרָא קְדִישָׁא, וְעַל בְּקִיּוּמָא, דְעֲלָמָא קָאִים עֲלִיהּ, וּבְרִין אֲתַקְיִים עֲלָמָא בְּגִינִיהּ. בְּגִין דְכְּתִיב אִם לֹא בְרִיתִי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה חֲקוֹת שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ לֹא שָׁמַתִּי. וּכְתִיב אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהַבְרָאָם. בְּה"א בְּרָאָם, בְּאַבְרָהָם. וְכָלֹא בְרָאָא חָדָא קָאִים.

344. When the Holy One, blessed be He, showed Adam all future generations of the world, he saw them one by one, one generation after the other, standing in the Garden of Eden in that same form that they would have in this world. So come and behold: We have learned that when he saw that David had no life of his own at all, he stood in wonder and then gave him 70 years of his own life. Because of this, Adam lived only nine hundred and thirty years; his remaining seventy years were given to David.

344. ובשעתא דקדשא בריך הוא אחמי ליה לאדם, כל אינון דרין דעלמא, וחמא לון כל חר וחר, כל דרא ודרא, בלהו קיימי בגנתא דערן, בהוא דיוקנא דזמינין לקיימא בהאי עלמא, ותא חזי, הא אתמר, כיון דחמא ליה לדוד, דלאו ביה חיים כלל, תוה, ואיהו יהיב ליה מדיליה ע' שנין, בגין כרהו ליה לאדם, תשע מאות ותלתין שנין, ואינון שבעין אסתלקו ליה לדוד.

345. And this is the secret of Wisdom. The fact that David had only the 70 years given to him by Adam, is in keeping with the higher Wisdom, because everything that occurs below is in accordance with what happens above, IN THE UPPER WORLD.

345. ומלה דא רזא דחכמתא איהו, דדוד לית ליה בר שבעין שנין, מאדם קדמאה, וכלא רזא דחכמתא איהו. וכל מה דלתתא כלא איהו ברזא דלעילא.

33. The Holy One, blessed be He, matches couples together

A discourse on soul mates reveals the mysteries surrounding the male and female aspects of the soul, and the concept of soul mate relationships. When a complete soul enters this physical realm, it does so through the efforts of the angel Lailah. During the process of descent, the unified soul separates into male and female halves. If the two halves of the soul embark on a spiritual path during physical existence, they can merit reunification. While the angel Lailah is responsible for bringing souls into the physical dimension, it is the Creator Himself who reunites two halves of one soul when the time is right--for only the Creator knows with certainty who are true soul mates.

The Relevance of this Passage

Through this portion, we can merit the appearance of our soul mate in our life and/or strengthen the marital bond with our current partner.

346. Come and behold: All the souls that are destined to come to the world appear before Him, as couples, WHICH MEANS THAT EACH SOUL IS DIVIDED TO A MALE AND FEMALE. Afterward, as they arrive in this world, the Holy One, blessed be He, matches them together. Rabbi Yitzchak said: THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, says, 'the daughter of so-and-so to so-and-so.'

346. ותא חזי, בכל אינון דיוקנין דנשמתין דעלמא. בלהו זוגין זוגין קמיה, לבתר, בר אתיין להאי עלמא, קדשא בריך הוא מזוג זוגין. אמר ר' יצחק, קודשא בריך הוא אמר בת פלוני לפלוני.

347. Rabbi Yosi asked: What is the meaning of this? THAT IS, OF THE STATEMENT THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, ANNOUNCES WHO GOES WITH WHOM. HOW CAN THIS BE TRUE SINCE it is written: "and there is nothing new under the sun" (Kohelet 1:9), WHICH MEANS THAT EVERYTHING WAS SETTLED DURING THE CREATION OF THE WORLD. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO WHAT YOU HAVE SAID, THE ACTION OF MATCHMAKING IS NEW EACH TIME, BECAUSE THE MATCHES MUST BE ANNOUNCED. Rabbi Yehuda said, it is written: "under the sun," yet "above THE SUN," NEW THINGS CAN TAKE PLACE. Rabbi Yosi asked, "Why does He have to make an announcement, since Rabbi Chizkiyah said that Rabbi Chiya said that "at exactly the time a man is born and emerges in the world, his spouse is assigned to him!"

347. אמר רבי יוסי, מאי קא מיירי, והא כתיב אינ כל חדש תחת השמש. אמר ר' יהודה, תחת השמש כתיב, שאני לעילא. אמר רבי יוסי, מאי ברוזא הכא, והא אמר ר' חזקיה אמר רבי חייא, בההיא שעתא ממש, דנפיק בר נש לעלמא, בת זוגו אודמנת לו.

348. Rabbi Aba responded, "Happy are the righteous, whose souls are adorned as they appear before the Holy King, before coming to this world TO ENTER THE BODY. Because we have learned that when the Holy One, blessed be He, sends the souls forth to the world, all of these spirits and souls include a male and a female joined together.

348. אמר רבי אבא, זכאין אינון צדיקיא, דנשמתהון מתעטרין קמי מלכא קדישא, עד לא ייתון לעלמא, דהכי תנינן, בההיא שעתא דאפיק קדשא בריך הוא נשמתין לעלמא, כל אינון רוחין ונשמתין, בלהו כלילן דכר ונקבא, דמתחברן בכדא.

349. They are handed over to a governor, who is an emissary in charge of human conception and whose name is Lailah (Eng. 'Night'). So when they descend to the world and are handed over to that governor, they are separated from each other. Sometimes one precedes the other in coming down and entering the body of a human being.

350. When their time to be married arrives, the Holy One, blessed be He, who knows THE MALES AND THE FEMALES OF these spirits and souls, joins them as they were BEFORE THEY CAME DOWN TO THE WORLD. And He announces, THE DAUGHTER OF SO-AND-SO TO SO-AND-SO. When they are joined together, they become one body and one soul-THEY ARE the right and left in proper unison. THE MALE IS THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE BODY AND SOUL; THE FEMALE IS THEIR LEFT SIDE. And because of this, "there is nothing new under the sun," MEANING EVEN THOUGH THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, ANNOUNCES, 'THE DAUGHTER OF SO-AND-SO TO SO-AND-SO', THIS IS NOTHING NEW BUT RATHER A RETURN TO HOW THEY WERE BEFORE COMING DOWN TO THIS WORLD. AND SINCE ONLY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, KNOWS THIS, HE THEREFORE ANNOUNCES REGARDING THEM.

351. You might say, "But we have learned that a man obtains a mate according to his deeds and ways of behavior!" It is assuredly so! If he is meritorious and his ways are correct, then he deserves his own SOULMATE-to join her AS THEY WERE JOINED when they left THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BEFORE BONDING A BODY.

352. Rabbi Chiya asked, "Where should he who performs good deeds look for his soulmate?" He answered, "We have already learned that a man should even sell all his property to marry the daughter of a sage, because the deposit of the Holy One, blessed be He, is handed over to a sage." THEREFORE, HE SHALL SURELY FIND HIS MATE WITH HIM.

353. We have also learned that according to the secret of the Braita, the mating of all souls, which are reincarnated BUT HAVE NO SOULMATES can be performed before their time through mercy. THIS MEANS THAT HE MAY PRECEDE AND MARRY SOMEBODY ELSE'S SOULMATE. THIS IS THE MEANING OF THE WARNING, "WOMEN SHOULD NOT BE MARRIED ON A FEAST DAY, BUT THEY CAN BE BETROTHED, BECAUSE ANOTHER MAN MAY PRECEDE HIM THROUGH MERCY." And what they said is right! The term "another man" is exact. This is the reason why "It is difficult for the Holy, blessed be He, to bring couples together" Above all, assuredly, "the ways of Hashem are right" (Hoshea 14:10), AND ALL THAT HE DOES IS GOOD AND RIGHT.

354. Rabbi Yehuda inquired of Rabbi Elazar, "I am aware of the secret of this subject. THEREFORE I ASK where do those souls that are reincarnated, BUT HAVE NO SOULMATES, find their spouses? He responded, "It is written: 'How shall we do for wives for them that remain?' (Shoftim 21:7), and "you shall catch every man his wife..." (Ibid. 21). Although this passage deals specifically with the sons of Binyamin, IT ACTUALLY DEALS WITH THE REINCARNATED SOULS, WHO MAY PRECEDE THEIR FRIENDS AND TAKE THEIR SOULMATES AWAY FROM THEM THROUGH MERCY. Therefore, as we have learned, "Lest another precede him with Mercy."

349. וְאֶת־מִסְרָן בִּידָא דִּהְהוּא מְמַנָּא, שְׁלִיחָא דְאַתְפָּקֵד עַל עֲדוּאֵיהוֹן דְּבְנֵי נָשָׁא, וְלִילָה שְׁמִיָּה. וּבִשְׁעָתָא דִּנְחֻתִּין וְאֶת־מִסְרָן בִּידוּי, מִתְפָּרְשִׁין. וְלִזְמַנִּין דָּא אֶקְדִּים מִן דָּא, וְאַחִית לָהּ בְּבְנֵי נָשָׁא.

350. וְכֵד מָטָא עֵידָן דְּזוּגָא דְלָהוֹן, קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דִּידַע אִינוּן רוּחִין וְנִשְׁמָתִין, מַחְבֵּר לֹון כְּדִבְקָדְמִיתָא, וּמַכְרִזָּא עֲלֵיהּ. וְכֵד אֶתְחַבְּרָן, אֶתְעַבְּדוּ חֵד גּוֹפָא חֵד נִשְׁמָתָא, יְמִינָא וּשְׂמָאלָא כְּדָקָא חֲזִי. וּבְגִין כֵּן אֵין כָּל חֵדָּשׁ תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ.

351. וְאִי תִימָא הָא תְּנִינָן, לִית זְוּגָא, אֱלָא לְמוֹם עוֹבְדוּי וְאַרְחוּי דְּבֵר נֶשׁ. הֵכִי הוּא וְדָאִי, דָּאִי זָכִי, וְעוֹבְדוּי אֶתְכַשְּׂרָן, זָכִי לִהְיוֹא דִּילִיָּה, לְאַתְחַבְּרָא בֵּיהּ, כְּמָה דְנִפְיָק.

352. אָמַר ר' חֲזִיָּא, מֵאן דְּאַתְכַּשְּׂרָן עוֹבְדוּי, בָּאן אַתְר יִתְבַּע הֵהוּא זְוּגָא דִּילִיָּה. אֲמַרְלוּהָ תְּנִינָן, לְעוֹלָם יִמְכּוֹר אָדָם כּו' וְיִשָּׂא בֵּת תַּלְמִיד חָכָם. דִּתְלַמִּיד חָכָם, פְּקֻדָּנָא דְמֵאֲרִיָּה, אֶתְפָּקֵדָן בִּידֵיהּ.

353. תֵּאֲנָא בְּרָזָא דְמִתְנִיתָא, כָּל אִינוּן דְּאֵתוּ בְּגִלְגּוּלָא דְנִשְׁמָתִין, יְכַלִּין לְאַקְדָּמָא בְּרַחְמֵי זְוּגָא דְלָהוֹן. וְעַל הָאִי אֶתְעֲרוּ חֲבֵרִיָּא, שְׂמָא יְקַדְּמֵנוּ אַחֵר בְּרַחְמִים. וְשְׁפִיר קְאָמְרוּ, אַחֵר דִּיִּקָּא, וְעַל כֵּן קִשִּׁין זְוּגִין קָמִיָּה דְקוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. וְעַל כֵּלָּא וְדָאִי כִי יִשְׂרִים דְרָכֵי ה' כְּתִיב.

354. ר' יְהוּדָה שְׁלַח לִיה לֵר' אֶלְעָזָר, אָמַר הָא רָזָא דְמַלְהָ יִדְעָנָא, אִינוּן דְּאֵתוּ בְּגִלְגּוּלָא דְנִשְׁמָתִין, מֵאן אַתְר לָהּ זְוּגָא. שְׁלַח לִיה, כְּתִיב מַה נַּעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם לְגוֹתְרִים לְנָשִׁים וְגו'. וְכְתִיב, לְכוּ וְחַטַּפְתֶּם לָכֶם וְגו'. פִּרְשָׁתָא דְבְנֵי בְנִימִין אוֹכַח, וְעַל הָאִי תְּנִינָן, שְׂמָא יְקַדְּמֵנוּ אַחֵר בְּרַחְמִים.

355. Rabbi Yehuda said that this is definitely the meaning of "It is difficult for the Holy One, blessed be He, to bring couples together," BECAUSE HE IS OBLIGED TO TAKE FROM ONE AND GIVE TO THE OTHER. Happy is the portion of Yisrael, because the Torah teaches them the ways of conduct of the Holy One, blessed be He, as well as all His secrets and mysteries hidden before Him.

356. Indeed, it is written: "The Torah of Hashem is perfect" (Tehilim 19:8), BECAUSE EVERYTHING APPEARS IN IT. Happy is the portion of him, who studies Torah and is never separated from it. Because whoever abandons the Torah, even for one moment, is separated from eternal life. Therefore, it is written: "For it is your life and length of your days" (Devarim 30:20) and "For length of days and years of life and peace shall they add to you" (Mishlei 3:2).

34. Night and Midnight

Specific judgments come to our world when the sun sets and night descends. At the stroke of midnight, another transformation occurs as the awesome and compassionate Light of mercy appears in the cosmos. According to the wisdom of the Zohar, whoever delves into the study of Torah during this time of Mercy, after midnight, shall merit a portion in the world to come.

This mystery is conveyed through a story about Rabbi Aba and Rabbi Ya'akov. The two eminent mystics are traveling through a certain village and they take up lodging at an inn. The inn-keeper has built a complex apparatus that uses water, buckets, and scales to signal the arrival of midnight. These complexities and metaphors within this seemingly simple tale indicate the extreme importance of spiritual study after the stroke of midnight. The Relevance of this Passage

The compassionate Light of Mercy is aroused through the language that flows through this mystical text of Zohar. This Light helps us merit a share in the world to come.

357. "And when Avram was ninety nine years old..." (Beresheet 17:1). Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion by quoting, "Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever..." (Yeshayah 60:21). Happy is Yisrael above all other nations because the Holy One, blessed be He, called its people righteous. For we have learned that there are 125,000 winged creatures roaming the world ready to hear and receive the voice.

358. As we have learned, everything in the world has a voice, which floats and flies in the firmament, where those winged creatures catch it and carry it aloft TO MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) FOR MALE AND FEMALE, to be judged to good or to evil, as it is written: "For the bird of heaven shall carry the sound and that which has wings shall tell the matter" (Kohelet 10:20).

359. "When do they judge this voice?" IN OTHER WORDS, "WHEN IS THE VOICE CARRIED ALOFT AS MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) FOR MALE AND FEMALE." Rabbi Chiya answers: When a person goes to bed and sleeps, because at that time, the soul leaves him and testifies about him; that is when the voice is judged. THIS MEANS THAT IT IS ELEVATED TO MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) IF THE SOUL TESTIFIES IN HIS FAVOR! Therefore, it is written: "keep the doors of your mouth from her that lies in your bosom" (Michah 7:5). Why? Because it is she who testifies against the person. THE WORDS "FROM HER THAT LIES IN YOUR BOSOM" ALLUDE TO THE SOUL. As Rabbi Yehuda says: All that a person does during the day, his soul testifies on him at night.

355. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה הָאֵי הוּא וְדָאֵי, דְּקָשִׁין זְווגִין קָמִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. זְכָאָה חוּלְקָהוֹן דִּישְׂרָאֵל, דְּאוּרֵייתָא אוּלִיף לֵהוּ אוּרְחוּי דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְכָל טְמִירִין וּגְנִיזָא דְּגְנִיזִין קָמִיה.

356. וְדָאֵי כְּתִיב תּוֹרַת ה' תְּמִימָה וגו'. זְכָאָה חוּלְקִיה מֵאֵן דִּישְׁתַּדַּל בְּאוּרֵייתָא, וְלֹא יִתְפָּרֵשׁ מִנֶּה, דְּכָל מֵאֵן דִּיתְפָּרֵשׁ מְאוּרֵייתָא, אָפִילוּ שְׁעָתָא חָדָא, כְּמָה דְּאִתְפָּרֵשׁ מַחֲוֵי דְעֵלְמָא. דְּכְתִיב כִּי הוּא חֵיךְ וְאֶרֶךְ יָמֶיךָ. וְכְתִיב אֶרֶךְ יָמִים וּשְׁנוֹת חַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם יוֹסִיפוּ לָךְ.

357. וַיְהִי אַבְרָם בֶּן תְּשַׁעִים שָׁנָה וגו'. ר' יוֹסִי פָתַח, וְעַמְךָ כֻּלָּם צְדִיקִים לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ וגו'. זְכָאִין אִינוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל, מְכָל שָׂאָר עַמִּין, דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא קָרָא לוֹן צְדִיקִים. דְּתַנִּיא מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִין וְחֲמֵשׁ אֲלֹפֵי מֵאֵרֵי דְגִדְפִין, דְּאֲזֵלִין וְטָאֲסִין כָּל עֵלְמָא, וְשִׁמְעִין קָלָא, וְאַחֲדִין לֵיהּ לֵהוּא קָלָא.

358. כְּמָה דְּתַנִּינוּ, לֵית לָךְ מְלָה בְּעֵלְמָא, דְּלִית לָהּ קָלָא, וְאֲזֵלָא וְטָאֲסָא בְּרִקִּיעָא, וְאַחֲדִין לָהּ מֵאֵרֵי דְגִדְפִין וְסִלְקִין הֵהוּא קָלָא, וְדִינִין לָהּ, הֵן לְטַב, הֵן לְבִישׁ. דְּכְתִיב כִּי עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם יוֹלִיךְ אֶת הַקּוֹל וגו'.

359. אֵימַתִּי דִּינִין לֵהוּא קָלָא. רַבִּי חֵיָא אָמַר, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּבֵר נִשְׁשָׁכִיב וְנָאִים, וְנִשְׁמַתִּיה נִפְקַת מִנֶּה, וְהִיא אִסְהִידַת בֵּיהּ בְּבֵר נֶשׁ, וְכִדִּין דִּינִין לֵהוּא קָלָא. הֵה"ר מִשְׁכַּבַּת חִיקָךְ שְׁמֵר פְּתָחֵי פִיךָ. מ"ט מִשּׁוֹם דְּהִיא אִסְהִידַת בְּבֵר נֶשׁ. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר, כָּל מַה דְּבֵר נֶשׁ עֲבִיד בְּכָל יוֹמָא, נִשְׁמַתִּיה אִסְהִידַת בֵּיהּ בְּבֵר נֶשׁ בְּלִילִיא.

360. Rabbi Elazar said, as we have learned: At the beginning of the first hour at night, when the day is blown away and the sun goes down, the keeper of the keys, who is in charge of the sun-MATATRON, THE GOVERNOR OF THE WORLD, WHO DRAWS THE LIGHT OF THE SUN DOWN TO THE WORLD-enters the twelve gates that BELONG TO THE SUN. THESE GATES are open during the day, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE TWELVE HOURS OF DAYLIGHT. After he has passed through all TWELVE GATES, MEANING AFTER THE TWELFTH HOUR IS OVER, then all the gates are closed, MEANING THAT THE DOMINION OF THE DAY HAS ENDED AND THE TIME FOR THE DOMINION OF THE NIGHT HAS COME!

361. A herald then announces-BECAUSE EVERY CHANGE IS ACCOMPLISHED BY AN ANNOUNCEMENT. Someone rises, THE HERALD, THE ANGEL GAVRIEL, WHO holds on to their keys. DURING THE DAY, THE KEYS ARE IN THE HANDS OF MATATRON. THROUGH THESE KEYS, HE DRAWS THE DARKNESS, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT. After he completes the announcement, all the guardians of the world gather together and ascend FROM THE WORLD. Nobody remains to create an opening TO DRAW DOWN EVEN A TINY LIGHT, because they are all silenced. Then the lower Judgments are aroused. They start to roam the world, and the moon begins to shine.

362. And wailers WHICH ARE THE FORCES OF JUDGMENT THAT AROUSE WAILING AND HOWLING IN THE WORLD, cry out loud WITH THE BLOWING OF A TRUMPET. At the second blast, the angels begin to chant and sing before their Master. How many Guardians stand erect TO OFFER PROTECTION FROM JUDGMENTS, and Judgments are aroused in the world. Then as people sleep, their souls leave THEIR BODIES, give testimony, and are sentenced-BECAUSE THERE IS NO RIGHTEOUS PERSON ON EARTH WHO DOES NOT SIN. But the Holy One, blessed be He, deals mercifully with the human beings and allows the soul to return back IN THE MORNING.

363. At midnight, when the birds awaken, THAT IS, THE COCKS, a spirit (or wind) rises in the North. THIS REFERS TO THE LEFT COLUMN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM-THE SECRET OF THE UPPER THREE SFIROT OF RUACH. The scepter then rises in the South, NAMELY IN THE RIGHT COLUMN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM, and unites with that spirit OF THE LEFT COLUMN. THUS, THEY ARE INCLUDED WITHIN EACH OTHER, AND THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LEFT COLUMN subside and are mitigated BY CHASSADIM. And the Holy One, blessed be He, is awakened and, as is His wont, delights Himself with the righteous in the Garden of Eden.

364. Happy is he who awakens at that time to delight in the Torah, because the Holy One, blessed be He, together with all the righteous in the Garden of Eden listen attentively to his voice. This is why it is written: "You that dwell in the gardens, the companions hearken to your voice, cause me to hear it" (Shir Hashirim 8:13).

365. In addition, the Holy One, blessed be He, draws down upon him a thread of grace (Lit. 'chesed') which earns him protection in this world from both higher and lower beings. Therefore it is written: "Hashem will command His loving kindness (Heb. Chesed) in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me" (Tehilim 42:9).

360. תָּאנָא אָמַר ר' אֶלְעָזָר, בְּתַחֲלַת שַׁעֲתָא קַמֵּייתָא בְּלִילְיָא, כְּדִן נִשָּׁף יָמָמָא, וְעָאֵל שְׁמַשָּׁא, מְאָרִי דְּמַפְתָּחֵן דְּמִמְנָן עַל שְׁמַשָּׁא, עָאֵל בְּתַרִּיסָר תְּרַעִין דְּפִתְיָחִין בְּיָמָמָא, בְּתַר דְּעָאֵל בְּכֻלָּהוּ, כָּל אִינוּן תְּרַעִין סְתִימִין.

361. בְּרוּזָא קָאִים, וְשָׂרִי לְאַכְרָזָא, קָאִים מֵאֵן דְּקָאִים, וְאַחִיד לְאִינוּן מַפְתָּחֵן. בְּתַר דְּסִיִּים בְּרוּזָא, כָּל אִינוּן נְטוּרֵי עֲלֵמָא מִתְּבַנְשִׁין וְסֻלְקִין, לִית מֵאֵן דְּפִתַּח פִּטְרָא, כֹּלָא מִשְׁתַּכְּבִּין. כְּדִין דִּינוּן דְּלִתְתָא מִתְּעֲרִין, וְאִזְלִין וְשֹׁאטִין בְּעֲלֵמָא, וְסִיְהֵרָא שְׂאֲרֵי לְאַנְהֵרָא.

362. וּמְאָרִי דִּיבְבָא תְּקַעִין וּמִילָלִין, תְּקַעִין תְּנִינֹת. כְּדִין מִתְּעֲרֵי שִׁירָתָא, וּמִזְמִרִין קָמִי מְאָרִיהוּן, כַּמָּה מְאָרִי תְּרִיסִין קִיּוּמוֹ בְּקִיּוּמֵיהֶן, וְאַתְּעֲרִין דִּינוּן בְּעֲלֵמָא, כְּדִין בְּנֵי נֶשָׂא נְיִימִין, וְנִשְׁמַתָּא נִפְקַת, וְאַסְהִידַת סִהְדוּתָא, וְאַתְחִיבַת בְּדִינָא, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאֵעִבִיד חֶסֶד בְּבֵר נֶשׁ, וְנִשְׁמַתָּא תַּבַּת לְאַתְרָהּ.

363. בְּפִלְגוֹת לִילְיָא, כְּדִן צְפוּרִין מִתְּעֲרִין, סִטְרָא דְּצֻפּוֹן אֲתַעֵר בְּרוּחָא, קָם בְּקִיּוּמֵיהָ, שְׂרָבִיטָא דְּבִסְטֵר דְּרוּם, וּבִטְשׁ בְּהֵוָה רוּחָא, וְשָׂכִיךְ וְאַתְבָּסָם, כְּדִין אֲתַעֵר קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּנִמוּסוֹ, לְאַשְׁתַּעֲשַׂע עִם צְדִיקָא בְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֶדֶן.

364. בְּהֵוָה שַׁעֲתָא, זְבָאָה חוּלְקִיָּה דְּבֵר נִשְׁדָּקָאִים לְאַשְׁתַּעֲשַׂע בְּאוּרֵייתָא, דְּהָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְכָל צְדִיקָא דְּבִגְנִתָּא דְּעֶדֶן, כֹּלָּהוּ צִיּוּתִין לְקָלִיָּה. דְּהָא הוּא דְּכַתִּיב הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּגִנִּים חֲבֵרִים מְקַשִּׁיבִים לְקוֹלךְ הַשְּׁמִיעֲנִי.

365. וְלֹא עוֹד, אֲלֹא דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאֵמְשִׁיךְ עֲלֵיהָ חֵד חוּטָא דְּחֶסֶד, לְמַהּוֹי נְטוּר בְּעֲלֵמָא, דְּהָא עֲלָאִין וְתַתָּאִין נְטֻרִין לִיָּה. הֵה"ד, יוֹמָם יֵצֵה ה' חֶסֶדוֹ וּבְלִילָהּ שִׁירָה עִמִּי.

366. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: Whoever delves to the study of Torah at that hour shall definitely have an eternal share in the world to come. Rabbi Yosi then asked: What is the meaning of 'eternal'? He answered: This is what I have learned. Every midnight, when the Holy One, blessed be He, enters the Garden of Eden, all the plants-- NAMELY THE SFIROT, of the Garden of Eden, WHICH IS THE NUKVA--are watered most generously by the stream that is called the 'ancient stream' and also the 'stream of delight,' WHICH REFERS TO THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA, which waters never cease to flow; BECAUSE THE MATING OF ABA AND IMA NEVER STOPS. So, if a person awakens to study Torah, it is as if that stream is poured on his head and he is watered, together with the plants of the Garden of Eden. HE RECEIVES AN ETERNAL PORTION OF THE MOCHIN OF THE WORLD TO COME AS WELL.

367. Furthermore, because all the righteous in the Garden of Eden listen to him, they add another portion to that flow of the stream, WHICH ARE THE MOCHIN OF SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA. Therefore he has an eternal portion in the world to come, FOR THEY ARE INCLUDED IN THE MOCHIN OF ABA AND IMA.

368. Rabbi Aba was traveling from Tiberias to Tronya, where his father-in-law lived, accompanied by his son, Rabbi Ya'akov. When they decided to spend the night in the village of Tarsha, Rabbi Aba asked his landlord, "Is there a cock around here?" The landlord asked, "What do you need a cock for?" Rabbi Aba responded, "Because I awake at midnight exactly! AND I NEED A COCK TO WAKE ME UP.

369. THE LANDLORD then said: You do not need THE COCK. I have prepared a signal in the house that indicates midnight, the scales that are before my bed. For this purpose, I fill a vessel with water. The water drips out THROUGH A HOLE IN THE VESSEL so that it empties exactly at midnight. AT THAT MOMENT, ONE SCALE GOES UP WHILE THE OTHER swings downward and roars. IT MAKES NOISE AS IT FALLS. And the sound is heard throughout the house. The signal was created by an old man who once stayed with me and arose at exactly midnight to study Torah.

370. Rabbi Aba said: Blessed be HASHEM, the Merciful, who has sent me over here. At midnight, the scale made a noise as it swung down, waking Rabbi Aba and Rabbi Ya'akov. They heard their landlord, who was sitting in a corner of the house with his two sons, say, "It is written: 'Midnight I will rise to give thanks to You because of Your righteous judgments'" (Tehilim 119:62). AND HE ASKED, "What did David see that caused him to say 'Midnight...'" instead of "at midnight...?" AND HE REPLIES: Most certainly he was referring to the Holy One, blessed be He, CALLING HIM 'MIDNIGHT.'

366. אָמַר רַבִּי חִזְקִיָּה, כָּל מֶאֵן דְּאַשְׁתַּדֵּל בְּהַאי שְׁעָתָא בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, וְדַאי אֵית לֵיה חוּלְקָא תְדִיר בְּעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי. אָמַר ר' יוֹסִי, מִ"ט תְּדִיר. אָמַר לוֹהֲבֵי אוֹלִיפְנָא, דְּכָל פְּלָגוֹת לִילְיָא, בְּד קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתַעֵר בְּגִנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן, כָּל אֵינּוֹן נְטִיעֵן דְּגִינְתָּא אֲשַׁתְּקִינֵן יְתִיר, מִהֵהוּא נֶחְלָא, דְּאֶקְרִי נֶחָל קְדוּמִים, נֶחָל עֲרָנִים, דְּלֹא פִסְקוּ מִימּוֹי לְעֵלְמִין, כְּבִיכּוֹל הֵהוּא דְקָאִים וְאַשְׁתַּדֵּל בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, כְּאִילוּ הֵהוּא נֶחְלָא אֲתֵרַק עַל רִישִׁיה, וְאַשְׁקִי לֵיה, בְּגוּ אֵינּוֹן נְטִיעֵן דְּבִגְנִתָּא דְעֵדֶן.

367. וְלֹא עוֹד, אֲלֵא הוּאִיל וְכִלְהוּ צְדִיקֵינָא, דְּבִגּוּ גִנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן, צִינְתִּין לֵיה, חוּלְקָא שׁוּיִין לֵיה, בְּהֵהוּא שְׁקִי דְנֶחְלָא, אֲשַׁתְּכַח דְאֵית לֵיה חוּלְקָא תְדִיר, בְּעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי.

368. רַבִּי אַבָּא הוּה אֲתִי מִטְבְּרִיָּה, לְבִי טְרוּנָא דְחֲמוּי, וְר' יַעֲקֹב בְּרִיה הוּה עֲמִיָּה, אֶעְרֵעוּ בְּכַפֵּר טְרָשָׁא. בְּד בָּעוּ לְמַשְׁכַּב, אָמַר ר' אַבָּא, לְמַרְיָה דְבֵיתָא, אֵית הָכָא תְרַנְגוּלָא. אָמַר לוֹמָרָא דְבֵיתָא, אָמַאי. אָמַר לוֹ, בְּגִין דְקָאִימְנָא בְּפִלְגוֹת לִילְיָא מִמֶּשׁ.

369. אָמַר לוֹ, לֹא אֶצְטְרִיךְ, דְּהָא סִימְנָא לִי בְּבֵיתָא, דְּהָדִין טַקְלָא דְקָמִי עֲרִסָא, מְלִינָא לֵיה מִיָּא, וְנָטִיף טִיף טִיף, בְּפִלְגוֹת לִילְיָא מִמֶּשׁ, אֲתֵרַקוּ כִלְהוּ מִיָּא, וְאַתְגַּלְגַּל הָאִי קִיטְפָא, וְנִהִים, וְאַשְׁתַּמַּע קְלָא בְּכָל בֵּיתָא, וְכִדִּין הוּא פִלְגוֹת לִילְיָא מִמֶּשׁ. וְחָד סָבָא הוּה לִי, דְּהוּה קָם בְּכָל פִלְגוֹת לִילְיָא, וְאַשְׁתַּדֵּל בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, וּבְגִינִי כֵךְ, עֲבַד הָאִי.

370. אָמַר ר' אַבָּא, בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמֵנָא דְשַׁדְרָנִי הָכָא. בְּפִלְגוֹת לִילְיָא נִהִים, הֵהוּא גִלְגַּלָּא דְקִיטְפָא, קְמוּ רַבִּי אַבָּא וְרַבִּי יַעֲקֹב. שְׁמָעוּ לְהֵהוּא גְבֵרָא, דְּהוּה יְתִיב בְּשַׁפּוּלֵי בֵיתָא, וְתִרִין בְּנוֹי עֲמִיָּה, וְהוּה אָמַר, כְּתִיב חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה אָקוּם לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ עַל מִשְׁפָּטֵי צִדְקָךְ, מֵאִי קָא חֲמָא דוֹד, דְאִיהוּ אָמַר חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה, וְלֹא בְּחֲצוֹת לַיְלָה. אֲלֵא, וְדַאי לְקוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אָמַר הֵכִי.

371. AND HE ASKS: Is the Holy One, blessed be He, called so? HE ANSWERED: Yes! Because at midnight exactly, the Holy One, blessed be He, appears with His retinue, and enters the Garden of Eden to delight with the righteous.

372. Rabbi Aba said to Rabbi Ya'akov, "We shall surely join the Shechinah, so let us join THAT MAN AND HIS SONS." They came closer, sat with him, and said: Say whatever you have to say, for you have spoken well! THEY ASKED HIM: From where do you know all this? He responded: I have learned this from my grandfather.

373. And he continued: At the first hour of the night all the judgments down below are aroused, THE JUDGMENTS OF MALCHUT WHICH ARE NOT SWEETENED BY BINAH, and fly around the world. Exactly at midnight, however, when the Holy One, blessed be He, enters the Garden of Eden, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, these Judgments disappear and cease to exist.

374. And all the pathways of above-NAMELY THE WAYS BY WHICH BINAH SWEETENS THE NUKVA-only occur exactly at midnight. How do we know this? We know this from the verse about Avraham, "And he divided himself against them...(by) night" (Beresheet 14:15). But in Egypt, IT IS WRITTEN: "And it came to pass at midnight" (Shemot 12:29) BECAUSE THE NUKVA WAS THEN SWEETENED BY BINAH AND HER LIGHT WAS REVEALED. And David knew of this, WHICH IS WHY HE SAID: "MIDNIGHT."

375. AND HE ASKED, "How did DAVID know this?" AND HE ANSWERED, so said my grandfather. Because his Kingdom OF DAVID depended on this, ON THE ILLUMINATION OF THE MOCHIN OF MIDNIGHT, David therefore rose at midnight and chanted songs. And so he actually called the Holy One, blessed be He, "Midnight." He also said: "I will rise to give thanks to You..." Then, at that hour, all Judgments stem from here, MEANING ONLY FROM THE NUKVA WHICH IS SWEETENED AT MIDNIGHT, AS THE JUDGMENTS OF THE WORLD BELOW HAVE ALREADY DISAPPEARED. So the Judgments of Malchut are derived only from here, AND NOT FROM ITS UNSWEETENED ASPECT. Therefore, at that hour, David attached himself to it and rose up to chant songs' Rabbi Aba went forward and kissed him. He said: It is assuredly so! Blessed be the Merciful One, who has brought me here.

376. Come and behold: As we have already explained, "night" has always been the time of Judgment; it was discussed in the presence of Rabbi Shimon and is certainly so! The young son of the landlord then asked, "If so, then why is it written: 'Midnight'?" They explained to him, "It is as we have already stated, because the Kingdom of Heaven is awakened at midnight." The son said: I have heard that, but have another explanation! Rabbi Aba then said: Well then, speak up, my son! For your words shall be the voice of the candle, REFERRING TO THE VOICE OF RABBI SHIMON, WHO IS CALLED THE 'LUMINOUS LIGHT.'

371. וְכִי קִדְּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאֵהֱכִי אֶקְרִי. אֵין, דְּהָא חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה מְמַשׁ, קִדְּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲשַׁתְּכַח, וְסִיעֲתָא דִּילֵיהּ, וּבְדִין הוּא שְׁעָתָא דְּעֵייל בְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֶרְן, לְאַשְׁתַּעֲשָׂא עִם צְדִיקָא.

372. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, לְרַבִּי יַעֲקֹב, וְדַאי נִשְׁתַּתְּףָּ בְּשִׁכְנִיתָא, וְנִתְחַבֵּר בְּחַדָּא, קְרִיבּוּ וְיִתְיַבּוּ עִמּוּהָ, אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ, אֵימָא מְלָה דְּפּוּמָךְ, דְּשִׁפּוּר קְאֻמְרָתָּ. מִנָּא לָךְ הָאִי. אָמַר לוֹן, מְלָה דָא, אוֹלִיפְנָא מִסְבָּאִי.

373. וְתוּ הוּא אָמַר, דִּתְחַלֵּת שְׁעָתִי קְמִייתָא דִּילֵילָא, כָּל דִּינִין דִּלְתַּתָּא מִתְעָרִין, וְאֲזִלִּין וְשֹׁאטִין בְּעֵלְמָא. בְּפִלְגוֹת לַיְלָא מְמַשׁ, קִדְּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתַעֲרַר בְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֶרְן, וְדִינִין דִּלְתַּתָּא לֹא מִשְׁתַּכְּחִין.

374. וְכָל גִּימוּסִין דְּלַעִילָא, בְּלֵילָא לֹא אֲשַׁתְּכַחוּ, אֲלֹא בְּפִלְגוֹת לַיְלָא מְמַשׁ. מְנַלְן, מֵאַבְרָהָם, דִּכְתִּיב וַיַּחֲלֹק עֲלֵיהֶם לַיְלָה. בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה. וּבְאַתְרֵין סְגִיאיִן בְּאוֹרֵייתָא הֵכִי אֲשַׁתְּכַח. וְדוֹר הוּא יָדַע.

375. וּמִנָּא הוּא יָדַע. אֲלֹא, הֵכִי אָמַר סְבָא, דְּמַלְכוּתָא דִּילֵיהּ בְּהָאִי תֵּלֵיא. וְעַל דְּאַקְאִים בְּהָאִי שְׁעָתָא, וְאָמַר שִׁירְתָּא, וְלֵהֲכִי קְרִיָּה לְקִדְּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה מְמַשׁ אָקוּם לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ וְגו'. דְּהָא כָּל דִּינִין תֵּלִיִין מֵהֶכָּא, וְדִינִין דְּמַלְכוּתָא מֵהֶכָּא מִשְׁתַּכְּחִין וְהָאִי שְׁעָתָא, אֲתַקְטִיר בֵּה דוֹר, וְקָם. וְאָמַר שִׁירְתָּא. אֲתָא רַבִּי אַבָּא וּנְשָׁקִיה, אָמַר לוֹדְאִי הֵכִי הוּא, בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמֵנָא, דְּשִׁדְרֵנִי הֶכָּא.

376. תָּא חֲזִי, לַיְלָה דִּינָא בְּכָל אַתְר, וְהָא אוֹקִימְנָא מְלָה, וְהֵכִי הוּא וְדַאי, וְהָא אֲתַעֲרַר קְמִי דְּרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן. אָמַר הָהוּא יְנוּקָא, בְּרִיָּה דְּהָהוּא גְּבָרָא, אִי הֵכִי, אָמַאי כְּתִיב חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה. אָמַר לוֹ, הָא אֲתַמָּר, בְּפִלְגוֹת לַיְלָא, מַלְכוּתָא דְּשִׁמְיָא אֲתַעֲרַת. אָמַר אָנָּא שְׁמַעְנָא מְלָה. אָמַר לוֹ, ר' אַבָּא, אֵימָא בְּרִי טַב דְּהָא מְלָה דְּפּוּמָךְ, קְלָא דְּבוֹצִינָא לְהוּי.

377. THE YOUNG SON said: I heard that the night is the time when the Judgment of Malchut is in power. As a result, everywhere THE TERM 'NIGHT' APPEARS, it refers to Judgment. But when the term midnight appears, it is because Malchut is nourished from the two aspects-Judgment and Chesed. So, the first half of the night is the time of Judgment. During the second half, however, the face shines from the aspect of Chesed. This is why it is written: 'Midnight'-THE HALF OF CHESED.

378. Rabbi Aba stood up, placed his hands over his head, and blessed him. He said: I thought that Wisdom was found only among the righteous, who earned it THROUGH PIOUS DEEDS. But now I see that in the generation of Rabbi Shimon, even the young have merited the Supernal Wisdom because of him. Happy are you, Rabbi Shimon. Woe to the generation from which you shall depart. They sat until the morning studying Torah.

379. Rabbi Aba began the discussion with the verse: "Your people also shall be all righteous..." (Yeshayah 60:21). Our friends have already explained this passage. Why is it written: "Your people also shall be all righteous?" How can it be that all the nation of Yisrael is righteous, when there are many wicked people in Yisrael? Many are sinners and transgressors, who disobey the precepts of Torah!

380. But the meaning is found in the secret of the Mishnah. Happy are Yisrael, who voluntarily offer a sacrifice to the Holy One, blessed be He. The sacrifice is the circumcision of their sons eight days after birth. When they are circumcised, they take part in the good portion of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "The righteous is the foundation (Heb. yesod) of the world" (Mishlei 10: 25). As they enter to this portion of the righteous, AS A RESULT OF THEIR CIRCUMCISION, they are the called "righteous." Therefore they are certainly all righteous, BECAUSE NOW THEY ARE ALL CIRCUMCISED, EVEN THE WICKED AMONG THEM. THEREFORE IS WRITTEN: "YOUR PEOPLE ALSO SHALL BE ALL RIGHTEOUS..."

381. Therefore, "they shall inherit the land for ever" (Yeshayah 60:21). THIS ALLUDES TO THE SHECHINAH THAT IS CALLED "THE LAND." As it is written: "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go through them" (Tehilim 118:19) and "This is the gate of Hashem, through which the righteous shall enter" (Ibid. 20). These are those who are circumcised and are called "righteous." "The branch of my plantings" is a branch of the plantings that the Holy One, blessed be He, planted in the Garden of Eden. And this "land" is one of those plantings. THE "PLANTINGS" ARE THE TEN SFIROT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, AND MALCHUT OF THEM IS CALLED "THE LAND." Therefore, Yisrael have a goodly portion in the world to come. As it is written: "The righteous shall inherit the land" (Tehilim 37:29)-"they shall inherit the land forever." AND HE ASKED, "What is 'forever'?" AND HE SAID: Just as it is explained in our Mishnah and has been settled among the friends.

377. אָמַר, אָנָּה שְׁמַעְנָא, דְּהָא לַיְלָה דִּינָא דְּמַלְכוּתָא אִיהוּ, וּבְכָל אַתְרֵי דִּינָא הוּא, וְהָא דְקָאֻמְרִי חֲצוֹת, בְּגִין דִּינָקָא בְּתָרֵי גּוּוּנֵי, בְּדִינָא וְחֶסֶד, וּוְדָא פְּלִגּוּתָא קְדָמִיתָא, דִּינָא הוּא, דְּהָא פְּלִגּוּתָא אַחֲרָא, נְהִירוֹ אֲנַפְהָא בְּסִטְרָא דְּחֶסֶד. וְעַל דָּא חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה בְּתִיב וְדָאֵי.

378. קָם רַבִּי אַבָּא, וְשׁוּי יָדָיו בְּרִישׁוּיָהּ, וּבְרַכְיָהּ, אָמַר וְדָאֵי, חֲשִׁיבָנָא דְּחֶכְמָתָא לֹא אֲשַׁתְּכַח בְּרֵי בְּאִינוּן זָכָאֵי דְּזָכוּ בָּהּ. הֲשָׁתָא חֲמִינוּא, דְּאֶפִּילוּ יְנוּקֵי בְּדָרָא דְּרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, זָכוּ לְחֶכְמָתָא עֲלָאָה. זָכָאָה אֲנִת רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן. וְוִי לְדָרָא דְּאֲנִת תְּסַתְּלַק מִנִּיהּ. יִתְּבוּ עַד צַפְרָא, וְאֲשַׁתְּדְּלוּ בְּאוּרִייתָא.

379. פִּתַּח ר' אַבָּא וְאָמַר, וְעִמָּךְ כָּלִם צְדִיקִים וְגו'. מִלָּה דָּא הָא אוֹקְמוּהָ חֲבֵרִיָּא, מ"ט, בְּתִיב, וְעִמָּךְ כָּלִם צְדִיקִים, וְכִי כָּלְהוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל צְדִיקֵי נִינְהוּ. וְהָא בְּמָה חֲיִיבִין אִית בְּהוּ בִּישְׂרָאֵל, בְּמָה חֲטָאִין, וּבְכָמָה רְשִׁיעִין, דְּעִבְרִין עַל פְּקוּדֵי אוּרִייתָא.

380. אֵלָּא, הֵכִי תֵּנָּא בְּרָזָא דְּמַתְּנִיתִין, זָכָאֵין אִינוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּעִבְרִין קְרִבָּנָא דְּרַעוּא לְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּמַקְרִיבִין בְּנִיחֻהוּ לְתַמְנִיָּא יוֹמִין לְקְרִבָּנָא, וְכַד אֲתַגְזְרוּ, עָאלוּ בְּהָאֵי חוּלְקָא טְבָא דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּכְתִיב וְצְדִיק יִסּוּד עוֹלָם. כִּיּוֹן דְּעָאלוּ בְּהָאֵי חוּלְקָא דְּצְדִיק, אֲקִרוּן צְדִיקִים, וְדָאֵי כָּלִם צְדִיקִים.

381. וְעַל כֵּן לְעוֹלָם יִירָשׁוּ אֶרֶץ. בְּדְכְתִיב פִּתְחוּ לִי שַׁעְרֵי צְדָק אֲבָא בָּם. וּבְתִיב זֶה הַשַּׁעַר לַה' צְדִיקִים יָבֹאוּ בּוֹ. אִינוּן דְּאֲתַגְזְרוּ, וְאֲקִרוּן צְדִיקִים. נִצֵּר מִטְעֵי. נִצֵּר מֵאִינוּן נְטִיעִין דְּנִטְע קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּנִתָּא דְּעֶרֶן, הָאֵי אֶרֶץ חֵד מְנִיחָהּ, וְעַל כֵּן אִית לָהּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל חוּלְקָא טְבָא, בְּעֲלָמָא דְּאֲתִי. וּבְתִיב צְדִיקִים יִירָשׁוּ אֶרֶץ. לְעוֹלָם יִירָשׁוּ אֶרֶץ. מֵהוּ לְעוֹלָם. בְּמָה דְּאוֹקִימָנָא בְּמַתְּנִיתָא דִּילָן, וְהָא אֲתַמַּר הָאֵי מִלָּה בִּין

35. Small Hei and large Hei

The Zohar presents a very complex metaphysical process that involves the Hebrew letter Hei. Through its shape and sound, the creative powers of the letter Hei ? help determine and influence our physical world.

The Relevance of this Passage

We develop a greater appreciation of the mystical powers of the Hebrew letters simply by perusing these verses. A deeper appreciation automatically amplifies their influence and effectiveness in each passage of Zohar that we read, learn, or peruse over.

382. We have already learned the reason why the name Avraham first occurs only now. We explained that he was not called Avraham until he was circumcised, because that is when he became attached to the letter Hei, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, and the Shechinah rested upon him. Therefore he was then called Avraham WITH HEI!

חֲבֵרִיָּא.

382. וְתֵאנָא, מֵאִי קָא חֲמָא קְרָא, דְּלֹא אֶקְרִי אַבְרָהָם עַד הַשְּׁתָּא. אֱלָא, הֵכִי אוֹקִימָנָא, דְּעַד הַשְּׁתָּא לֹא אֲתַגְזֹר, וְכֵד אֲתַגְזֹר, אֲתַחֲבַר בְּהֵאִי ה', וְשְׁכִינְתָּא שְׂרִיָא בֵּיה, וְכֵדִין אֶקְרִי אַבְרָהָם.

383. Therefore it is written: "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created (Heb.

behibar'am)" (Beresheet 2:4). As we have learned that "with the letter Hei" (Be-Hei) "they were created (Heb. bra'am)." We also learned about the word beAvraham (with Avraham), WHICH CONSISTS OF THE SAME LETTERS AS THE WORD BEHIBAR'AM. THIS TEACHES US THAT THE WORLD WAS CREATED FOR THE SAKE OF AVRAHAM. AND HE ASKED, "What are they saying?" IN OTHER WORDS, "WHY DO THEY DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER IN THE MEANING OF BEHIBAR'AM? AND HE REPLIED, "One refers to Chesed," SO THE ONE THAT SAYS THAT BEHIBAR'AM ALLUDES TO AVRAHAM, CHESED, MEANS THAT THE WORLD WAS CREATED BECAUSE OF CHESED. The other refers to the Shechinah, THE OTHER SAYS THAT BEHIBAR'AM, ALLUDES TO THE SHECHINAH BECAUSE THE LETTER HEI SIGNIFIES THE SHECHINAH. And there is no contradiction between the two, because they refer to the same meaning, FOR IF THE CHESED EXISTS IN THE WORLD, SO DOES THE SHECHINAH, AND VICE VERSA. THEREFORE, BOTH MEANINGS-CHESED AND THE SHECHINAH-ARE THE SAME. SO THE WORLD WAS CREATED because of the one, CHESED and because of the other, THE SHECHINAH.

383. וְהֵינֵנוּ דְכֹתִיב, אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם. וְתֵאנָא בְּה' בְּרָאָם. וְתֵאנָא בְּאַבְרָהָם. מֵאִי קְאָמְרִי, אֱלָא דָּא חֲסֵד, וְדָא שְׁכִינְתָּא, וְכֹלָא נְחִית בְּחֻדָּא, וְלֹא קְשִׁיָא מַלְּה, וְהֵאִי וְהֵאִי הֵּוֵי.

384. Rabbi Ya'akov said to Rabbi Aba that the Hei in Behibaram is small, while the Hei in "Do you thus requite Hashem (Hala'Hashem)" (Devarim 32:6) is big! What is the difference between them? He said that the one, THE SMALL HEI, is Shmitah (Sabbatical year), NAMELY MALCHUT, while the other, THE LARGE HEI is Yovel (Jubilee), NAMELY BINAH. Because of this, there are times when the moon is full and times when it wanes. WHEN IT IS A GARMENT FOR BINAH, WHICH IS THE LARGE HEI, IT IS FULL. BUT BEFORE IT IS A GARMENT FOR BINAH, IT IS A SMALL HEI. So THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SMALL AND LARGE HEI can be seen by the phases of the moon. So everything is now clear! This is the clarification of the matter.

384. אָמַר רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב לְר' אַבָּא, הֵאִי ה' דְּהִבְרָאָם זְעִירָא, וְה' דְּהִלָּה רַבְרָבָא, מַה בֵּין הֵאִי לְהֵאִי. אֲמַרְלוּדָא שְׁמִיטָה וְדָא יוֹבְלָא. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ זְמַנִּין דְּסִיְהֵרָא קִיּוּמָא בְּאַשְׁלֻמוּתָא, וְזְמַנִּין בְּפִגְמוּתָא, וּבְאַנְפָּהָא אֲשֶׁתִּכַּח וְאַשְׁתְּמוּדַע, וְכֹלָא שְׁפִיר וְהֵאִי אִיהוּ בְּרִירָה דְּמַלְּה.

36. Essays on circumcision

Rabbi Aba remains awake all night in anticipation of a circumcision that will take place in the town during the morning. He then accompanies all the townspeople and the family of the child to be circumcised. A lengthy discourse on all the complex secrets and mysteries surrounding circumcision occurs in the Zohar. Circumcision pertains to the purification of the Sfirah of Yesod and its counterpart in the physical world, the sexual organ.

The Relevance of this Passage

Circumcision is one of the most powerful cleansing actions available to us, and it is made available by learning these secrets and by meditating upon the words that comprise this portion.

385. Rabbi Aba said: Happy are Yisrael, that the Holy One, blessed be He, chose them from among all the other nations to receive the sign of the covenant. Because whoever retains this sign shall not go down to Gehenom as long as he preserves it properly, does not subject it to another power, REFERRING TO A MENSTRUATING WOMAN, A FEMALE SLAVE, A GENTILE WOMAN, OR A PROSTITUTE, and does not lie in the Name of the King. Because if one has lied IN THE NAME, BY THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT, it is as though he has lied in the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "They have dealt treacherously against Hashem, for they have begotten strange children" (Hoshea 5:7).

386. Rabbi Aba continued, "When a man brings his son forth to elevate and initiate him to the covenant, the Holy One, blessed be He, calls upon His retinue, THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN, and declares, 'See what a creature I have made in the world.' At that time, Eliyahu is invited, flies over the entire world in four crossings, and then appears there."

387. Therefore, we have learned that a man should prepare a chair in honor of Eliyahu, and should say, "This is the chair of Eliyahu." If he does not announce this, Eliyahu will not appear in that place nor ascend and testify about the circumcision before the Holy One, blessed be He.

388. Come and behold: It is written first, "What are you doing here, Eliyahu?" (I Melachim 19:13), and "I have been very jealous for Hashem ...because they have forsaken Your covenant..." (Ibid. 14). THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SAID TO ELIYAHU, "As you live, you shall be present in every place that My sons shall imprint this holy sign on their flesh. And the mouth that testified that Yisrael had forsaken the covenant shall now testify that Yisrael observes it!" Thus, we have learned why Eliyahu was punished by the Holy One, blessed be He-because he accused His sons BY SAYING THAT THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL "HAVE FORSAKEN YOUR COVENANT."

389. By now, the light of day shone, and they were still studying Torah. As they stood to go, THE LANDLORD said to them, "Complete the subject that you were discussing during the night." They asked, "What subject?" He answered, "Tomorrow you can see the face of the guarantor of the covenant, ELIYAHU, because my wife begs you to stay for the celebration of the circumcision of our son." Rabbi Aba responded, "This is an invitation to participate in a commandment, so let us stay!"

385. אָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, זָכָאִין אֵינָן יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתֵרְעֵי בְּהוֹן, מִכָּל שְׂאָר עַמִּין, וְיִהְיֶה לוֹן אֶת קוּימָא דָּא, דְּכָל מָאן דְּאִית בֵּיה הָאִי אַת, לֹא נִחִית לַגִּיהֶנֶם, אִי אִיהוּ נָטִיר לֵיה, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, דְּלֹא עֵייל לֵיה בְּרִשּׁוּתָא אַחְרָא, וְלֹא מִשְׁקַר בְּשִׁמְיָה דְּמִלְכָּא, דְּכָל מָאן דְּמִשְׁקַר בְּהָאִי, כְּמָאן דְּמִשְׁקַר בְּשִׁמְיָה דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. דְּכִתִּיב, בְּה' בָּגְדוּ בִּי בָנִים זָרִים וְלָדוּ.

386. תו, אָמַר ר' אָבָא, בְּזִמְנָא דְּבַר נֶשׁ אָסִיק בְּרִיָּה, לֹא עָלִיָּה לְהָאִי בְּרִית, קְרִי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְפַמְלִיָּא דִּילֵיה, וְאָמַר, חָמוּ מְאִי בְּרִיָּה עֲבָדִית בְּעֵלְמָא. בֵּיה שְׁעָתָא אֲזַדְמָן אֵלֵיהּ וְטָאס עֲלְמָא בְּד' טָאסִין, וְאֲזַדְמָן תַּמָּן.

387. וְעַל דָּא תַנִּינָן דְּבַעֲי בַר נֶשׁ לְתַקְנָא בְּרִסְיָא אַחְרָא לִיקְרָא דִּילֵיה, וְיִימָא דָּא בְּרִסְיָא דְּאֵלֵיהּ, וְאִי לֹאוּ לֹא שְׂרִי תַמָּן. וְהוּא סָלִיק, וְאִסְהִיד קְמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

388. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּקִדְמִיתָא כְּתִיב מַה לָּךְ כֹּה אֵלֵיהּ וְגו'. וְכְתִיב קָנָא קְנָאתִי לֵה' כִּי עָזְבוּ בְּרִיתְךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגו'. אָמַרְלוּ, חֲזִיךְ בְּכָל אֲתֵר דְּהָאִי רִשְׁימָא קְדִישָׁא, יִרְשְׁמוּן לֵיה בְּנֵי בְּבִשְׂרָהוֹן, אֲנֵת תִּזְדְּמָן תַּמָּן, וּפּוּמָא דְּאִסְהִיד דִּישְׂרָאֵל עָזְבָּ, הוּא יִסְהִיד דִּישְׂרָאֵל מְקִימִין הָאִי קוּימָא. וְהָא תַנִּינָן, עַל מַה אֲתַעֲנֵשׁ אֵלֵיהּ קְמִי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, עַל דְּאָמַר דְּלִטּוּרָא עַל בְּנוֹי.

389. אֲדַהְכִּי, הָוָה אֶתִּי נְהוּרָא, דְּיוּמָא וְהוּוּ אָמַרִי מְלִי דְּאוּרִייתָא. קְמוּ לְמִיזַל. אָמַרְלוּהוּא גְבִרָא, בְּמַה דְּעַסְקִיתוּ בְּהָאִי לִילֵיא, אֲשִׁלִּימוּ. אָמַרִי מְאִי הוּא. אָמַרְלוּ דְּתַחֲמוּן לְמַחַר אֲנַפּוּי דְּמַרְיָה דְּקוּימָא, דְּהָא דְּבִיתָאִי, בְּעָתָא בְּעוּתָא דָּא מְנִיכּוּ. וְגִזְרִי קוּימָא דְּבָרֵי דְּאֲתִיילִיד לִי, לְמַחַר לִיהוּי הַלּוּלָא דִּילֵיה. אָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, הָאִי בְּעוּתָא דְּמִצְוָה אִיהוּ, וְלְמַחֲמִי אִמִּי שְׂכִינְתָא נִיתִיב.

390. They waited all that day. At night, the landlord gathered all his friends together. They studied Torah all that night, and nobody slept. He said to them, "I ask of you all, that each person give a new explanation about the words of the Torah."

391. One man opened the discussion by saying that it is written: "In time of tumultuous strife (Heb. pra'ot) in Yisrael, when the people willingly offered themselves, praise Hashem" (Shoftim 5:2). AND HE ASKED, "Why did D'vorah and Barak open their poem with this phrase?" Because, as we have learned, the world cannot exist without this covenant. And it is written: "If My covenant be not day and night, it were as if I had not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Yirmeyah 33:25), as heaven and earth are established upon it.

392. As a result, as long as Yisrael observe this covenant, the ordinances of heaven and earth continue to exist. But as soon as Yisrael do not heed to this covenant, then the covenant between the heavens and the earth ceases to exist, and no blessings appear in the world.

393. Come and behold: Other nations ruled over Yisrael only when Yisrael neglected this covenant. And what did they neglect? THEY PERFORMED THE CIRCUMCISION, BUT they did not uncover the corona (Heb. pri'a) and reveal the sacred flesh. This is why it is written: "And they forsook Hashem ..." (Shoftim 2:13) and so "He sold them to the hand of Sisra" (I Shmuel 12:9). THEREFORE, THE NATIONS DID NOT RULE OVER YISRAEL UNTIL THEY NEGLECTED THE COVENANT and they actually "forsook Hashem." Then Dvorah appeared and volunteered in the name of all Yisrael, for the cause, and then their enemies were subdued.

394. This refers to what we have learned about the Holy One, blessed be He, Who said to Yehoshua, "Yisrael are not circumcised because they did not uncover the sacred flesh. Therefore they do not uphold My covenant. Yet you plan on bringing them to the Land of Yisrael and overcoming their enemies. "Circumcise again the children of Yisrael a second time!" (Yehoshua 5:2). And before they uncovered the corona and this covenant was revealed, they did not enter to the Land of Yisrael and their enemies were not subdued. So here as well, when Yisrael volunteered to reveal the sign OF THIS COVENANT, their enemies were overcome and blessings returned to the world. Therefore it is written: "In time of tumultuous strife (also: an uncovering of flesh) in Yisrael, when the people willingly offered themselves, praise Hashem."

390. אורִיכוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם וְלַיְלָה, בְּהָיוּ לִילִיָּא, בְּנֵשׁ הָיוּ גְבָרָא, כָּל אִינוֹן רַחֲמֵי, וְכָל הָיוּ לִילִיָּא, אֲשֶׁתְּדָלוּ בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, וְלֹא הָיוּ מֵאן דְּנָאִים. אֲמָרְלוּ, הָיוּ גְבָרָא בְּמָטוֹ מְנִיכָא, כָּל חַד וְחַד, לִימָא מְלָא חֲדָתָא דְּאוֹרֵייתָא.

391. פִּתַּח חַד וְאָמַר, בְּפָרוּעַ פְּרָעוֹת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהִתְנַדֵּב עִם בְּרָכּוֹ ה'. מֵאֵי קָא חָמוּ דְּבוֹרָה וּבִרְק דִּפְתָּחוּ בְּהָאֵי קְרָא. אֲלֵא הֵכִי תְנִינוּ, לִית עֲלֵמָא מִתְקִימָא, אֲלֵא עַל הָאֵי בְרִית, דְּכִתִּיב אִם לֹא בְרִיתִי יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה וּגו'. דְּהָא שְׁמִיָּא וְאַרְעָא עַל דָּא קִימִין.

392. בְּגִין כֵּן, כָּל זְמָנָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מְקִימִין הָאֵי בְרִית, נְמוּסֵי שְׁמִיָּא וְאַרְעָא קִימִין בְּקִימִיָּהּ, וְכָל זְמָנָא דְּחַ"ו יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבְטָלִין הָאֵי בְרִית, שְׁמִיָּא וְאַרְעָא לֹא מִתְקִימִין, וּבְרָכָאן לֹא מִשְׁתַּבְּחִין בְּעֲלָמָא.

393. תָּא חֲזִי, לֹא שְׁלִיטוּ שָׂר עַמִּין עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲלֵא כִּד בְטִילוּ מְנִיָּהּ קִימָא דָּא. וְמָה בְטִילוּ מְנִיָּהּ. דְּלֹא אֲתַפְּרֶען, וְלֹא אֲתַגְלִינן. וְעַל דְּאֲכַתִּיב וַיַּעֲזְבוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת ה' וּגו'. וַיִּמְכֹּר אוֹתָם בְּיַד סִיסְרָא, וַיַּעֲזְבוּ אֶת ה' מִמֶּשׁ. עַד דְּאֲתַת דְּבוֹרָה, וְאֲתַנְדֵּב לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּמִלָּה דָּא, כְּדִין אֲתַכְנַעוּ שְׁנֵאִיָּהוּן תַּחֲתִיָּהּ.

394. וְהֵינּוּ דְּתְנִינוּ, דְּאָמַר קְדָשָׁא בְרִין הוֹאֲלִיהוּשֶׁעַ, וְכִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲטִימִין אִינוֹן, וְלֹא אֲתַפְּרֶעוּ וְלֹא אֲתַגְלִיָּא, וְלֹא קִימִין קִימָא דִּילִי, וְאֵת בְּעִי לֹאֲעֵלָא לְהוּ לְאַרְעָא, וְלֹאֲכַנַּע שְׁנֵאִיָּהוּן. שׁוּב מוֹל אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנִית. וְעַד דְּאֲתַפְּרֶעוּ וְאֲתַגְלִיָּא הָאֵי בְרִית, לֹא עָאֲלוּ לְאַרְעָא, וְלֹא אֲתַכְנַעוּ שְׁנֵאִיָּהוּן. אוֹף הֵכָא, בִּין דְּאֲתַנְדֵּבִין יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּהָאֵי אֵת, אֲתַכְנַעוּ שְׁנֵאִיָּהוּן תַּחֲתִיָּהּ, וּבְרָכָאן אֲתַחֲזְרוּ לְעֲלָמָא, הֵ"ד בְּפָרוּעַ פְּרָעוֹת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהִתְנַדֵּב עִם בְּרָכּוֹ ה'.

395. Another man stood up and said, as it is written: "And it came to pass on the way in the inn, that Hashem met him, and sought to kill him." (Shemot 4:24) . Whom HAD HE SOUGHT TO KILL? Moshe! The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "You are about to go and bring Yisrael out of Egypt and overcome a great and powerful ruler, while you neglect a precept-your son is not yet circumcised! Immediately then He "sought to kill him."

396. We have learned that Gavriel came down in a flame of fire to burn him. He appeared as a burning serpent which sought to swallow him. AND HE ASKED, "Why a serpent?" AND HE REPLIED, "The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, 'You are going to slay a great and mighty serpent, REFERRING TO THE GREAT SEA CROCODILE THAT LIES IN THE RIVERS, WHO IS THE KING OF EGYPT, while your son is not yet circumcised.'" So immediately a serpent was given the intimation to kill MOSHE.

397. However, Tziporah understood and circumcised her son, as it is written: "And Tziporah took a flint" (Heb. tzor). And what is a tzor? TZOR also MEANS a remedy. And what was the remedy? To "cut off the foreskin of her son" (Ibid. 25). So because the Holy Spirit sparkled within her, MOSHE WAS SAVED FROM DEATH.

398. Another man stood and quoted, "And Yosef said to his brothers, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said..." (Bereshheet 45:4). AND HE ASKED, "Why did he have to call them, as they were close by?" AND HE REPLIED, "Because when he told them, 'I am Yosef your brother' they were astonished, because they saw him as elevated royalty. So Yosef told them, 'I gained this kingdom because of this-REFERRING TO CIRCUMCISION. 'Come near to me.' They came nearer, and he showed them the sign of the covenant-the circumcision. He said: Because I have preserved the covenant, I have earned this kingdom.

399. From this we have learned that whoever keeps this sign of the covenant, the kingdom will be kept for him. And how do we know this? Another example is Boaz. As it is written: "as Hashem lives, lie down until the morning" (Rut 3:13). Because his lust was aroused and disturbed him until he took an oath-"AS HASHEM LIVES"-and preserved the sign of the covenant. As a result, his sons became kings and rulers over other kings, and the King Mashiach, who is called by the name of the Holy One, blessed be He. THEREFORE, KINGSHIP AWAITS HE WHO PRESERVES THE COVENANT FROM DEFILEMENT.

400. Another one then quoted, "Though a host should encamp against me..." (Tehilim 27:3). We have learned that "in this (Heb. zot) I trust" (Ibid.). What does 'zot (this)' refer to?" AND HE ANSWERED, "This is the sign of the covenant that always exists in a person and is hinted on high IN MALCHUT CALLED ZOT. Therefore, it is written as zot, just as it is also written: "This (Heb. zot) is the sign of the covenant" (Bereshheet 9:12) and "This (Heb. zot) is my covenant" (Yeshayah 59:21). All apply to the same grade. And we have learned, zeh (masc. this) and zot (fem. this) are both in the same grade and are not separated.

395. קם אַחֲרָא, פִּתַּח וְאָמַר, וַיְהִי בַדֶּרֶךְ בְּמִלּוֹן וַיִּמְגְּשֵׁהוּ ה' וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַמִּיתוֹ. לְמֶאֱן לְמֹשֶׁה. אָמַרְלוּ קִדְּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְכִי אַתְּ אֵזִיל לְאַפְקָא ית יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְלֹא־כִנְעָא מַלְכָּא רַב וְשְׁלִיטָא, וְאַתְּ אֲנַשְׁיִית מִנֶּךָ קֵינִימָא, דְּבִרְךְ לֹא אֲתַגְזֹר, מִיָּד וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַמִּיתוֹ.

396. תָּאנָא, נָחַת גַּבְרִיאֵל בְּשִׁלְהוֹבָא דְאַשָּׁא, לְאוּקְדִיָּה, וְאַתְרַמִּיז חַד חֵיוִיָּא מִתּוּקְדָּא לְשִׁאפָּא לִיָּה, בְּגִוּיָּה. אָמַאי חֵיוִיָּא. אָמַרְלוּ קִדְּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אַתְּ אֵזִיל לְקַטְלָא חֵיוִיָּא רַבְרָבָא וְתַקִּיפָא, וְכִרְךְ לֹא אֲתַגְזֹר. מִיָּד אֲתַרַמִּיז לְחַד חֵיוִיָּא לְקַטְלָא לִיָּה.

397. עַד דְּחֻמַּת צְפוּרָה, וְגִזְרַת לְבָרָה, וְאַשְׁתִּיזִב. הָה"ד וְתַקַּח צְפוּרָה צוּר. מַהוּ צוּר. אֵלָא אֲסוּתָא. וְאִמַי אֲסוּתָא, דְּכִתִּיב וְתִכְרוֹת אֶת עֶרְלַת בְּנָה דְנִצְנֵצָא בַּה רוּחַ קוּדְשָׁא.

398. קם אַחֲרָא וְאָמַר, וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל אָחָיו גִּשּׁוּ נָא אֵלַי וַיִּגְשׁוּ וַיֹּאמֶר וּגו'. וְכִי אָמַאי קָרִי לָהּ, וְהָא קְרִיבִין הוּוּ גִבִּיָּה. אֵלָא בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְאַמַּר לוֹן אָנִי יוֹסֵף אֲחִיכֶם. תְּוֹהוּ, דְּחֻמוּ לִיָּה בְּמַלְכוּ עֵלְאָה. אָמַר יוֹסֵף, מַלְכוּ דָּא, בְּגִין דָּא רוּחָנָא לִיָּה, גִּשּׁוּ נָא אֵלַי. וַיִּגְשׁוּ, דְאַחֲזִי לָהּ הָאִי קֵינִימָא דְמִילָה, אָמַר, דָּא גִרְמַת לִי מַלְכוּ דָּא, בְּגִין דְנִטְרִית לָהּ.

399. מִכָּאֵן אֹלִיפְנָא, מֶאֵן דְנִטִּיר לְהָאִי אֶת קֵינִימָא, מַלְכוּ אֲתַנְטֵרַת לִיָּה. מִנְלָן, מִבְּעִז, דְּכִתִּיב חֵי ה' שְׁכִבִי עַד הַבֶּקֶר. דְּהוּוּ מְקַטְרֵג לִיָּה וַצְרִיָּה, עַד דְּאוּמִי אוּמָאָה, וְנִטִּיר לְהָאִי בְרִית, בְּגִין כֶּךָ זָכָה דְנִפְקוּ מִנִּיָּה מַלְכִין שְׁלִיטִין, עַל כָּל שְׂאָר מַלְכִין, וּמַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא, דְאַתְקִרִי בְּשִׁמָּא דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

400. פִּתַּח אִידֶךָ וְאָמַר, כְּתִיב אִם תַּחֲנֶה עָלַי מַחֲנֶה וּגו'. הָכִי תָאנָא, בְּזֹאת אָנִי בּוֹטָח. מַהוּ בְּזֹאת, דָּא אֶת קֵינִימָא, דְזִמְנָא תְדִיר גְּבִי בְר נֶשׁ, וְאַתְרַמִּיזָא לְעִילָא, וּבְגִינִי כֶךָ אֲתַמַּר בְּזֹאת, כְּמָה דְכִתִּיב זֹאת אוֹת הַבְּרִית. זֹאת בְּרִיתִי. וְכָלֹא בְּחַד דְרֵגָא. וְתָאנָא, זֶה וְזֹאת בְּחַד דְרֵגָא אִינוּן, וְלֹא מִתְפָּרְשִׁין.

401. You might say, "If so, then the other people in the world are the same AS DAVID, AS THEY CAN SAY 'IN THIS (ZOT) I TRUST.' So why was David the only one to say so, and nobody else as well?" AND HE REPLIED, "Because THE GRADE OF ZOT is attached to DAVID and appears in him, MEANING THAT THE NAME OF DAVID ALLUDES TO MALCHUT and is the Crown of his kingdom.

402. Come and behold: Because King David did not preserve ZOT properly, the kingship was taken away from him during all that time THAT HE FOUGHT WITH AVSHALOM, HIS SON. And so we have learned that this Zot is hinted in the upper Kingdom and in the holy city of Jerusalem.

403. When David sinned WITH BAT-SHEVA, a voice went forth and said: 'David, You are to be disjoined-as you shall be banished from Jerusalem and the kingship shall be taken away from you-from that with which you were united, NAMELY ZOT, WHICH ALLUDES TO MALCHUT AND TO JERUSALEM.' How do we know this? From the verse, "Behold I will raise up evil against you out of your own house" (II Shmuel 12:11). Actually "your own house," HIS OWN HOUSE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF NUKVA THAT IS CALLED ZOT. AND THE "EVIL" MENTIONED IN THE VERSE REFERS TO HIS SEPARATION FROM HER. And so he was punished for having sinned. BECAUSE HE DID NOT PRESERVE THE GRADE OF ZOT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE COVENANT, HE WAS SEPARATED FROM HER. And if David was punished so, even more so the rest of the world!

404. Another continued the discussion with the verse, "Unless Hashem had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in silence (Heb. Dumah)" (Tehilim 94:17). We have learned why Yisrael are saved from going down to Gehenom, unlike idol-worshipping nations, and are not handed over to the hands of Dumah, WHO IS THE GOVERNOR OF GEHENOM. They have merit because of the sign OF THE COVENANT.

405. Because we have learned that when a person passes from this world, hoards of Klipot fall upon him TO HURT HIM. But when they hold up their eyes and see this sign, which is the sacred covenant, they leave him and he is not handed over to the hands of Dumah to be taken down to Gehenom. Whoever is handed over to his hands shall definitely go down to Gehenom.

406. The upper and lower beings are afraid of this sign and do not inflict evil Judgments on the man who preserves it, because, by doing so, he becomes united with the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He.

401. ואי תימא, אי הכי הא שאר בני עלמא, הכי אמאי דוד בלחודוי, ולא אחרא. אלא, בגין דאחידא ביה, ואתרמיזא ביה, והוא כתרא דמלכותא.

402. תא חזי, בגין דהאי זאת, לא נטר ליה, דוד מלכא בדקא חזי, מלכותא אתעדני מניה, כל ההוא זמנא. והכי אולפינא, האי זאת אתרמיזא במלכותא דלעילא, ואתרמיזא בירושלם קרתא קדישא.

403. בההוא שעתא דדוד עבר עליה, נמק קלא ואמר, דוד במה דאתקטרת תשתרי. לך טרדין מירושלם, ומלכותא אתעדני מינך. מנ"ל, דכתיב הנני מקים עליך רעה מביתך. מביתך דייקא, והכי הוה, במה דעבר ביה אתענש, ומה דוד מלכא הכי, שאר בני עלמא על אחת במה וכמה.

404. פתח אידך ואמר לולי ה' עזרתה לי במעט שכנה דומה נפשי. תאנא. במה זכאן ישראל, דלא נחתי לגיהנם, בשאר עמין עכו"ם, ולא אתמסרן בידוי דדומה, בהאי את.

405. דהכי תאנא, בשעתא דבר נש נפיק מעלמא, במה חבילי טהירין אתפקדן עליה. זקיפין עינא וחמאן האי את, דהוא קיימא דקודשא, אתפרשן מניה. ולא אתיהיב בידוי דדומה לנחתא לגיהנם, דכל מאן דאתמסר בידוי, נחית לגיהנם ודאי.

406. ומהאי את, דחלין עלאין ותתאין, ודינין בישיין לא שלטין ביה בבר נש, אי איהו זכי לנטורי ליה, להאי את, בגין דהוא אתאחיר בשמא דקודשא בריך הוא.

407. Because David did not preserve this sign of the covenant as he should have, kingship was taken away from him and he was banished from Jerusalem. He was afraid that he would immediately be brought down to be handed over to Dumah and that he would die in the World of Truth WITHOUT MERITING SPIRITUAL LIFE. Then he was given the good news. As it is written: "Hashem also has commuted your sin, you shall not die" (II Shmuel 12:13). At that very moment he exclaimed, "Unless Hashem had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in silence (Dumah)," MEANING THAT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN HANDED OVER TO THE ANGEL DUMAH.

408. Another one continued the discussion by asking what is meant by the words of David, "and show me both him, and his habitation" (II Shmuel 15:25), for who is able to see the Holy One, blessed be He? AND HE REPLIES, "We have learned that at the moment when AVSHALOM decreed David's punishment, David knew that it was because BY SINING WITH BAT-SHEVA he did not preserve the sign, as he should have. So he was punished in this, IN HAVING HIS KINGDOM TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM, because everything is united as one and everything is alluded to in the sign, MALCHUT OF ABOVE AND JERUSALEM. And one is not a righteous man if he does not preserve the sign properly. For this reason, David prayed and said: "...and show me both him (Heb. oto), and his habitation."

409. What is oto? It is the sign of the holy covenant (Heb. ot), and David was afraid that he had lost it. Why DID HE THINK THAT HE HAD LOST THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT? Because these two-the kingdom and Jerusalem-are both attached TO THIS SIGN OF THE COVENANT. SO AS THE KINGSHIP WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM AND HE WAS BANISHED FROM JERUSALEM, HE THOUGHT THAT THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT WAS ALSO TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM. Therefore in his prayer he linked "oto" and "His habitation" together, BECAUSE "OTO" ALLUDES TO THE SIGN THE COVENANT AND "HIS HABITATION" TO MALCHUT. So, he prayed that Malchut (Kingdom) which is attached to this sign (Heb. ot), may return to its place-and both subjects are actually the same.

410. Another one then continued with the text: "from my flesh shall I see Eloha" (Iyov 19:26). AND HE ASKS: What is "my flesh"? He should have said 'myself.' AND HE REPLIED THAT "from my flesh" is definitely correct, REFERRING TO YESOD WHICH IS CALLED FLESH, HE SAID: "...SHALL I SEE ELOHA." What is the meaning of "and the holy flesh is passed from you..." (Yirmeyah 11:15), WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE HOLY COVENANT, and: "and my covenant shall be in your flesh..." (Beresheet 17:13), WHICH APPLIES TO YESOD. We have learned that as long as a man is stamped by the holy imprint of this sign, THAT THIS SIGN OF THE COVENANT IS STAMPED IN HIM AND GUARDS HIM ALWAYS, then from within it he can actually see the Holy One, blessed be He, and the holy soul remains attached to him in the sign of the covenant.

411. But if he is not deserving, because he did not preserve this sign, what is written of him? IT IS WRITTEN: "By the breath (or, soul) of Eloha they perish..." (Iyov 4:9), because the imprint of the Holy One, blessed be He, has not been preserved. If he has the merit of preserving it, then the Shechinah shall never depart from him.

407. כִּיּוֹן דְּדוֹד מִלְכָּא לֹא נָטַר אֶת קְיֻמָּא דָּא בְּדָקָא חַזִּי, אֶתְעֵדִי מִנִּיה מְלָכוּתָא, וְאֶתְטָרִיד מִירוּשָׁלַיִם. מִיָּד דְּחִיל, דְּסִבֵּר דִּיּוֹחָתוֹן לִיה מִיָּד, וְיִמְסְרוֹן לִיה בִּידּוּי דְּרוּמָה, וְיָמוּת בְּהוּא עֲלָמָא, עַד דְּאֶתְבָּשַׁר בִּיה, דְּכְתִיב גַּם ה' הָעֵבִיר חֲטָאתְךָ לֹא תָמוּת. בִּיה שְׁעָתָא פִּתַּח וְאָמַר לוּלִי ה' עֲזָרְתָה לִי כַּמַּעַט שְׁכָנָה דְּרוּמָה נִמְשִׁי.

408. פִּתַּח אֵידִךְ וְאָמַר מֵאִי הָאִי דְּאָמַר דְּוֹד וְהֶרָאֵנִי אוֹתוֹ וְאֵת נוֹהֵג. מֵאֵן יָכִיל לְמַחְמִי לִיה לְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. אֵלָא הֵכִי תִנִּינֵן, בְּהֵיכָא שְׁעָתָא דְּאֶתְגָּזַר עָלֵיהָ הָהוּא עוֹנָשָׁא, וְדוֹד יָדַע דְּעַל דְּלֹא נָטַר הָאִי אֶת בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, אֶתְעַנֵּשׁ בְּהָאִי, דְּכָלָא בְּחֶדָא אֲחִידָא, וְכָלָא מִתְרַמֵּיז בְּהָאִי אֶת, וְלֹא אֶקְרִי צְדִיק, מֵאֵן דְּלֹא נָטַר לִיה בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, הָוָה בְּעֵי בְּעוֹתִיהָ, וְאָמַר וְהֶרָאֵנִי אוֹתוֹ וְאֵת נוֹהֵג.

409. מֵאִי אוֹתוֹ. דָּא אֶת קְיֻמָּא קְדִישָׁא, דְּהָא דְּחִילָנָא דְּאֶתְאֲבִיד מִנָּאִי. מ"ט. בְּגִין דִּתְרִין אֵלִין מְלָכוּתָא וִירוּשָׁלַם בְּהָאִי אֲחִידֵן, וּבְגִין כְּרִתְלִי בְּבְעוֹתִיהָ אוֹתוֹ וְאֵת נוֹהֵג, דִּיתְהַדֵּר מְלָכוּתָא דְּהָאִי אֶת לְאֶתְרִיהָ. וְכָלָא חֵד מְלָה.

410. פִּתַּח אֵידִךְ וְאָמַר וּמִבְּשָׂרִי אֲחֻזָּה אֱלֹהִי. מֵאִי וּמִבְּשָׂרִי, וּמַעֲצָמִי מִבְּעֵי לִיה. אֵלָא מִבְּשָׂרִי מִמֶּשׁ. וּמֵאִי הִיא. דְּכְתִיב וּבָשָׂר קָדֵשׁ יַעֲבִרוּ מֵעַלְיָךְ. וְכְתִיב וְהִיתָה בְּרִיתִי בִּבְשָׂרְכֶם. דִּתְנִינָא בְּכָל זְמָנָא דְּאֶתְרָשִׁים בְּרִי נֶשׁ, בְּהָאִי רְשִׁימָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּהָאִי אֶת, מִנִּיהָ חֲמִי לְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מִנִּיהָ מִמֶּשׁ, וְנִשְׁמָתָא קְדִישָׁא אֶתְאֲחִידֵת בִּיה.

411. וְאִי לֹא זָכִי, דְּלֹא נָטַר הָאִי אֶת, מַה כְּתִיב מְנַשְׁמַת אֱלֹהִי יֹאבְדוּ. דְּהָא רְשִׁימוֹ דְּקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לֹא אֶתְנָטִיר. וְאִי זָכִי וְנָטַר לִיה, שְׁכִינָתָא לֹא אֶתְפָּרַשׁ מִנִּיהָ.

412. AND HE ASKS: When does THE SHECHINAH reside within him? AND HE SAID: When he marries, and this sign enters to its place, TO THE SHECHINAH. Then they are attached together, THE MALE AND THE FEMALE, WHO ARE THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT AND THE SHECHINAH, and are called by one name, and supernal Chesed rests upon them. Where does CHESD rest? It rests at the side of the male. And what is Chesed? It is Chesed IN THE NAME of El, that comes forth from the supernal Chochmah and adorns the male as a crown over his head. And by these CHASSADIM, the female is sweetened.

413. And we have learned further (IN EXPLANATION OF THE PREVIOUS PASSAGE) THAT the name Eloha (El-Vav-Hei) is interpreted as follows: El is the Light of Chochmah, Vav is the male, and Hei is the female. MALE AND FEMALE are attached together and are called BY ONE NAME, Eloha. So the holy soul clings to this place, and everything depends on the sign OF THE COVENANT.

414. Hence the words, "from my flesh shall I see Eloha," REFERRING TO THE NAME ELOHA, represent overall completion, because it is "from my flesh", my own-WHICH IS YESOD THAT IS CALLED FLESH-the actual sign of the covenant. Therefore, happy are the holy Yisrael who are united with the Holy One, blessed be He; happy is their portion in this world and the world to come. Of them, it is written: "You that cleave to Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4)."

415. Rabbi Aba said: You are all so wise, yet you sit here! They said to him: If birds are uprooted from their homes, they shall not know where to fly. As it is written: "As a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man who wanders from his place" (Mishlei 27:8).

416. So this place, WHERE WE LIVE, has given us the advantage of studying Torah, and also our habit to sleep half the night and to study Torah during the second half. When we rise in the morning, the smell of the fields and water streams illuminates the words of Torah, and they are instilled to our hearts.

417. This place was once punished from above, and many great scholars died because they neglected the study of Torah. Since then, our occupation is studying Torah, day and night, and this place helps us. So whoever leaves this place acts as if he were abandoning eternal life.

418. Rabbi Aba raised up his hands, and blessed them. They sat until daylight shone. And after daylight had shone, they told the children who sat in front of them, "Go out and see if day has come." And each one of you should give a new explanation of the Torah to this great man, A REFERENCE TO RABBI ABA!

412. אִימָתִי מִתְקַיֵּמָא בֵּיהּ, כִּד אֲתַנְסִיב, וְהָאִי אֶת עֵינִי בְּאַתְרֵיהּ, אֲשַׁתְּתַּפּוּ כַּחֲדָא וְאַקְרִי חֵד שְׂמָא, כְּדִין חֶסֶד עֲלָא שְׂרִיָא עֲלִיָּהּ. בְּאֵן אֶתֶר שְׂרִיָא. בְּסִטְרָא דְכּוּרָא. וּמֵאֵן חֶסֶד, חֶסֶד אֵל, דְּאֶתִי וְנִמְקֵי מִחֲכְמָה עֲלָא, וְאֶתְעֵטֵר בְּכּוּרָא, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ אֲתַבְסַּמַּת נּוֹקְבָא.

413. תּוּ תַנִּינָן, אֱלֹהִי: הֵכִי הוּא, אֲמַרְלוֹנְהִירוּ דְּחֲכָמָתָא. ו' דְּכֵר. ה' נּוֹקְבָא. אֲשַׁתְּתַּפּוּ כַּחֲדָא, אֱלֹהִי אֲקָרִי. וְנִשְׁמַתָּא קְדִישָׁא מֵהָאִי אֶתֶר אֲתַאֲחֶדֶת, וְכָלֵא תֵלִיא בְּהָאִי אֶת.

414. וְעַל דְּאֲבַתִּיב, וּמִבְּשָׂרִי אֲחֻזָּה אֱלֹהִי. דָּא שְׁלִימוּתָא דְּכָלֵא, מִבְּשָׂרִי מִמֶּשׁ, מֵהָאִי אֶת מִמֶּשׁ. וְעַל דְּאֲזַכָּאִין אֵינּוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל קְדִישִׁין, דְּאֲחִידֵן בֵּיהּ בְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, זַכָּאִין אֵינּוּן בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין, וּבְעֵלְמָא דְּאֶתִי, עֲלִיָּהּ כְּתִיב וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבָקִים בָּהּ וְגו' וּבְגִין כֵּךְ חַיִּים כָּלְכֶם הַיּוֹם.

415. אָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, וּמַה בְּכָל כֵּךְ אֲתוֹן חֲבִימִין, וְאַתֶּן יִתְבִּין הָכָא, אֲמַרוּ לִיה אִי צְפוּרָאָה יִתְעַקְרוּ מֵאַתְרֵיהּ לֹא יִדְעִין לֶאֱן טֶאסָן, הֵה"ד בְּצִפּוּר נּוֹדֶדֶת מִן קְנָה בֵּן אִישׁ נּוֹדֵד מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

416. וְאַתְרָא דָּא זָכִי לֶן לְאוּרִיָּתָא, וְהָאִי אוּרְחָא דִּילָן. בְּכָל לַיְלָא, פִּלְגוּתָא אֲנֵן נְיִימִין, וּפִלְגוּתָא אֲנֵן עֲסָקִין בְּאוּרִיָּתָא. וְכִד אֲנֵן קִיּוּמִין בְּצִפּוּרָא, רִיחֵי חֻקְלָא, וְנִהְרֵי מֵיא, נִהְרִין לֶן אוּרִיָּתָא, וְאַתִּישְׁבֶּת בְּלִבָּן.

417. וְאַתֶּר דָּא הָא דִּינּוּהָ לְעִילָא זְמַנָּא חֲדָא, וְכִמָּה סְרִכֵי תְרִיסִין, אֲסַתְּלָקוּ בְּהוּא דִּינָא, עַל עוֹנְשָׁא דְּאוּרִיָּתָא, וְכִדִּין אֲשַׁתְּדְּלוּתָא דִּילָן יִמְמָא, וְלִילֵיא בְּאוּרִיָּתָא הוּא, וְאַתְרָא דָּא, קָא מְסִינְעָא לֶן, וּמֵאֵן דְּאַתְפָּרֵשׁ מִכָּאֵן כְּמֵאֵן דְּאַתְפָּרֵשׁ מִחַיִּי עֲלָמָא.

418. זְקִיף יְדוּי רַבִּי אָבָא, וּבְרִיךְ לֶן. יִתְבוּ עַד דְּנִהָר יִמְמָא, בְּתֵר דְּנִהָר יִמְמָא, אֲמַרוּ לְאֵינּוּן דְּרִדְקֵי דְּקִמְיָהּ, פּוֹקוּ וְחִמוּ, אִי נִהָר יִמְמָא, וְכָל חֵד לִימָא מְלָה חֲדָתָא דְּאוּרִיָּתָא, לְהָאִי גְבֵרָא רַבָּא.

419. They went outside and saw that day had come. One of them said: It is destined that a fire from above shall appear on this day! Another one added: And in this house! Another then said: An old man here is destined to be burned by this fire on this day! Rabbi Aba said: Let the Merciful One save us!

420. RABBI ABA was astonished and could not speak. Then he said: The secret of the supernal government is grasped on earth, BECAUSE EVEN THE CHILDREN KNOW HOW TO TELL THE FUTURE. And so it was! On that same day, the friends saw the face of the Shechinah and were surrounded by fire. And Rabbi Aba's face was aflame with the light of the fire from the joy of the Torah.

421. We have learned that all that day, they all did not leave the house, which was enveloped with fire and flame. And the words that were uttered brought happiness among them, as though they received Torah on that day from Mount Sinai. So that when they left that place, they did not know whether it was day or night. Rabbi Aba said: As long as we are here, each of us should say a new word of wisdom, in order to present a fitting return to the landlord, the host of the celebration.

422. One of them opened the discussion with the verse, "Blessed is the man whom You choose and cause to approach You, that he may dwell in Your courts...; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, the holy place of Your temple" (Tehilim 65:5). THE VERSE first SAYS: "Your courts," then "Your house," and then "Your temple"-one within the other and one above the other. THIS MEANS THAT MALCHUT HAS THREE GRADES FROM BOTTOM TO TOP, EACH ONE HIGHER THAN THE OTHER. The first is "Your court," WHICH ALLUDES TO THE ASPECTS OF NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD THAT ARE OUTSIDE OF THE BODY AND ARE CALLED "YOUR COURTS." As it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Tzion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy" (Yeshayah 4:3). BECAUSE THE ESSENCE OF NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD IS YESOD. TZION IS THE INTERNAL ASPECT OF YESOD AND JERUSALEM ITS EXTERNAL ASPECT; BOTH ARE CALLED "COURTS."

423. The verse "We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house" comes next, MEANING THAT AFTER THE GRADE OF THE COURT IS COMPLETED, HE THEN MERITS THE GRADE OF THE HOUSE. It is written: "Through wisdom is a house built" (Mishlei 24:3); it is not written: "wisdom will build a house," which would have meant that the wisdom is called a house. Therefore, "Through wisdom is a house built" MEANS THAT WHEN MALCHUT RECEIVES CHOCHMAH, IT IS CALLED A HOUSE. This relates to the verse, "a river went out of Eden to water the garden" (Beresheet 2:10), WHICH IS THE SECRET OF BINAH RETURNING TO CHOCHMAH, AND THE GARDEN IS MALCHUT.

424. Finally comes "the holy place of Your temple (Heb. heichal)," which is the completion of all. As we have learned, heichal (Hei Yud Caf Lamed) means Hei Kol (Hei Yud Caf Lamed). HE WHO MERITS THIS GRADE IS ASTONISHED AND EXCLAIMS, "HOW WAS ALL (HEB. KOL) THIS REVEALED!" And all here reaches completion, WHICH MEANS THAT EVERYTHING HAS NOW REACHED FULL PERFECTION.

419. נִפְקוּ וַחֲמוּ, דְּנִהַר יִמָּמָא, אָמַר חַד מִנֵּיהוּ, זְמִין הָאִי יוֹמָא, אָשָׁא מְלַעִילָא. אָמַר אַחְרָא, וּבִהֲךָ בִּיתָא. אָמַר אַחְרָא, חַד סְבָא הָכָא, דְּזִמִּין הָאִי יוֹמָא לְאַתְוֹקְרָא בְּנוֹרָא דָא, אָמַר ר' אָבָא, רַחֲמֵנָא לִישׁוּכָן.

420. תָּוֹה, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמַלְלָא, אָמַר קוּטְרָא דְּהוֹרְמָנָא, בְּאַרְעָא אֲתַפְסַת. וְכֵךְ הָוָה, דְּהָהוּא יוֹמָא, חָמוּ חֲבֵרִיָּא, אִפִּי שְׂכִינְתָא, וְאַסְתַּחֲרוּ בְּאָשָׁא, וְר' אָבָא אֲתַלְהִיטוּ אֲנָפוּי בְּנוֹרָא, מַחֲדוּתָא דְּאוּרִיָּיתָא.

421. תָּאנָא, כָּל הָהוּא יוֹמָא לֹא נִפְקוּ כָּלְהוּ מִבֵּיתָא, וּבֵיתָא אֲתַקְשֵׁר בְּקִיטְרָא, וְהוּוּ חֲדָתָן מְלִי בְּגוּוֹיָהוּ, כְּאֵלּוּ קִבְּלוּ הָהוּא יוֹמָא אוּרִיָּיתָא, מְטוּרָא דְּסִינִי. בִּתְרֵי דְּאַסְתַּלְקוּ, לֹא הָוּ יָדְעִי, אִי הוּא יִמָּמָא וְאִי לִילִיָא. אָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, בְּעוֹד דְּאֵנָן קְיִימִין, לִימָא כָּל חַד מִינָן, מְלָה חֲדָתָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא, לְאַקְשָׁרָא טִיבּוּ לְמֵאֲרִיָּה דְּבֵיתָא, מְרִיָּה דְּהִלּוּלָא.

422. פִּתַּח חַד וְאָמַר אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתְקַרֵּב יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצִירֶךָ וְגו'. בְּקַדְמִיתָא חֲצִירֶךָ, לְבִתְרֵי בֵּיתְךָ, וּלְבִתְרֵי הֵיכָלְךָ. דָּא פְּנִימָאָה מִן דָּא, וְדָא לְעִילָא מִן דָּא. יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצִירֶךָ בְּקַדְמִיתָא, כְּדִ"א וְהִיא הַנִּשְׁאָר בְּצִוּוֹן וְהַנּוֹתֵר בִּירוּשָׁלַם קְדוֹשׁ יֵאמָר לוֹ.

423. נִשְׁפָּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ לְבִתְרֵי, כְּדִ"א בְּחֻכְמָה יִבְנֶה בֵּית. הַחֻכְמָה יִבְנֶה בֵּית, לֹא כְּתִיב, דָּאִי כְּתִיב הָכִי הָוָה מִשְׁמַע דְּחֻכְמָה בֵּית אֲקָרִי, אֵלָּא כְּתִיב בְּחֻכְמָה יִבְנֶה בֵּית, הֵיִינוּ דְּכְתִיב, וְנִהַר יוֹצֵא מַעַרְן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת הַגֶּן וְגו'.

424. קְדוֹשׁ הֵיכָלְךָ, לְבִתְרֵי, דָּא הוּא שְׁלִימָא דְּכָלָא, דְּהָכִי תִנְיִן, מֵהוּ הֵיכָל. כְּלוּמַר ה"י כ"ל, הָאִי וְהָאִי, וְכָלָא אֲשִׁתְּלִים בְּחֻדָּא.

425. What does the beginning of the verse teach us? The verse opens, "Blessed is the man whom You choose and cause to approach to You, that he may dwell in Your courts." THIS MEANS THAT whoever offers his son as a sacrifice before the Holy One, blessed be He, CIRCUMCISES HIM, gives something desirable to the Holy One, blessed be, Who then wants him and brings him closer to Himself. There he dwells in the two chambers OF YESOD, WHICH ARE TZION AND JERUSALEM. He clings to both of them, because they are joined as one, as it is written: "that he may dwell in Your courts," "courts" being two!

426. This is why the pious men who lived here in earlier days, the grandfathers of these people, when they offered their sons to this sacrifice OF CIRCUMCISION began by saying, "Blessed is the man whom You choose, and causes to approach to You, that he may dwell in Your courts." Those who were present there said: "We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, of the holy place of Your temple." After this, he would say the blessing, '...who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to initiate the child in the covenant of the patriarch Avraham.' And those present responded: 'Just as you have initiated him to the covenant...'

427. As we have learned, a person should first ask for mercy for himself, and then for another, as it is written: "and he shall make an atonement for himself" at first, and afterward "for all the congregation of Yisrael" (Vayikra 16:17). We have chosen this path, which is good and suitable for us. THEREFORE THE HOST OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE CIRCUMCISION SHOULD AT FIRST RECITE VERSES TO ASK FOR MERCY, AND THEN THOSE WHO ARE PRESENT RECITE AFTER HIM.

428. Rabbi Aba said: "This is definitely well said," REFERRING TO THE VERSE, "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOM YOU CHOOSE..." He who does not recite this is excluded from under the ten canopies that the Holy One, blessed be He, shall prepare in the future for the righteous men in the world to come. And everyone should be attached to this VERSE! Therefore this verse contains ten words of faith, "Blessed is the man..." and from each word a canopy is prepared.

429. Happy are your portions in this world and in the world to come, as Torah is absorbed into your hearts, as if you were standing yourselves on Mount Sinai at the time when the Torah was given to Yisrael.

430. Another person began by saying, "An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt offerings and your peace offerings..." (Shemot 20:21). We have learned that whoever offers his son as a sacrifice THROUGH CIRCUMCISION is as deserving as one who has offered all the sacrifices in the world before the Holy One, blessed be He. It is as though he were building a perfect altar to Him!

425. רִישָׁא דְקָרָא מַה מוֹכַח, דְּכָתִיב אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתִקְרַב יִשְׁכֵּן חֲצִירֶיךָ. הָאִי מֵאֵן דְּאִקְרִיב בְּרִיָּה קְרַבְנָא קָמִי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, רַעּוּא דְקְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּהָהוּא קְרַבְנָא, וְאַתְרָעִי בֵּיהּ, וְקָרִיב לֵיהּ, וְשׁוּי מְדוּרָהּ בְּתֵרִין אֲדָרִין, וְאַחִיד לֵהָאִי וּלְהָאִי, דְּאִינוּן תֵּרִין אֲתַקְשְׁרוּ בְּחָדָא. דְּכָתִיב יִשְׁכֵּן חֲצִירֶיךָ. חֲצִירֶיךָ וְדָאִי תֵרִי.

426. בְּגִינִי כֶךָ, חֲסִידִי קְדָמָאִי סְבָאן דְּהֵכָא, בְּדִמְקָרִיבִין בְּנִיָּהוּ לְקְרַבְנָא דָא, פְּתַחִי וְאִמְרִי, אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתִקְרַב יִשְׁכֵּן חֲצִירֶיךָ. אִינוּן דְּקִיּוּמִי עֲלִיָּהוּ אִמְרִי, נִשְׁבַּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ קְדוֹשׁ הַיְכָלְךָ. לְבַתֵּר מִבְּרַךְ אֲשֶׁר קִבְּלִי לְהַכְנִיסוֹ בְּבֵרִיתוֹ שֶׁל אֲבִרָהֶם אֲבִינוּ. וְאִינוּן דְּקִיּוּמִי עֲלִיָּהוּ אִמְרִי, כְּשֶׁם שֶׁהַכְנַסְתָּו לְבֵרִית וְכו'.

427. וְתִנִּינֵן, בְּקְדָמִיתָא לְבַעֲי בִר נֶשׁ רַחֲמִין עֲלֵיהּ, וּלְבַתֵּר עַל אַחֲרָא, דְּכָתִיב וּכְפָר בַּעֲדוֹ בְּקְדָמִיתָא, וּלְבַתֵּר וּבַעֲדָא כָּל קָהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאַנֵּן אֹרְחָא דָא נִקְטִינֵן, וְהֵכִי שְׁפִיר וְחַיִּי לְקָמָאן.

428. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, וְדָאִי כֶךָ הוּא וְיָאוֹת מְלָה, וּמֵאֵן דְּלֹא אָמַר הֵכִי, אִפִּיק גְּרָמִיָּה מַעֲשָׂרָה חוּפּוֹת דִּזְמִין קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְמַעַבְדָּא לְצַדִּיקָא, בַּעֲלָמָא דְאֵתִי, וְכִלְהוּ מִתְקַשְׁרֵן בְּהָאִי. וּבְגִינִי כֶךָ, עֲשָׂרָה מְלִי דְמַהֲיָמְנוּתָא אֵית בְּהָאִי קָרָא, אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתִקְרַב וְגו', וְכָל מְלָה וּמְלָה חַד חוּפָה אֲתַעֲבִיד מִנָּה.

429. זָכָאָה חוּלְקִיכוֹן בַּעֲלָמָא דָא, וּבַעֲלָמָא דְאֵתִי, דְּהָא אֹרִייתָא מִתְקַשְׁרָא בְּלִבֵּיכוֹ, בְּאִילוֹ קִיּוּמִיתוֹ בְּגוּפֵיכוֹ בְּטוֹרָא דְסִינִי, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְאַתִּיהֵיבַת אֹרִייתָא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

430. פְּתַח אֵידֶךָ וְאִמְרִי מִזְבֵּחַ אֲדָמָה תַעֲשֶׂה לִּי וְחִבַּחַת עָלָיו אֶת עֲלִיתֶיךָ וְאֶת שְׁלֵמֶיךָ וְגו'. תֵּאנָא, כָּל מֵאֵן דְּקָרִיב בְּרִיָּה לְקְרַבְנָא דָא, בְּאִילוֹ אִקְרִיב כָּל קְרַבְנִין דְּעָלְמָא, לְקָמִיָּה דְקְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּכְאִילוֹ בְּנִי מְדַבְּחָא שְׁלִימָתָא קָמִיָּה.

431. Thus, the circumcision to this holy covenant should be performed over an altar prepared by using a vessel full of earth. It is considered before the Holy One, blessed be He, as if he had offered sacrifices of sheep and oxen upon the altar.

432. And it, THE CIRCUMCISION, pleases the Holy One, blessed be He, more than all THE OTHER SACRIFICES, as it is written: "and shall sacrifice thereon your burnt offerings and your peace offerings...in every place where I mention My name..." What do the words "I mention My name" mean? They refer to circumcision, as it is written: "The secret of Hashem is with them that fear Him, and He will reveal to them his covenant" (Tehilim 25:14). SO THE COVENANT APPEARS THERE!

433. This "altar of earth" is as I have stated. Next, it is written: "And if they make Me an altar of stones" (Shemot 20:22), which is an allusion to the proselyte who comes from a stiff-necked and stony-hearted people. This is what is referred to as an altar of stones.

434. What is the meaning of the verse, "you shall not build it of hewn stones?" (Ibid.) IT MEANS THAT the proselyte should enter to the service of the Holy One, blessed be He, but should not be circumcised until he has forgotten the idol worshipping that he practiced until then and the hardness is removed from his heart.

435. Because if he is circumcised before he removes the hardness from his heart in order to join in the holy service of the Holy One, blessed be He, he will be like a statue of stone that is hewn on all sides, but still remains a stone. Because of this, "You shall not build it of hewn stones," because if he still has harshness in his heart, then "you lift up your tool upon it, you have defiled it." This means that the circumcision performed on him serves no purpose.

436. Therefore happy is the fate of he who willingly and joyously offers the sacrifice to the Holy One, blessed be He. And one should rejoice with this person all day long, as it is written: "But let all those that put their trust in You rejoice, let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them, and let those who love Your name be joyful in You" (Tehilim 5:12).

431. בְּגִינִי כֵן, בְּעֵי לְסִדְרָא מִדְּבָחָא, בְּמֵאנָא חֲד מְלִינָא אֶרְעָא, לְמַגְזֹר עָלֶיהָ הָאִי קְוִימָא קְדִישָׁא, וְאַתְחָשִׁיב קָמִי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּאִילּוֹ אֲרֻבָּח עָלֶיהָ עֲלוּן וְקִרְבָּנִין, עָאנָא וְתוּרִי.

432. וְנִיחָא לִיה יְתִיר מְכַלְהוּ, דְּכְתִיב וְזָבַחַת עָלֶיךָ אֶת עֲלִיתֶךָ וְאֶת שְׁלָמֶיךָ וְגו'. בְּכָל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֲזָכִיר אֶת שְׁמִי. מִהוּ אֲזָכִיר אֶת שְׁמִי. דָּא מִיִּלְהָ, דְּכְתִיב בֵּה סוֹד ה' לִירְאָיו וּבְרִיתוֹ לְהוֹדִיעֵם.

433. הָאִי מִזְבֵּחַ אֶרְמָה וְדָאִי כְּמָה דְּאֻמִּינָא. בְּתִרְיָה מִה כְּתִיב, וְאִם מִזְבֵּחַ אֲבָנִים תַּעֲשֶׂה לִּי. רְמִז לְגִיזְרָא בְּד אֲתַגִּיז, דְּאִיהוּ מֵעַם קָשִׁי קָדְל, וְקָשִׁי לְבָא, הָאִי אֲקִרִי מִזְבֵּחַ אֲבָנִים.

434. לֹא תִבְנֶה אֶתְהֵן גְּזִית. מָה הוּא. דְּבְעִי לְאַעְלָא לִיה בְּפּוֹלְחָנָא דְּקְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְלֹא יִגְזֹר יְתִיה, עַד דִּינְשִׁי פּוֹלְחָנָא אַחֲרָא דְּעֵבֵד עַד הָכָא, וְיַעֲדִי מְנִיה הֵהוּא קָשִׁי דְּלְבָא.

435. וְאִי אֲתַגִּז, וְלֹא אֲעִדִי מְנִיה הֵהוּא קָשִׁי דְּלְבָא, לְמִיעֵל בְּפּוֹלְחָנָא קְדִישָׁא דְּקְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, הָרִי הוּא כְּהָאִי פְסִילָא דְּאֲבָנָא, דִּיגְזִרִי לִיה מִהָאִי גִיסָא, וּמִהָאִי גִיסָא, וְאֲשֶׁתָּאֵר אֲבָנָא בְּדִבְקָדְמִיתָא. בְּגִין כִּנְלָא תִבְנֶה אֶתְהֵן גְּזִית. דָּאִי אֲשֶׁתָּאֵר בְּקִשְׁוִיתִיה, כִּי חֲרַבְךָ הִנֵּפֶת עָלֶיהָ וְתַחֲלִלֶיהָ, כְּלוּמַר, הֵהוּא גְזִירוֹ דְּאֲתַגִּז לֹא מִהֵנָּא לִיה.

436. בְּגִינִי כֵן, זָכָאָה חוֹלְקִיה דְּמָאן דְּאֲקָרִיב הָאִי קִרְבָּנָא בְּחִדּוּתָא בְּרַעְוָא קָמִי קְדָשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּבְעֵי לְמַחְדִּי בְּהָאִי חוֹלְקָא, כָּל יוֹמָא, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּשְׁמַחוּ כָּל חוֹסֵי כֵן לְעוֹלָם יִרְגְּנוּ וְתִסַּךְ עֲלֵימוֹ וַיַּעֲלִצוּ בֶן אֲהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ.

437. Another one began by saying, "And when Avram was ninety nine years old (lit. 'ninety year and nine years'), Hashem appeared before Avram and said to him, I am El Shadai; walk before me, and be perfect" (Beresheet 17:1). This passage should be studied carefully, because in many ways it is difficult. Could it be saying that only now, when Avraham reached such an age, did the Holy One, blessed be He, appear for the first time to Avraham? -That "Hashem appeared to Avram", now and never before? But HOW CAN THIS BE, WHEN it has previously been written: "Now Hashem has said to Avram," (Beresheet 12:1) "And Hashem said to Avram," (Beresheet 13:14) "And He said to Avram, know surely..." (Beresheet 15:13). Yet now, as he is counting and calculating the days, it is written: "Hashem appeared to Avram..." which means that until now Hashem did not appear to him. Further, as it is written: "when Avram was ninety year and nine years," it first SAYS "year" and concludes with "years."

438. What is the reason that for all the days until now it was not written: "AND HASHEM appeared TO AVRAM?" We have learned that as long as he was uncircumcised and covered, the Holy One, blessed be He, did not appear to him properly. But now He did appear to him properly, as it is written: "And...appeared." For what purpose? To expose in him the sign of the covenant, which is the holy crown.

439. Furthermore, the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to bring forth holy seed from him, and this could not happen as long as Avraham remained with uncovered flesh. So the Holy One, blessed be He, said "Now, that he is ninety year and nine years old, and the time is close for the holy seed to issue from him, MEANING THAT HE IS ALMOST 100 YEARS OLD, let him first become holy, LET HIM FIRST CIRCUMCISE HIMSELF, and after that let the holy seed come forth." This is why his age was counted in this manner now, REFERRING TO THE "NINE YEARS," BECAUSE HE WAS NOW NEAR THE RIGHT AGE TO BEGET HIS CHILD IN COMPLETE PERFECTION, and not at any other time before, REFERRING TO THE OTHER NINETY YEARS, WHEN HE WAS STILL NOT READY TO BEGET HOLY DESCENDANTS. THEREFORE, THESE YEARS ARE DESCRIBED AS "NINETY YEAR" AND NOT "YEARS."

440. Furthermore, THE VERSE SAYS "ninety year" AND NOT YEARS because all the days before HIS CIRCUMCISION were not years. Rather, THEY WERE CONSIDERED AS one year. THIS IS because his days were not considered as days. Only now, as he reached these years, REFERRING TO THE 99TH YEAR, DURING WHICH HE WAS CIRCUMCISED, were they counted as years for him. Therefore they are not counted as a year, BUT RATHER, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "NINE YEARS."

441. Of the verse, "and He said to him, I am El Shadai," HE ASKS, "Why has not THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE said to him until now 'I am El Shadai'." AND HE REPLIES, "Because we have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, prepared DOWN BELOW lower Crowns, that are not holy. So all those who are uncircumcised are defiled by them."

437. פתח אידך ואמר, ויהי אברם בן תשעים שנה ותשע שנים וירא ה' וגו' אני אל שדי הטהלך לפני וגו'. האי קרא אית לעיינא ביה, וקשיא בכמה אורחין, וכי עד השתא לא אתגלי ליה קדשא ברין הואלאברהם, אלא האידנא כד מטא להני יומין, וירא ה' אל אברם, ולא קודם. והכתיב ויאמר ה' אל אברם. וה' אמר אל אברם. ויאמר לאברם ידוע תרע וגו'. והאידנא מני חושבן יומין, וכד מני להו, כתיב וירא ה' אל אברם, אשתמע דער השתא לא אתגלי עליו. ועוד דכתיב בן תשעים שנה ותשע שנים בקדמיתא שנה, ולבסוף שנים.

438. אלא הכי תאנא, כל אינון יומין לא כתיב וירא, מ"ט, אלא כל כמה דהוה אטים וסטים, קדשא ברין הוא לא אתגלי עליה בדקחזי. האידנא אתגלי עליה, דכתיב וירא. מ"ט. משום דבעא לגלי ביה האי את כתר קדישא.

439. ועוד דבעא קדשא ברין הואלאפקא מניה זרעא קדישא, וקדישא לא להוי, בעוד דאיהו אטים בשרא, אלא אמר השתא דהוה בן תשעים שנה ותשע שנים, וזמן קריב הוא דינפוק מניה זרעא קדישא, להוי הוא קדישא בקדמיתא, ולבתר ינפוק מניה זרעא קדישא. בגין כך מני יומיו בהאי, ולא בכל הני זמני קדמיתא.

440. תו תשעים שנה, דכל יומיו קדמאי לא הוו שנים אלא בחד שנה, דלא הוו יומיו יומין, השתא דמטא להאי, שנים אינון, ולא שנה.

441. ויאמר אליו אני אל שדי. מאי משמע, דער השתא לא קאמר אני אל שדי. אלא הכי תאנא, עבד קדשא ברין הוא בתרין תתאין דלא קדישין לתתא, וכל אינון דלא אתגזרו וסתאבון בהון.

442. And these LOWER CROWNS have marks! What are these marks? They are the letters Shin and Dalet; nothing else appears in them. THIS MEANING THAT THE YUD IN THE NAME SHADAI IS MISSING FROM THERE. This is why they are defiled by them, and cling on to them-TO THOSE LOWER CROWNS. After they are circumcised, they leave them-THESE LOWER CROWNS-and enter under the wings of the Shechinah, and Yud, which is the mark of holiness, is revealed from within them. This is the regular, complete, and proper sign of the covenant. And the name Shadai is imprinted upon those who are circumcised and is completed in full perfection. Therefore, it is written ABOUT AVRAHAM; "I am El Shadai," WHICH WAS NOT WRITTEN BEFORE HE WAS COMMANDED TO PERFORM CIRCUMCISION.

443. In the verse, "walk before me, and be perfect" (Beresheet 17:1), "PERFECT" MEANS complete. Because until now the letter YUD was missing in the mark of Shin-Dalet. THEREFORE, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SAID TO HIM, "Circumcise yourself, and be completed by the mark of the Yud," SO THE NAME SHADAI (SHIN-DALET-YUD) MAY REACH COMPLETION IN YOU. Because whoever is completed by this mark is worthy of being blessed by this Name, as it is written: "And El Shadai shall bless you..." (Beresheet 28:3).

444. AND HE ASKS, "What is the meaning of THE NAME 'El Shadai'?" AND HE ANSWERS, "This is THE NAME from which all the blessings issue. It controls all the lower crowns. And all are in awe and tremble from fear of it. Therefore, all those who are impure stay away from him who has been circumcised and have no control over him. In addition, he is not pulled down to Gehenom, as it is written: "Your people also shall be all righteous..." (Yeshayah 60: 21).

445. Rabbi Aba said: "Happy is your lot in this world and in the world to come. Happy is my fate that I have come here and heard these words from your mouths-all of you are holy. You are all the sons of the holy Elohim. Of you it is written: 'One shall say, I am Hashem's, and another shall call himself by the name of Ya'akov, and another shall subscribe with his hand to Hashem and surname himself by the name of Yisrael' (Yeshayah 44:5). Each of you clings to the holy supernal King and is attached to Him. And you are ruling governors with shields, from that land that is called the land of the living, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA THAT ENCLOTHES THE UPPER IMA, where its governors feed on the manna of the sacred dew."

446. Another continued the discussion with "Blessed are you, O land, when your king is a free man and your princes eat in due season..." (Kohelet 10:17). Consider also the previous verse, "Woe to you, land, when your king is a child, and your princes eat in the morning" (Ibid. 16). These two verses do not seem to agree with each other. THE "LAND" REFERS TO THE NUKVA, BUT ONE VERSE SAYS "YOUR KING IS A FREE MAN"; THE OTHER THAT "YOUR KING IS A CHILD!" AND HE SAID: "Indeed they do not CONTRADICT EACH OTHER. "Blessed are you, land" refers to the land above, NAMELY THE NUKVA THAT ASCENDED UPWARD AND ENCLOTHED BINAH, which governs all life on high-IN BINAH. For this reason, it is called the land of the living. Of this land it is written: "land which Hashem your Elohim cares for..." (Devarim 11:12) and "A land in which you shall eat bread without scarceness, you shall not lack anything in it..." (Devarim 8:9). Exactly! "You shall not lack anything in it" MEANS THAT IT IS NOURISHED BY A NEVER-ENDING UNION. Wherefore all this? Because, as it is written: "your king is the son of a free man." This is the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, as you may read, "Yisrael is

442. וְרִשְׁמִין בְּהוֹן, וּמֵאֵי רִישׁוּמָא אֵית בְּהוֹן דְּאַתְחֲזִי בְּהוֹ שִׁין דַּל"ת, וְלֹא יִתִּיר, וּבְגִין כְּרִאֲסָתָאבּוֹן בְּהוֹ, וְאַתְדַּבְּקוֹן בְּהוֹ. בְּתֵר דְּאַתְגְּזֵרוּ, נִמְקִין מֵאֲלִין, וְעֲלִין בְּגִדְפוֹי דְּשְׂכִינְתָא, וְאַתְגְּלִיא בְּהוֹ יו"ד רִשְׁימָא קְדִישָׁא, אֶת קִיּוּמָא שְׁלִים, וְאַתְרִשִׁים בְּהוֹ שַׁד"י, וְאַשְׁתַּלִּים בְּקִיּוּמָא שְׁלִים, וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב בְּהֵאֵי, אֲנִי אֵל שַׁדִּי.

443. הִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי וְהִיָּה תָמִים, שְׁלִים, דְּהִשְׁתָּא אֶת חֶסֶד בְּרִשְׁימָא דְּשִׁין וְדַל"ת, גִּזֵּר גְּרַמֶּךָ, וְהִוֵּי שְׁלִים, בְּרִשְׁימָא דִּיו"ד. וּמֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ בְּרִשׁוּמָא דָּא, אֶתְחֲזִי לְאַתְבְּרָכָא בְּשֵׁמָא דָּא, דְּכְתִיב וְאֵל שַׁדִּי יְבָרַךְ אוֹתְךָ.

444. מֵהוּ אֵל שַׁדִּי. הֵהוּא דְּבִרְכָאן נִמְקֵן מִנִּיהּ, הוּא דְּשְׁלִיט עַל כָּל כְּתָרִין תַּתָּאִין, וְכָלֹא מִדְּחַלְתִּיהּ דְּחָלִין וּמִזְדַּעְזְעִין, בְּגִין כְּרִמָּאן דְּאַתְגְּזֵר, כָּל אִינוֹן דְּלֹא קְדִישִׁין אֶתְרַחֲקוֹן מִנִּיהּ, וְלֹא שְׁלִטִין בִּיהּ. וְלֹא עוֹר אֵלֹא דְּלֹא נְחִית לְגִיָּהֶנּוּ, דְּכְתִיב וְעַמְּךָ כָּלֹם צְדִיקִים וְגו'.

445. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, זָכְאִין אֶתּוֹן בְּעֲלָמָא דִּין וּבְעֲלָמָא דְּאַתִּי, זָכָא חוֹלְקֵי דְּאַתִּינָא לְמִשְׁמַע מְלִין אֲלִין מִפּוּמִיכּוֹן, כָּלְכוּ קְדִישִׁין, כָּלְכוּ בְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵא קְדִישָׁא, עֲלִיכוּ כְּתִיב זֶה יֹאמֵר לֵה' אֲנִי זֶה יִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יַעֲקֹב זֶה יִכְתֹּב יְרוּ לֵה' וּבְשֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל יִכְבֶּה. כָּל חַר מִנְכוֹן אַחִיר וְאַתְקַשֵּׁר בְּמַלְכָּא קְדִישָׁא עֲלָא, וְאַתּוֹן רַבְּבִין מִמֶּנּוּ תְרִיסִין מֵהֵיָּא אֶרֶץ, דְּאַקְרִי אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים, דְּרַבְּרַבְנוּהִי אֲכָלִין מִמֶּנָּא דְּטִלָּא קְדִישָׁא.

446. פִּתַּח אֵידֵךְ וְאָמַר אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ אֶרֶץ שְׁמִלְכְךָ בֶן חוּרִין וְשֶׁרֶיךָ בַּעַת יֹאכְלוּ. וְכְתִיב אִי לָךְ אֶרֶץ שְׁמִלְכְךָ נֶעַר וְשֶׁרֶיךָ בַּבֶּקֶר יֹאכְלוּ. הֵנִי קְרָאִי קִשְׁיִין אֶהְדִּי. וְלֹא קִשְׁיִין, הֵאֵי דְּכְתִיב אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ אֶרֶץ, דָּא אֶרֶץ דְּלַעֲיִלָּא, דְּשְׁלֵטָא עַל כָּל אִינוֹן חִיִּין דְּלַעֲיִלָּא. וּבְגִין כְּרִאֲקִי אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים, וְעֲלָה כְּתִיב אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ דּוֹרֵשׁ אוֹתָהּ תָּמִיד. וְכְתִיב אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְּמַסְכְּנוֹת תֹּאכַל בָּהּ לֶחֶם לֹא תִחְסַר כָּל בָּהּ. לֹא תִחְסַר כָּל בָּהּ דִּיִּיקָא. וְכָל כֶּךָ לָמָּה, מִשּׁוּם דְּכְתִיב שְׁמִלְכְךָ בֶן חוּרִין דָּא קְדִישָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. כְּדָא בְּנֵי בְּכוֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

my son, My firstborn" (Shemot 4:22).

447. AND HE ASKED, "What is THE MEANING OF the son of a free man?" AND HE ANSWERED, "As you may read, 'For it is the Yovel (Jubilee), it shall be holy to you...'" (Vayikra 25:12). YOVEL (JUBILEE) ALLUDES TO BINAH. And it is further written: "and proclaim liberty throughout all the land..." (Ibid. 10). So all freedom is derived from Yovel (Jubilee), WHICH IS BINAH, Therefore, WHEN ZEIR ANPIN ATTAINS THE MOCHIN OF BINAH, HE IS THEN CALLED "a free man!" AND HE SAID: "You may ask why IS IT WRITTEN 'chorin (masc. a free man)' and not 'cherut (fem. Freedom)?" AND HE REPLIED, "Definitely, it should be 'a man of freedom!'"

448. IF SO, THEN WHY IS IT WRITTEN: "A FREE MAN?" We have learned the answer in our secret Mishnah. When the Yud and the Hei are united, it is written: "And a river went out of Eden, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, to water the garden" (Beresheet 2:10). It does not say, "When they are united," but assuredly "they are united." Therefore, it is written: "the son of a free man." This, THEN, is the reason why the verse describes ZEIR ANPIN, "Blessed are you, land, when your king is a free man and your princes eat in due season," NAMELY with pleasure and contentment!

449. The verse "Woe to you, land, when your king is a child" refers to the land down below; NAMELY THE NUKVA THAT IS IN THE WORLD OF BRIYAH, WHO IS THE WIFE OF MATATRON. For we have learned that all the lands that belong to nations that worship the stars and constellations are ruled by the governors. And the highest of them all is he of whom it is written: "I have been young, and now am old" (Tehilim 37:25). And we have also learned that the verse was spoken by the governor of the world, NAMELY MATATRON, WHO IS CALLED "A LAD." Of him it is written: "Woe to the land, when the king is a child." Woe to the world that draws its nourishment from this aspect, NAMELY THE ASPECT OF MATATRON. But when Yisrael are in exile, they draw their nourishment from him, as one who feeds on a stranger BECAUSE YISRAEL ARE SUPPOSED TO DERIVE THEIR SUSTENANCE FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, AND NOT FROM MATATRON!

450. The verse says that "your princes eat in the morning" and not during the other hours of the day. The morning IS MENTIONED, and the other times of the day are not. We have learned that when the sun shines AND THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD bow to the sun, wrath hangs over the world, as it also does at the hour of the afternoon prayer, BECAUSE THAT IS THE TIME OF JUDGMENT. Why is this true? Because "your king is a lad"-he who is called "a lad," NAMELY MATATRON.

451. And you, truly pious and holy men of above, the sons of the Holy King, do not derive sustenance from that aspect OF MATATRON, but rather from that holy place on high, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN WHICH IS CALLED THE LAND OF THE LIVING. Of you it is written: "You that cleave to Hashem your Elohim are alive everyone of you this day" (Devarim 4:4).

447. בן חורין, מהו בן חורין, כד"א יובל הוא קדש תהיה לכם. וכתיב וקראתם דרור בארץ. דהא כל חירו מיובל קא אתי, בגין כרבן חורין. ואי תימא בן חורין, ולא כתיב בן חירות. הכי הוא ודאי, בן חירות מיבעי ליה.

448. אלא במתניתא סתימא דילן תנינא, כד מתחברן יו"ד בה' בדין כתיב ונהר יוצא מעדן להשקות את הגן. ולא תימא כד מתחברן, אלא מתחברן ודאי. ובגין כך בן חורין כתיב, ועל דאשריך ארץ שמלכך בן חורין ושריך בעת לאכלו, בחדוותא בשלימו ברעוא.

449. אי לך ארץ שמלכך נער, האי ארץ דלתתא. דתניא כל שאר ארעי דשאר עמין עכו"ם אתיהבו לרבבין תריסין דממנן עליהו, ועילא מכלהו ההוא דכתיב ביה, נער הייתי גם זקנתי. ותאנא האי קרא שרו של עולם אמרו. ועל דא כתיב אי לך ארץ שמלכך נער. ווי לעלמא דמסטר דא ינקא, וכד ישראל בגלותא, ינקין במאן דיניק מרשותא אחרא.

450. ושריך בבקר לאכלו. ולא בכולי יומא. בבקר, ולא בזמנא אחרא דיומא. דתניא בשעתא דחמה זורחת, ואתיין וסגדין ליה לשמשא, רוגזא תלי בעלמא, בשעתא דמנחה, רוגזא תליא בעלמא. מאן גרים האי, משום דמלכך נער, ההוא דאקרי נער.

451. ואתון זכאי קשוט, קדישי עליונים, בגי מלכא קדישא, לא ינקין מהאי סטרא, אלא מההוא אתר קדישא דלעילא, עליוכו כתיב ואתם הדבקים בה' אלהיכם חיים כלכם היום.

452. Rabbi Aba then discoursed on the verse, "Now I will sing to my friend a song of my beloved for his vineyard...And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof..." (Yeshayah 5:1-2). These verses should be studied carefully. Why does it read, "a song" rather than "a reprimand?" BECAUSE THESE ARE WORDS OF REPROOF TO YISRAEL. AND FURTHERMORE, IT IS WRITTEN: "to my friend," when it should have been written: "to my beloved," just as it is written: "a song of my beloved!" IN ADDITION, IT IS WRITTEN: "My friend has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill (Heb. Keren Ben Shemen)" (Yeshayah 5:1-2). But I have searched the entire Torah and cannot find a place called "Keren Ben Shemen!"

453. AND HE REPLIED, "These verses are clarified by the friends in different ways, all of which are good and correct. Nevertheless, "Now will I sing to my friend," refers to Yitzchak, who was a "friend" and was named "friend" before he even came to this world. THUS WE SAY ABOUT HIM, "HE WHO HAS SANCTIFIED A FRIEND FROM THE WOMB."

454. AND HE ASKS, "Why WAS YITZCHAK CALLED "a friend?" AND HE ANSWERS, "Because we have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, bore a great love for Yitzchak, who was not conceived until Avraham, the patriarch, was circumcised and called 'perfect'." ONLY THEN WAS HE TOLD, "AND BE PERFECT." And the Hei was added TO HIS NAME for perfection, as well as to Sarah's name. THEN HE WAS CALLED AVRAHAM AND SHE SARAH!

455. This should be studied! The Hei THAT WAS GIVEN to Sarah is suitable, but why was Avraham given the Hei and not the Yud. The Yud should have been added to his name, because he is a male, AND THE ASPECT OF YUD BELONGS TO THE MALE, WHILE THE ASPECT OF THE HEI BELONGS TO THE FEMALE! AND HE REPLIES, "There is a sublime secret of a concealed aspect. Avraham rose up and took a secret from the upper Hei, BINAH, which is the world of the male. Because of the upper Hei and lower Hei OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, one relates to the male, NAMELY THE UPPER HEI, and one relates to the female, NAMELY THE LOWER HEI. SO THE HEI THAT AVRAHAM TOOK IS THE UPPER HEI, WHICH BELONGS TO THE MALE, NAMELY BINAH.

456. As it is written: "So (Heb. koh) shall your seed be" (Beresheet 15:5). And we have learned that "your seed" is actually "your seed!" THIS MEANS THAT KOH, WHICH IS MALCHUT, SHALL BE HIS ACTUAL SEED. He started to enter to this covenant, and whoever starts to enter, does actually enter to this covenant, WHICH IS MALCHUT THAT IS CALLED KOH. Therefore, a proselyte who is circumcised is called "a proselyte of righteousness," because he does not come from the "holy seed" that was circumcised AND HE STARTS TO ENTER TO THE COVENANT, AND WHOEVER STARTS ENTERS IN MALCHUT. So whoever enters this, NAMELY MALCHUT THAT IS CALLED "RIGHTEOUSNESS," is called by this name, A PROSELYTE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

452. פתח רבי אבא ואמר, אשירה נא לידידי שירת דודי לכרמו וגו' ויעזקהו ויסקלהו וגו'. הני קראי אית לאסתכלא בהו, אמאי כתיב שירה, תוכחה מבעי ליה. לידידי, לדודי מבעי ליה. במה דכתיב שירת דודי. כרם הנה לידידי בקרן בן שמן. אסתכלנא בכל אורניתא, ולא אשכחנא אתרא דאקרי קרן בן שמן.

453. אלא הני קראי הא אוקמוה חברינא בכמה גוונים, וכלהו שפיר והכי הוא. אבל אשירה נא לידידי, דא יצחק, דהוה ידיד, ואקרי ידיד עד לא יפוק לעלמא.

454. אמאי ידיד. דתנינן רחימו סגי הוה ליה לקדשא בריך הוא ביה, דלא אתעביר, עד דלא אתגזר אברהם אבה, ואקרי שלים, ואתוסף ליה ה"א לאשלמותא. וכן לשרה האי ה"א אתיהיבת לה.

455. הכא אית לאסתכלא, ה' לשרה שפיר, אבל לאברהם, אמאי ה"א ולא יו"ד, י' מבעי ליה, דהא הוא דכר הוה. אלא רזא עלאה הוא, סתים בגוון, אברהם סליק לעילא, ונטיל רזא מה"א עלאה, דאיהו עלמא דדכורא, ה"א עלאה וה"א תתאה, האי תליא בדכורא והאי בנוקבא ודאי.

456. דכתיב כה יהיה זרעך. ותנא זרעך, זרעך ממש, דהוה שארי למיעל בהאי קנים, ומאן דשארי למיעל, בהאי קנים עאל. ובגיני כך גיזרא דאתגזר גר צדק אקרי, בגין דלא אתא מגזעא קדושא דאתגזרו, ועל דא מאן דעאל בהאי, שמייה בהאי.

457. This is why it is written of Avraham. "So (Koh) shall your seed be," which means "your seed" exactly. BECAUSE THE TERM KOH, WHICH IS THE LOWER HEI, NAMELY MALCHUT, SHALL ACTUALLY BE "YOUR SEED." Therefore he was given the Hei. AS HE CONTINUES TO EXPLAIN HOW MALCHUT BECOMES HIS "SEED," HE SAYS: The two Heis, WHICH ARE BINAH AND MALCHUT, are joined together. AFTER AVRAHAM ROSE TO THE FIRST HEI, THE LOWER HEI, MALCHUT, ROSE UP TO HIM, AND THE TWO JOINED TOGETHER. Then they gave birth up there IN BINAH. And what issues from those, AS THE LEFT COLUMN IS FORMED, is Yud. This is why Yud, WHICH IS THE ASPECT OF the male, is the first letter of the name of Yitzchak. From here, the male expands, BECAUSE FROM THE SECRET OF YUD THE MALE STARTS TO EXPAND. Because of this, it is written: "for in Yitzchak shall your seed be called" (Bereshheet 21:12). IT SAYS "in Yitzchak," and not in you. Yitzchak bore above, as it is written: "You will show truth to Ya'akov" (Michah 7:20), who completed everything.

458. You might claim, "But it was Avraham who was attached to this grade," WHO, IN OTHER WORDS, BECAME INCLUDED IN THE ASPECT OF THE LEFT COLUMN OF YITZCHAK, and no more! Yet it is written: "Kindness (Chesed) to Avraham" (Michah 7:20), SO HE IS ATTACHED TO THE RIGHT! AND HE REPLIED, "His portion is indeed so, NAMELY CHESD, because he showed kindness to the people of the world. But to beget children, he remained attached to this grade, MEANING THAT HE BECAME INCLUDED WITHIN THE LEFT COLUMN, and from here he begins, BECAUSE THERE IS NO BEGETTING WITHOUT THE ASPECT OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, WHICH IS ACHIEVED BY COMBINING THE RIGHT AND LEFT TOGETHER. AND THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSE "IN YITZCHAK SHALL YOUR SEED BE CALLED," AND NOT IN YOU. This is why Avraham was not circumcised until the age of ninety nine years. And this secret is known and explained in our Mishnah.

459. For this, Yitzchak, who is harsh Judgment, AND IS THE LEFT COLUMN THAT WAS BLOCKED BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF CHASSADIM, came forth to complete his share and beget the CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS YA'AKOV and is called Chesed. THEN, RIGHT AND LEFT WERE INCLUDED IN EACH OTHER. This is how Ya'akov completed everything from this side, THE RIGHT SIDE, and from that side, THE LEFT SIDE, from the side where Avraham and Yitzchak were combined in their portion on high THROUGH YA'AKOV WHO IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN. AND BY THIS, THE CHASSADIM OF THE RIGHT WERE COMPLETED-this is ONE completion-OF YA'AKOV. And from the side that was given the ability to give birth and beget from below upward this is THE SECOND completion FOR YA'AKOV. Therefore it is written: "Yisrael, in whom I will be glorified" (Yeshayah 49:3), BECAUSE in him, IN YISRAEL, were the colors, NAMELY THE LIGHTS, completed from above and below!

460. This is why it is written "a song" in the verse "Now will I sing to my friend" AND NOT A REPROVAL. This is definitely a song, because he is called to beget a male. HIS MENTION OF "MY FRIEND" ALLUDES TO BEGETTING A MALE, WHO IS YITZCHAK, THE MOCHIN OF THE LEFT COLUMN OF BINAH, WHICH THE WORLD OF THE MALE. He was call a "friend" before he appeared in the world.

461. There are those who say that "Now will I sing to my friend" refers to Avraham, as it is written: "What has my friend to do in my house" (Yirmeyah 11:15), WHICH REFERS TO AVRAHAM. SO MY FRIEND HERE ALSO REFERS TO AVRAHAM. And Avraham inherited the portion of this field, WHICH IS MALCHUT THAT IS CALLED HERE "VINEYARD." AND HE RECITES A SONG OF MY BELOVED FOR HIS VINEYARD. "But," RABBI ABA SAID: "What I have said-that it is Yitzchak-is indeed so."

457. אַבְרָהָם, בְּגִין כְּרִכְתִּיב בִּיה כַּה יְהִיה זִרְעָךְ, זִרְעָךְ מִמֶּשׁ, וְאַתְּמִסֵּר לִיה ה"א. אֶתְחַבְּרוּ תְּרִין הַהִי"ן בְּחֶדָּא, וְאוֹלִידוּ לְעִילָא, וּמֵאִי דְנִפְק מִנִּיהוּ, הוּא יו"ד, בְּגִינִי כֵךְ, יו"ד אֶת רִישָׁא דְיִצְחָק, דְּכֵר. מִכָּאן שְׁאֵרֵי דְכוּרָא לְאַתְּפִשְׁטָא, וְעַל דְּאַכְתִּיב בִּי בְּיִצְחָק יִקְרָא לֶךְ זִרְע. בְּיִצְחָק, וְלֹא בֶךְ. יִצְחָק אוֹלִיד לְעִילָא, דְּכִתִּיב תֵּתִן אֱמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב. יַעֲקֹב אֲשֵׁלִים כָּלָא.

458. וְאִי תִימָא, וְכִי אַבְרָהָם בְּהֵאֵי אֶתְאַחִיד, וְלֹא יִתִּיר, וְהָא כְּתִיב חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם. אֶלָּא חוֹלְקָא דִּילִיה כֵךְ הוּא, בְּגִין דְּעֵבִיד חֶסֶד עִם בְּנֵי עֲלְמָא, אֲבַל לְאוֹלְדָא, הֵכָא אַחִיד, וּמֵהֵכָא שְׁאֵרֵי. וְעַל דְּאֵלָּא אֶתְגַּזֵּר אַבְרָהָם, אֶלָּא בֶן תְּשׁוּעִים וְתִשְׁעֵי שָׁנָה. וְרִזָּא דְּמִלָּה הָא אֶתְיִידַע, וְאוֹקִימָנָא, בְּמַתְּנִיתָא דִּילָן.

459. וּבְגִין כְּרִיִּצְחָק, דִּינָא קִשְׁיָא, נִפְק לְאַחֲרָא לְחוֹלְקִיה וְלְאוֹלְדָא וְחֶסֶד אֶקְרִי. וְעַל דְּאֵיִעֲקֹב אֲשֵׁלִים כָּלָא, מֵהֵאֵי סִטְרָא, וּמֵהֵאֵי סִטְרָא, מִסְטְרָא דְּאַחִידוּ אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק לְחוֹלְקִיהוֹן לְעִילָא, הוּא שְׁלִימוּתָא. מִסְטְרָא דְּאַתִּיחֵיב לְהוּ לְאוֹלְדָא מִתְּתָא לְעִילָא הוּא שְׁלִימוּתָא. וְעַל דְּאַכְתִּיב יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בֶּךְ אֶתְפָּאֵר. בִּיה אֶתְאַחִידוּ גּוֹוִנִין מְעִילָא וּמִתְּתָא.

460. וְעַל דְּאַכְתִּיב הֵכָא שִׁירָה, דְּכִתִּיב אֲשִׁירָה נָא לִידִידִי. שִׁירָה וְדָא, דְּהָא אֶקְרִי לְאוֹלְדָא, דְּכֵר, דְּהָא אֶקְרִי יִדִיד, עַד לֹא יִפּוֹק לְעֲלָמָא.

461. וְאִית דְּאִמְרִי, אֲשִׁירָה נָא לִידִידִי דָא אַבְרָהָם, כְּד"א מַה לִּידִידִי בְּבֵיתִי. וְאַבְרָהָם יִרִית יִרְוּתָא דְּאַחְסָנָת חוֹלְקָא דָא, אֲבַל מַה דְּאִמְיִנָא, דְּדָא יִצְחָק הֵכִי הוּא.

462. In the verse "A song of my beloved for his vineyard," my beloved refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, who is called "my beloved," as it is written: "My beloved is white and ruddy" (Shir Hashirim 5:10). When my friend is united with my beloved, he is a male. AND THEN, from this WITH THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT COLUMN OF BINAH, he planted a vineyard, WHICH IS MALCHUT AND NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "My beloved has a vineyard" (Yeshayah 5:1), BECAUSE MALCHUT IS CONSTRUCTED BY THE LEFT COLUMN OF BINAH.

463. In discoursing on the verse "a very fruitful hill (Heb. Keren Ben Shemen)," HE ASKS, "What is Keren Ben Shemen? AND HE REPLIED, "This is TO TEACH US how the vineyard came to be and how it was planted!" So he repeated, "by keren!" And what is the keren? This is, as it is written: "with the ram's horn (lit. 'with the horn [keren] of Yovel [Jubilee])" (Yehoshua 6:5), WHICH ALLUDES TO MALCHUT THAT IS SWEETENED BY BINAH. BECAUSE KEREN IS MALCHUT, WHILE THE YOVEL IS BINAH. And this Keren THAT APPEARS HERE has joined this male that is called Ben Shemen (lit. 'the Son of Oil'), WHICH IS ALSO BINAH. THE VERSE TEACHES US, THAT THE EMERGENCE AND PLANTING OF THE VINEYARD, MALCHUT, WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY ITS ASCENDING TO BINAH, WHICH IS MALE.

464. HE ASKED, "What is THE MEANING OF 'Ben Shemen' (the Son of Oil)?" AND HE RESPONDS, "This is the equivalent of the verse (Heb. ben or bar) a free man," WHICH MEANS BINAH. And both of them-BEN SHEMEN AND YOVEL-are the same thing, NAMELY BINAH. AND THIS IS CALLED Shemen (oil) because from there, BINAH, the oil and greatness is drawn for the purpose of lighting the candles. Thus, "the son of oil." And this Keren, WHICH IS MALCHUT, assembles them all, and this is ALSO CALLED, the Keren (horn) of the Yovel (Jubilee). Therefore, the kingship is anointed only by this horn, and the kingship of THE HOUSE OF David endures because he was anointed with the horn and was attached to it.

465. The verse continues with the words, "And he fenced it..." AND NOW HE EXPLAINS THIS VERSE, DESCRIBING HOW THE VINEYARD CAME FORTH AND WAS BORN BY KEREN BEN SHEMEN, OR, IN OTHER WORDS, BY ASCENDING TO BINAH. SO HE SAID: "And he fenced it," WHICH MEANS THAT HE RESTRICTED IT AND FENCED IT ALL AROUND, just like a ring that surrounds it from all directions. "And gathered out the stones thereof" MEANS THAT he removed all the great ones and all the governors and the lower crowns from his portion and his vineyard. Then He, NAMELY BINAH, took the vineyard to be his portion. THIS MEANS THAT IT CLUNG TO BINAH AND BECAME A PART OF BINAH, as it is written: "For Hashem's portion is His people; Ya'akov is the lot of His inheritance" (Devarim 32:9). BECAUSE AS MALCHUT HAS BECOME A PART OF BINAH, SO YISRAEL HAS BECOME A PART OF BINAH, BECAUSE THEY ARE ATTACHED TO IT.

466. The verse, "and planted it with the choicest vine" is similar to the verse "I had planted you a noble vine, an entirely (Heb. kuloh) right seed..." (Yirmeyah 2:21). It is written kuloh with the letter Hei. SO IT IS AS THOUGH IT WERE WRITTEN: KOL (ALL) HEI, WHICH MEANS ALL OF HEI, WHICH IS MALCHUT. And from this stage Avraham started to beget YITZCHAK above. THEREFORE HE SAYS: "and from here the 'right seed' issued-definitely "an entirely right seed," BECAUSE THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH IS CALLED RIGHT OR TRUTH. And as it is written: "So (Koh) shall your seed be," BECAUSE WHEN THE LEFT COLUMN SHINES IN MALCHUT, IT IS CALLED KOH. Thus, they are the same: "THE CHOICEST VINE," "THE RIGHT SEED," THE FATHERING OF YITZCHAK, AND "KOH SHALL YOUR SEED BE." THEY ALL REFER TO THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM BINAH. Happy is the lot of Yisrael, who receive such a great inheritance.

462. שִׁירַת דּוּדִי לְכַרְמּוֹ. הָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּאִקְרִי דּוּדִי. דְּכִתִּיב דּוּדִי צַח וְאֲדוּם, יְדִידִי אֲחִיד בְּדוּדִי, דְּכֵר. וּמִנִּיָּה אֲתַנְטַע בְּרָם, דְּכִתִּיב, בְּרָם הִיָּה לְיְדִידִי.

463. בְּקֶרֶן בֶּן שֶׁמֶן. מֵאֵי בְּקֶרֶן בֶּן שֶׁמֶן. אֵלָּא, בְּמָה נִמְיָק הָאֵי בְּרָם, וּבְמָה אֲתַנְטַע, חֲזֹר וְאָמַר בְּקֶרֶן. מֵאֵי קֶרֶן. דְּכִתִּיב בְּקֶרֶן הַיּוֹבֵל. בְּקֶרֶן הַיּוֹבֵל שְׁאֲרֵי. וְהָאֵי קֶרֶן אֲתַאֲחִיד בְּהוּא דְּכֵר, דְּאִקְרִי בֶּן שֶׁמֶן.

464. מַהוּ בֶּן שֶׁמֶן. כְּדִ"א בֶּן חוּרִין. וְתַרְוּמִיהוּ חֵד מְלָה, שֶׁמֶן דְּמִתְמָן נִגִיד מִשְׁחָא וּרְבּוּ, לְאֲדִלְקָא בּוֹצִינִין, וּבִגִין כְּרַבָּן שֶׁמֶן. וְדָא שֶׁמֶן וּרְבּוּ נִגִיד וּנְמִיק וְאֲדִלְקִי בּוֹצִינִין, עַד דְּנִטִּיל לִיה, וּכְנִישׁ לִיה, הָאֵי קֶרֶן, וְדָא אִקְרִי קֶרֶן הַיּוֹבֵל. בְּגִינֵי כֶךְ, לִית מְשִׁיחוּתָא דְּמַלְכוּתָא, אֵלָּא בְּקֶרֶן, וְעַל דְּאֲתַמְשֵׁךְ מַלְכוּתָא דְּדוּד, דְּאֲתַמְשֵׁךְ בְּקֶרֶן, וְאֲתַאֲחִיד בִּיה.

465. וְיַעֲזֻקְהוּ, בְּהָאֵי עֲזָקָא דְּאִסְתַּחֲר לְכָל סְטְרִין. וְיִסְקְלֵהוּ, דְּאִעֲדֵי מִנִּיָּה וּמַחֲוִלְקִיָּה, כָּל אֵינוֹן רַבְרָבִין, כָּל אֵינוֹן תְּרִיסִין, כָּל אֵינוֹן בְּתָרִין תְּתַאֲוִן, וְהוּא נְסִיב לִיה לְהָאֵי בְּרָם לְחֻלְקִיָּה, דְּכִתִּיב בִּי חֶלֶק ה' עִמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ.

466. וְיִטְעֵהוּ שׁוֹרֵק, כְּדִ"א וְאֲנָכִי נִטְעַתִּיךְ שׁוֹרֵק כֻּלָּה זֶרַע אֲמֵת. כֻּלָּה כְּתִיב בְּהִ"א. מִכָּאֵן שְׁאֲרֵי אֲבִרְהָם לְאֻלְדָּא לְעִילָא, וּמַהֲאֵי נִמְק זֶרַע אֲמֵת. כֻּלָּה זֶרַע אֲמֵת, וְדָאֵי, הֵינּוּ דְּכִתִּיב, כֹּה יִהְיֶה זֶרַעְךָ, וְכֻלָּא חֵד מְלָה. זִכְאָה חֻלְקֵהוּן דִּישְׂרָאֵל, דִּינְרֵתוֹ יִרְוּתָא קִדְשָׁא דָא.

467. The verse continues, "and built a tower in the midst of it." AND HE ASKS, "What is a tower?" AND HE RESPONDS, "This is as it is written: 'The name of Hashem is a strong tower, the righteous runs to it, and is safe'" (Mishlei 18:10). Assuredly, "the righteous runs to it."

468. The text, "and also made a winepress therein" refers to the "gate of righteousness," as it is written: "Open to me the gates of righteousness..." (Tehilim 118:19). AND HE ASKS, "What is the meaning OF THE VERSE 'OPEN TO ME THE GATES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS'?" AND HE ANSWERS, "Each person among Yisrael who is circumcised enters and merits them both, THIS IS WHY DAVID PLEADED, 'OPEN TO ME THE GATES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS' in order to merit them both.

469. He who offers his son for the sacrifice OF CIRCUMCISION brings his son to the Holy Name. And the heavens and earth are based upon this sign, as it is written: "If My covenant be not day and night, it were as if I had not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Yirmeyah 33:25). So our host has merited all this, AND HE HAD THE PRIVILEGE to see the Holy One, blessed be He, face to face on this day.

470. Happy is our lot that we have merited this day, and happy is your lot together with ours. And upon this boy that is born to you, I pronounce, "Everyone that is called by my name...I have formed him: yea, I have made him" (Yeshayah 43:7), and "And all your children shall be taught of Hashem..." (Yeshayah 54:13). Then he accompanied Rabbi Aba for three miles.

471. They said to RABBI ABA, "The host who made the ceremony, the owner of your guest house, has merited all this because he performed a precept!" He asked, "What is the precept?" Then that man, THE OWNER OF THE GUESTHOUSE, said: "My wife was the wife of my brother, who died childless. So I married her. And this is the first child that I got from her, and I named him after my dead brother." He said to him, "From now on you shall call him Iddi. He is Iddi the son of Ya'akov!" Rabbi Aba then blessed them and went on his way.

472. When he arrived at his destination, he told everything to Rabbi Elazar, but he was afraid to tell it in front of Rabbi Shimon, WHO MIGHT PUNISH THEM FOR REVEALING THE SECRETS. One day, while with Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Shimon said: "Why is it written: 'And Avram fell on his face and Elohim spoke with him, saying, as for Me, behold My covenant is with you'" (Beresheet 17:3-4). This means that as long as he was not circumcised, he fell on his face when He spoke with him. But after he was circumcised, he stood upright and was not afraid. "As for Me, behold My covenant is with you," MEANING THAT he found himself to be circumcised, AS THE WORDS OF HASHEM AFFECTED HIM AND HE BECAME CIRCUMCISED!

467. סופיה דקרא ויבן מגדל בתוכו. מהו מגדל. כד"א מגדל עז שם ה' בו ירוץ צדיק ונשגב, בו ירוץ צדיק ודאי.

468. וגם יקב חצב בו. דא תרעא דצדק, כד"א פתחו לי שערי צדק. מאי משמע, דכל בר ישראל דאתגזר, עייל בתריוויהו וזכי לתריוויהו.

469. ומאן דקריב בריה לקרבנא דא, עייל ליה בשמא קדישא, ועל את דא, מתקיימין שמיא וארעא. דכתיב אם לא בריתי יומם ולילה חקות שמים וארץ לא שמתי. והאי מאריה דהלולא דא, זכה לכלא, למחזי קודשא בריך הוא אנפין באנפין בהאי יומא.

470. זבאה חולקנא, דזכינא להאי יומא, וזבאה חולקך עמנא, והאי ברא דאתיליד לך קרינא עליה כל הנקרא בשמי וגו' יצרתיו אף עשיתיו. וכתיב וכל בנך למודי ה' וגו'. אוזמוה לרבי אבא תלת מילין.

471. אמרו ליה האי מאריה דהלולא אושפינך זכה לכולי האי, בגין דקיים קיומא דמצוה. אמר מאי היא. אמר ההוא גברא, דביתאי, אתת אחי הוות, ומית בלא בנים, ונסיבנא לה, ודא הוא ברא קדמא דהוה לי מנה, וקרינא ליה בשמא דאחי דאתפטר. אמרלומכאן ולהלאה קרי ליה אידי, והיינו אידי בר יעקב. בריך לון רבי אבא ואזיל לארחיה.

472. כד אתא, סדר מלין קמיה דר' אלעזר, ודחיל למימר לר' שמעון. יומא חד הוה קמיה דרבי שמעון, ואמר רבי שמעון, מאי דכתיב ויפל אברם על פניו וידבר אתו אלקים לאמר אני הנה בריתי אתך. משמע דער דלא אתגזר הוה נפיל על אנפוי, ומליל עמיה, בתר דאתגזר קאים בקיומיה ולא דחיל. אני הנה בריתי אתך, דאשכח גרמיה גזיר.

473. Rabbi Aba said to him, "I hope it will be pleasing in the eyes of my master for me to say a few of those good things that I have heard about this subject." He said to him: "Speak!" He said to him, "I am afraid that somebody might be punished because of me." Rabbi Shimon said: "Heaven forbid, 'He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed, trusting in Hashem'" (Tehilim 112:7). Rabbi Aba then told him every thing that had happened.

474. Rabbi Shimon said: "Could it be that all these good things were hidden in you and you did not reveal them! I hereby bring a decree upon you that for the next 30 days you shall immediately forget everything you learn! Is it not written: "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do it" (Mishlei 13.27)? And so it came to be THAT HE FORGOT EVERYTHING HE LEARNED! He, RABBI SHIMON, said: "I bring a decree that they with their learnings; REFERRING TO THE OWNER OF THE GUESTHOUSE AND HIS FRIENDS, be banished to Babylon, where they will stay among the friends THAT LIVE THERE.

475. Rabbi Aba's mind became confused. One day, Rabbi Shimon saw him and said: "The reflection of your heart can be seen in your face." RABBI ABA responded, "I am not sorrowful for myself, but for them, AS RABBI SHIMON PUNISHED THEM TO EXILE IN BABYLON. RABBI SHIMON THEN said: "Heaven forbid, that they were punished. Rather, because the secrets were revealed among them so openly, I BROUGHT A DECREE UPON THEM, that they be banished and be among the friends IN BABYLON, where they will learn to conceal and hide the secrets among them. Because the secrets should be revealed only among us, as the Holy One, blessed be He, gave permission to us. So through us only should these things be revealed."

476. Rabbi Yosi said: It is written: "Then shall your light break forth as the morning..." (Yeshayah 58:8). The Holy One, blessed be He, shall in the future declare to His children, "Then shall your light break forth as the morning, and your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you and the glory of Hashem shall be your rearguard."

473. אַמְרֵלֹר' אַבָּא, אִי נִיחָא קָמִיה דְּמַר דְּלִימָא קָמִיה, מְאִינוּן מְלִי מַעְלִייתָא דְּשִׁמְעָנָא בְּהָאִי, אַמְרֵלֹרֵימָא. אַמְרֵלֹדְחִילָנָא דְּלֵא יִתְעַנְשׁוּ עַל יְדָאִי. אַמְרֵלֹח' מְשִׁמוּעָה רַעָה לֹא יִירָא נְכוּן לְבוּ בְּטוּחַ בָּהּ. סָח לִיה עוֹבְדָא, וְסִדֵּר קָמִיה כָּל אִינוּן מְלִין.

474. אַמְרֵלֹוֹכִי כָּל הַיּוֹ מְלִי מַעְלִייתָא הוּוּ טְמִירִין גַּבְךָ, וְלֹא אִמְרַתְּ לָהּ. גּוֹזְרָנָא עֲלֶיךָ דְּכָל תְּלַתִּין יוֹמִין אֵלִין תְּלַעִי וְתַנְשִׁי. וְלֹא כְּתִיב אֶל תִּמְנַע טוֹב מִבְּעִלּוֹי בְּהִיּוֹת לֹאֵל יֶדְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת. וְכָךְ הוּא. אִמַּר, גּוֹזְרָנָא, דְּבִאֲוִרֵיתָא, דָּא יִגְלוֹן לְבָבֵל בֵּינֵי חֲבֵרִיָּא.

475. חָלַשׁ דַּעְתִּיה דְּרַבִּי אַבָּא, יוֹמָא חַד חָמָא לִיה רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, אַמְרֵלֹוֹטוּפְסָרָא דְּלִבְךָ בְּאַנְפְךָ שְׂכִיחַ, אַמְרֵלֹלָא עַל דִּידִי הוּא, אֶלָּא עַל דִּידֵּהּ. אַמְרֵלֹח' דְּאִתְעַנְשׁוּ, אֶלָּא בְּגִין דְּמִלִּין אֲתַגְלִיין בֵּינֵיהוּ כָּל כֶּךָ, יִגְלוֹן בֵּינֵי חֲבֵרִיָּא, יִלְפֹון אִינוּן אֲרַחִין, וְאֲתַבְּסִין מְלִין בְּגוֹוִיָּהּ. דָּהָא מְלִין לֹא אֲתַגְלִיין אֶלָּא בֵּינָנָא, דָּהָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא אֲסִתְכִים עֲמָנָא, וְעַל יְדָנָא אֲתַגְלִיין מְלִין.

476. אִמַּר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, כְּתִיב אֲזִי יִבְקַע כְּשַׁחַר אוֹרְךָ וגו'. זְמִין קִדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא לְאַכְרָזָא עַל בְּנוֹי, וְיִימָא, אֲזִי יִבְקַע כְּשַׁחַר אוֹרְךָ וְאַרְכְּתָךְ מְהֵרָה תַצְמַח וְהֵלֶךְ לְפָנֶיךָ צִדְקָךְ וְכְבוֹד ה' יֵאֲסֹפֵךְ.