

# 1. "And Hashem appeared to him"

There were numerous moments in history when the goal of eternal peace and unending happiness for all mankind was within reach. Both Adam and Noach had the opportunity to cause universal change and bring about endless fulfillment. The Zohar likens the path to permanent peace to the creation and care of a garden. Adam is compared to the force that causes rain water to fall upon and nourish the land, and Noah represents a person who manufactures the tools needed to tend the garden. The appearance of Avraham in our world corresponds to the force that influences the flowers to grow and blossom. Now that Avraham's name includes the additional letter Hei ?, signifying the ritual of circumcision, he is now prepared to receive the great Light of the Creator as expressed through the Tetragrammaton ????, one of the holy Names of the Creator that radiates His spiritual energy.

## The Relevance of this Passage

The path to personal peace is an arduous process that each of us must endure. We can, however, accelerate this process through our connection to this portion. The Light of the Creator fills our soul through the merit and power of Avraham. The energy channeled through our Patriarch nurtures our soul, inspiring us to seek higher levels of spiritual growth. The strength to blossom in all our spiritual endeavors is revealed through the Light of these verses.

1. Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion: IT IS WRITTEN: "The flowers appeared on the earth, the time of the singing of the birds has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land" (Shir Hashirim 2:12). "The flowers appeared on the earth," MEANS THAT when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He endowed the earth with appropriate powers, so that everything was in the earth BUT it did not produce any fruit until Adam was created. As soon as Adam was created, everything in the earth became visible, that is, the earth began to reveal the powers and products that were implanted within it. AND THEN IT WAS SAID: "THE FLOWERS APPEAR ON THE EARTH."

2. Similarly, the heavens did not give any powers to the earth until humankind appeared, as it is written: "And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet grown, for Hashem Elohim had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground" (Beresheet 2:5). All the offspring and products were concealed in the earth. They did not appear, and the heavens were prevented from pouring rain on the earth because humankind did not yet exist. Because it had not yet been created, the revelation of all things was delayed. As soon as humankind appeared, however, "The flowers appeared on the earth," and all the hidden and concealed powers were now revealed.

3. "...the time of the singing of the birds has come" MEANS THAT a recital was composed of songs and praises to the Holy One, blessed be He. This was not done before humankind was created, "...and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." This is the word of the Holy One, blessed be He, which did not exist in the world before humankind was created. But as soon as humankind appeared, everything appeared!

4. After Adam sinned, everything disappeared from the world, and the earth was cursed, as it is written: "cursed is the earth for your sake" (Beresheet 3:17), "When you till the ground, it shall not henceforth give its strength to you..." (Beresheet 4:12) and "thorns also and thistles it shall bring forth to you" (Beresheet 3:18).

ה

יהוה

1. רַבִּי חִיָּא פָּתַח, הַנֶּצְנִים נִרְאוּ בָּאָרֶץ עִתְּ הַזְמִיר הַגִּיעַ וְקוֹל הַתּוֹר נִשְׁמַע בְּאַרְצֵנוּ. הַנֶּצְנִים נִרְאוּ בָּאָרֶץ, כִּד בְּרָא קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּאֵעֲלָמָא, יְהִב בְּאַרְעָא כָּל חֵילָא דְאַתְחֲזִי לָהּ. וְכָלֹא הוּוּה בְּאַרְעָא, וְלֹא אִמִּיקַת אִיבִין בְּעֲלָמָא, עַד דְּאַתְבְּרִי אָדָם, בֵּינָן דְּאַתְבְּרִי אָדָם, כָּלֹא אִתְחֲזִי בְּעֲלָמָא, וְאַרְעָא גְּלִיַּאת אִיבָהָא, וְחִילָהָא דְאַתְפַּקְרוּ בָּהּ.

2. כַּגִּוּוֹנָא דָא, שְׁמַיִם לֹא יְהִיבוּ חֵילִין לְאַרְעָא, עַד דְּאַתָּא אָדָם. הַה"ד, וְכָל שִׁיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה טָרַם יְהִיָּה בָּאָרֶץ, וְכָל עֶשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טָרַם יִצְמַח, כִּי לֹא הִמְטִיר ה' אֱלֹקִים עַל הָאָרֶץ, וְאָדָם אֵין לְעֵבֶד אֶת הָאֲדָמָה. אִטְמְרוּ כָּל אֵינֹן תּוֹלְדִין וְלֹא אִתְגַּלּוּן, וְשִׁמְיָא אִתְעַבְּבוּ, דְּלֹא אִמְטִירוּ עַל אֲרַעָא, בְּגִין דְּאָדָם אֵין, דְּלֹא אִשְׁתַּכַּח, וְלֹא אִתְבְּרִי, וְכָלֹא אִתְעַבְּב בְּגִינִיהּ, בֵּינָן דְּאַתְחֲזִי אָדָם, מִיַּד הַנֶּצְנִים נִרְאוּ בָּאָרֶץ, וְכָל חֵיילִין דְּאַתְטְמְרוּ, אִתְגַּלְיָאוּ וְאַתִּיהִיבוּ בָּהּ.

3. עִתְּ הַזְמִיר הַגִּיעַ, דְּאַתְתַּקֵּן תְּקוּנָא דְּתוֹשְׁבָחָן לְזִמְרָא קְמִי קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מֵה דְּלֹא אִשְׁתַּכַּח עַד לֹא אִתְבְּרִי אָדָם. וְקוֹל הַתּוֹר נִשְׁמַע בְּאַרְצֵנוּ. דָּא מְלָה דְּקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּלֹא אִשְׁתַּכַּח בְּעֲלָמָא, עַד דְּאַתְבְּרִי אָדָם, בֵּינָן דְּאַשְׁתַּכַּח אָדָם כָּלֹא אִשְׁתַּכַּח.

4. בְּתֵר דְּחֻטָּא, כָּלֹא אִסְתַּלַּק מִעֲלָמָא, וְאַתְלִטָּא אֲרַעָא. הַה"ד אֲרוּרָה הָאֲדָמָה בְּעִבּוּרָךְ וְגו'. וְכִתִּיב כִּי תַעֲבֹד אֶת הָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִסֵּף תֵּת כֹּחָהּ לָךְ וְגו'. וְכִתִּיב וְקוֹץ וְדִרְדֵּר תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ.

5. When Noah appeared in the world, he prepared spades and hoes, WHICH MEANS THAT HE PREPARED TOOLS TO TILL THE GROUND. THUS, IT IS WRITTEN OF HIM: "THIS ONE SHALL COMFORT US FROM OUR WORK AND THE TOIL OF OUR HANDS..." (BERESHEET 5: 29). HE SHALL GIVE US TOOLS, SO THAT WE MAY BE FREED FROM PRODUCTION USING OUR BARE HANDS, FOR WHICH WE HAD BEEN DESTINED UNTIL NOW! Afterwards, however, "he drank of the wine, and was drunk; and he was uncovered within his tent" (Beresheet 9: 21). And later, the people of the world sinned before the Holy One, blessed be He. And the powers of the earth disappeared again. THUS, ALL THE IMPROVEMENTS OF NOACH WERE LOST. And so it remained until Avraham appeared.

6. As soon as Avraham appeared: "the flowers appeared on the earth." THIS MEANS THAT the powers of the earth were amended and revealed. "The time of the singing of the birds (also: 'pruning') has come," REFERRING TO THE TIME when the Holy One, blessed be He, told him to circumcise himself. THE TERM 'PRUNING' ALLUDES TO THE REMOVAL OF THE FORESKIN. Thus, the time was ripe for the covenant to appear in Avraham, MEANING when he was circumcised. Only then was the verse, "THE FLOWERS APPEARED..." fulfilled through him, and the word of the Holy One, blessed be He, was revealed openly to him. as it is written: "And Hashem appeared to him," AFTER HE WAS CIRCUMCISED.

7. Rabbi Elazar began TO EXPLAIN THAT this verse refers to events after the circumcision of Avraham. Before the circumcision, the Holy One, blessed be He, spoke to him only through the lower grade--SPOKE THROUGH "A VISION," WHICH REFERS TO THE NUKVA WHILE IT IS STILL AT THE STAGE OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT SIDE. AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AFTER THESE THINGS THE WORD OF HASHEM CAME TO AVRAM IN A VISION..." The upper grades were not attached to this grade, WHICH MEANS THAT THE UPPER GRADES OF ZEIR ANPIN WERE NOT ATTACHED TO THE NUKVA. As soon as Avraham was circumcised, "the flowers appeared on the earth." These are the lower grades, brought forth and established by the lower grade THAT IS CALLED "A VISION," SO THAT THEY MAY BE UNITED WITH ALL THE UPPER GRADES.

8. "The time of the singing of the birds (also: 'pruning') has come..." ALLUDES TO THE TIME OF PRUNING AND CUTTING OF THE BAD BRANCHES, WHICH ARE the branches of the foreskin, BECAUSE THIS KLIPAH WAS IN CHARGE BEFORE HE WAS CIRCUMCISED. THIS IS ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "A WHISPERER SEPARATES CLOSE FRIENDS" (MISHLEI 16:28). "...and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." This is the voice that comes from the innermost aspect of all. THE VOICE ALLUDES TO ZEIR ANPIN, AND THE INNERMOST ASPECT OF ALL IS IMA, FROM WHOM ZEIR ANPIN EMANATES AND COMES FORTH. So that voice, ZEIR ANPIN, is heard IN OUR LAND, WHICH IS THE NUKVA--MEANING THAT ZEIR ANPIN MATED WITH THE NUKVA BY THE MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) THAT WERE ELEVATED THROUGH THE PRECEPT OF CIRCUMCISION. And this is the voice that cuts the word into an utterance. THIS MEANS THAT IT HAS THE ABILITY TO ARTICULATE (LIT. 'CUT THE SPEECH'), thereby achieving its perfection.

9. Come and behold: as long as Avraham was not circumcised, only that grade dwelt upon him, as we explained--THAT IS, THE GRADE OF NUKVA WHILE SHE WAS CALLED "A VISION." But after he was circumcised, it is written: "And Hashem appeared to him!" But it is not mentioned to whom, because it is not written: 'And Hashem appeared to Avram'! AND HE ANSWERS: IF IT WERE WRITTEN, 'to Avram,' then what greater sort of praise would there be than that which existed before he was circumcised? Because even then it was written: "And Hashem appeared to Avram" (Beresheet 12: 7).

5. אַתָּא נַח וְתַקֵּן קַרְדּוּמִין וּפְצִירֵי בַעֲלָמָא. וּלְבַתֵּר וַיֵּשֶׁת מִן הַיֵּין וַיִּשְׁכַּר וַיִּתְּגַל בְּתוֹךְ אֹהֶלָה. אֶתּוּ בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא וַחֲבּוֹ קַמִּיָּה דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְאַסְתַּלְקוּ חִילִין דְאַרְעָא בְּמַלְקַדְמִין, וְהוּ קַיִימִי עַד דְאַתָּא אַבְרָהָם.

6. בֵּינָן דְאַתָּא אַבְרָהָם, מִיַּד הַנְּצָנִים נִרְאוּ בְּאַרְץ, אֲתַתְּקֵנוּ וְאַתְּגַלוּ כָּל חִילִין בְּאַרְעָא. עֵת הַזְּמִיר הִגִּיעַ, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְאַמֵּר לִיהּ קַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דִּיתְגַּזֵּר, בֵּינָן דְּמִטָּא הֵהוּא זְמַנָּא, דְּבִרְיָת, אֲשַׁתְּכַח בֵּיהּ בְּאַבְרָהָם, וְאַתְּגַזֵּר. בְּרִינָן אֲתַקְיִים בֵּיהּ, כָּל הָאִי קְרָא, וְאַתְּקִיִּים עֲלָמָא, וּמְלָה דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הוּא בְּאַתְּגַלְיָא בֵּיהּ, הֵה"ד וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה'.

7. רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר פִּתַּח, הָאִי קְרָא בְּתֵר דְאַתְּגַזֵּר אַבְרָהָם, דְּעַד לָא אֲתַגְזֵר לָא הוּא מְלִיל עַמִּיָּה, אֶלָּא מְגוּ דְרָגָא תַתָּא, וְדִרְגִין עֲלָאִין לָא הוּוּ קַיִימִי, עַל הֵהוּא דְרָגָא. בֵּינָן דְאַתְּגַזֵּר, מִיַּד הַנְּצָנִים נִרְאוּ בְּאַרְץ, אֵלִין דְרְגִין תַתָּאִין דְאַפִּיקַת וְאַתְּקִינַת הָאִי דְרָגָא תַתָּא.

8. עֵת הַזְּמִיר הִגִּיעַ אֵלִין עֲנֻפֵי דְעֶרְלָה. וְקוֹל הַתּוֹר נִשְׁמַע בְּאַרְצֵנוּ. דָּא קוֹל דְנִפְיָק מְגוּ הֵהוּא פְּנִימָא דְכָלָא, וְהֵהוּא קוֹל נִשְׁמַע, וְדָא קוֹל דְגִזֵּר מְלָה לְמַלְלָא וְעִבִיד לָהּ שְׁלִימוּ.

9. תָּא חֲזִי, דְּעַד לָא אֲתַגְזֵר אַבְרָהָם, לָא הוּא עֲלִיהּ, אֶלָּא הָאִי דְרָגָא בְּדָאמְרָן, בֵּינָן דְאַתְּגַזֵּר, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה'. לְמָאן, דִּהָא לָא כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אַבְרָם. דָּאִי לְאַבְרָם, מָאִי שְׂבַחָא הָכָא יִתִּיר, מִבְּקַדְמִיתָא עַד לָא אֲתַגְזֵר, דְכְּתִיב וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל אַבְרָם.

10. The words: "And Hashem appeared to him" contain a secret. THIS MEANS THAT HE APPEARED TO that grade that spoke to him. IN OTHER WORDS, ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, APPEARED TO HIM, NAMELY TO THE NUKVA. This had not happened before he was circumcised, WHEN THE NUKVA WAS STILL SEPARATED FROM ZEIR ANPIN. And now the voice THAT IS ZEIR ANPIN was revealed and was associated with speech, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, when He spoke with him. THUS, AVRAHAM BENEFITED FROM THE MATING OF MALE AND FEMALE, AND BECAME A CHARIOT FOR BOTH OF THEM. THEREFORE IT IS WRITTEN: "AND HASHEM APPEARED TO HIM," WHICH ALLUDES TO THE MATING OF MALE AND FEMALE.

11. The verse: "and he sat in the tent door" (Beresheet 18:1) says "and he," but does not identify "him." AND HE REPLIES: the verse reveals the wisdom that INDICATES THAT all the grades rested upon that lower grade after Avraham was circumcised. SO THE PHRASE TEACHES US THAT "AND HE," REFERRING TO THE NUKVA, "SAT IN THE TENT DOOR," AS SHE BECAME THE GATEWAY FOR ALL THE GRADES. Come and behold: "And Hashem appeared to him." This is the secret of the voice, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, that is heard and attached to the utterance (speech), NAMELY MALCHUT, and revealed through it.

12. In the verse: "and he sat in the tent door," THE WORDS, "AND HE" allude to the upper world, NAMELY IMA, that stands over him, REFERRING TO THE NUKVA, to shine upon him. THE NUKVA IS DESCRIBED AS "THE TENT DOOR," BECAUSE SHE HAS BECOME THE GATEWAY FOR THE LIGHTS. THE WORDS, "in the heat of the day," MEAN THAT the right side, WHICH IS CHESED, shone. This is the grade to which Avraham cleaved. Another explanation of "in the heat of the day" IS THAT IT REFERS TO the time when one grade approached another with great passion, AS ZEIR ANPIN APPROACHED THE NUKVA. THEN THEY WERE DESCRIBED BY THE WORDS: "IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY."

13. In explaining the words, "appeared to him," Rabbi Aba said that before Avraham was circumcised, he was blocked FROM RECEIVING THE SUPERNAL LIGHTS. As soon as he was circumcised, everything appeared, INCLUDING ALL THE LIGHTS, AS HIS COVER WAS REMOVED. And the Shechinah rested upon him in full perfection, as should properly be. Come and behold. IT IS WRITTEN: "and he sat in the tent door." "He" refers to the upper world, TO BINAH, that rests upon the lower world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. HE ASKS: When DOES BINAH REST UPON THE NUKVA? AND HE REPLIES: THIS IS WHY THE VERSE CONCLUDES WITH "in the heat of the day"--when the passion of a certain righteous, WHO IS THE YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, is aroused to rest IN THE LOWER WORLD, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. THAT IS, WHEN THERE IS A MATING BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE, THEN THE MOCHIN OF BINAH DWELL WITHIN THE NUKVA.

14. Immediately AFTER THE MATING OF MALE AND FEMALE WAS COMPLETED, IT IS WRITTEN: "And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him..." (Beresheet 18: 2) AND HE ASKS: Who are these three men? AND HE SAYS: They are Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov-- OR CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN THAT ARE NAMED AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, AND YA'AKOV. AND HE SAW THEM standing over that grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and from them the Nukva draws sustenance and nourishment.

10. אֵלָא, רָזָא סְתִימָא אִיהוּ, וִירָא אֱלִיּוֹ ה'. לְהֵהוּא דְרָגָא דְמַלְיִל עֲמִיָּה, מַה דְלֵא הוּהּ מְקַדְמַת דְנָא, עַד דְלֵא אֲתַגְזֹר. דְהִשְתָּא, אֲתַגְלִי קוֹל, וְאֲתַחְבֵּר בְּדַבּוּר, בְּד מַלְיִל עֲמִיָּה.

11. וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל. וְהוּא, וְלֹא גְלִי מֵאֵן. אֵלָא, הֵכָא גְלִי חֲכֻמָּתָא, דְכָלְהוּ דְרָגִין שְׂרוּ עַל הָאִי דְרָגָא תַתָּא, בְּתַר דְאֲתַגְזֹר אֲבִרְהָם. תָּא חֲזִי, וִירָא אֱלִיּוֹ ה'. דָּא הוּא רָזָא דְקוֹל דְאֲשַׁתְמַע, דְאֲתַחְבֵּר בְּדַבּוּר, וְאֲתַגְלִי בִיָּה.

12. וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל. דָּא עֲלֻמָּא עֲלָאָה, דְקָאִים לֹאֲנַהֲרָא עֲלִיָּה. בְּחוּם הַיּוֹם. דְהָא אֲתַנְהִיר יְמִינָא, דְרָגָא דְאֲבִרְהָם אֲתַדְבֵּק בִּיָּה. דְבַר אַחֲרִכְחוּם הַיּוֹם. בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְאֲתַקְרִיב דְרָגָא לְדְרָגָא, בְּתִיאֻבְתָּא דְדָא לְקַבֵּל דָּא.

13. וִירָא אֱלִיּוֹ. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, עַד לֹא אֲתַגְזֹר אֲבִרְהָם, הוּהּ אָטִים. פִּינּוֹן דְאֲתַגְזֹר, אֲתַגְלִי כְלָא, וְשָׂרָא עֲלִיָּה שְׂכִינְתָּא בְּשְׁלִימוֹ בְּדָקָא יָאוּת. תָּא חֲזִי. וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל. וְהוּא: דָּא עֲלֻמָּא עֲלָאָה, דְשְׂרִי עַל הָאִי עֲלֻמָּא תַתָּא, אִימְתִי, בְּחוּם הַיּוֹם. בְּזִמְנָא דְתִיאֻבְתָּא דְחַד צְדִיק לְמִשְׁרֵי בִיָּה.

14. מִיָּד, וַיֵּשֶׁא עֵינָיו וִירָא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עֲלָיו, מֵאֵן אִינוּן שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים. אֱלִיּוֹן אֲבִרְהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, דְקִיּוּמֵי עֲלִיָּה דְהָאִי דְרָגָא, וּמְנִיָּהּ יִנִּיק וְאֲתַזֵּן.

15. And then: "when he saw them, he ran to meet them," because the passionate desire of the lower grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, is to cleave to CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. And Her joy is to be drawn toward them. SO, ACCORDINGLY, "HE RAN TO MEET THEM" IS SAID ABOUT THE NUKVA THAT WANTED TO CLING TO THEM. THE VERSE CONTINUES, "and bowed himself toward the ground," to become and be formed into a throne for them--SO THAT THE NUKVA BECOMES A THRONE FOR CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, SO THAT THEY MAY REST UPON HER, AS A PERSON SITS ON A CHAIR.

16. Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, made King David, WHO IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, one of the legs of the supernal throne, like the patriarchs. AND HE ASKS: Even though She is a throne for THE PATRIARCHS, HOW CAN IT BE SAID THAT SHE WAS SET AT THE SAME LEVEL WITH THE PATRIARCHS TO COMPLETE THE FOURTH LEG OF THE THRONE? AND HE ANSWERS: This is so only when She is united with them for the purpose of being a leg of the supernal throne. King David received the kingdom of Yisrael in Chevron for seven years for this reason--to be united with CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. This has already been explained.  
Tosefta (addendum)

17. Of the verse, "And Hashem appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre" (Bereshheet 18:1), HE ASKS: Why by the terebinths of Mamre and not in any other place? AND HE REPLIES: Because Mamre gave him good advice about being circumcised. When the Holy One, blessed be He, told Avraham to circumcise himself, Avraham consulted his friends. Aner told him: You are more than 90 years old, and you shall pain yourself.

18. Mamre, HOWEVER, said to him: Do not forget the day when the Chaldeans threw you into the furnace of fire and famine took over the world, as it is written: "And there was a famine in the land, and Avram went down into Egypt" (Bereshheet 12: 10). And you smote all those kings that YOUR MEN pursued. And the Holy One, blessed be He, saved you from them all, so that nobody could do you any harm. So rise and fulfill the precept of your Master. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to MAMRE: You advised him to perform the circumcision. By your life! I shall reveal Myself to him only in your chamber. This is why it is written: "by the terebinths of Mamre."

15. כִּדִּין וַיֵּרָא וַיֵּרֶץ לִקְרָאתָם. דִּתְיֹאבֶּתָא דִּהָא דִּרְגָא תַתָּא, לְאַתְחַבְּרָא בְּהוּ, וְחֲדוּתָא דִּילָהּ, לְאַתְמַשְׁכָּא אֲבִתְרֵיהוּ. וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה. לְאַתְתַּקְנָא כְּרִסְיָא לְגַבְיָהּ.

16. תָּא חַזִּי, עֲבֵד קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְדָרֹד מַלְכָּא, חֵד סַמְכָא מְכַרְסִיָּא עֲלָא, כְּאַבְהֵן. וְאַף עַל גְּבִדְאֵיהוּ כְּרִסְיָא לְגַבְיָהּ, אֲבָל, בְּזִמְנָא דִּאֲתַחַבְּרָא בְּהוּ, אִיהוּ חֵד סַמְכָא, לְאַתְתַּקְנָא בְּכַרְסִיָּא עֲלָא. וּבְגִין כֵּן, נָטַל מַלְכוּתָא בְּחִבְרוֹן, דְּוֹד מַלְכָּא, שְׂבַע שָׁנִין, לְאַתְחַבְּרָא בְּהוּ. וְהָא אֲתָמַר.

תּוֹסֶפֶת  
17. וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה' בְּאֵלוֹנֵי מִמְרָא. אֲמַאי בְּ אֵלוֹנֵי מִמְרָא, וְלֹא בְּאַתֵּר אַחֵרָא. אֵלָּא, בְּגִין דִּיהִיב לִיה עֵיטָא, עַל גְּזִירוֹ דִּקְוִימָא דִּילִיה. בְּשַׁעֲתָא דִּאֲמַר קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַבְרָהָם לְמַגְזֵר, אֲזַל אֲבְרָהָם לִימְלָךְ עִם חֲבֵרָיו, אָמַר לִיה עֵנִי, אֲנִי בֶן תְּשַׁעִין שָׁנִין וְאַתָּה מַעִיק גְּרַמֵּךְ.

18. אֲמַר לוֹ מִמְרָא, דְּכִרְתָּ יוֹמָא דִּרְמוֹ לָךְ בְּשַׁדְּאֵי בְּאַתּוֹן דְּנוֹרָא. וְהוּא כִּפְנָא דְּעֵבֵר עַל עֲלֻמָּא, דְּכִתִּיב וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ וַיֵּרֶד אֲבָרָם מִצְרִימָה. וְאִינוּן מַלְכִין דִּרְדְּפוּ בְּתִרְיָהּ, וּמַחִית יִתְהוּן, וְקִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא שׁוֹבֵינָן מִכָּלָּא, וְלֹא יָכִיל בְּרִי נֶשׁ לְמַעַבְדָּא לָךְ בִּישׁ. קוּם עֲבִיד פְּקוּדָא דְּמִרְךָ. אֲמַר לוֹ קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא: מִמְרָא. אֲנִי יְהִבְתָּ לִּיה עֵיטָא לְמַגְזֵר, חֲוִיךָ, לִית אָנָּא מִתְגַּלִּי עֲלִיה אֵלָּא בְּמַלְטְרִין דִּילָךְ, הֵה"ד בְּאֵלוֹנֵי מִמְרָא (עַד כָּאן).

2. The soul, when it rises from earth to heaven

The Zohar presents the spiritual significance behind the Torah story and speaks of Avraham sitting under a hot, blazing sun when three people come to visit him. The blazing sun is a metaphor for the immense Light of the Creator revealed through the divine instrument of the Tetragrammaton and correspondingly, through the words of the Zohar.

The Relevance of this Passage

The phrase blazing sun indicates that an extraordinary amount of spiritual Light is suddenly being revealed in this specific section of the Torah. This concept can be understood through the analogy of a light bulb. A bulb glows at a constant level of illumination. Just before the bulb burns out, however, there is a momentary burst of added light. The Zohar is our instrument to capture the intense spark of Light that is momentarily shining forth in this specific verse of the Torah.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

19. The sages began their interpretation of this passage WITH THE VERSE: "Your oils are fragrant. For your flowing oil you are renowned" (Shir Hashirim 1:3). Our sages have taught that when the soul of a human being rises from earth to heaven, REFERRING TO THE TIME WHEN A PERSON SLEEPS AT NIGHT, it stands in the Divine Illumination. The Holy One, blessed be He, visits it.

20. Come and listen: Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said: When the soul of a righteous person stands in the place where the Shechinah of His blessed Glory rests--MEANING THAT IT IS WORTHY OF RECEIVING THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF 'STANDING UPRIGHT,' and is worthy of sitting by Her, TO RECEIVE THE GARMENT OF CHASSADIM, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF 'SITTING'--The Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, calls upon the patriarchs, WHO ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, HIS THREE COLUMNS. And He says to them: Go and visit so-and-so, the righteous person who has come, and welcome him in peace in My Name. THIS MEANS THAT THE THREE COLUMNS SHOULD PASS ON THE ILLUMINATION OF THE MATING, WHICH IS CALLED PEACE. THE WORDS "IN MY NAME" REFER TO THE NUKVA. And they claim it is not proper for a father to go and visit his child, but rather the child should seek after his father to see him.

21. The Holy One, blessed be He, then calls upon Ya'akov and says to him: You, who suffered the sorrow of RAISING children, go and welcome so-and-so, the righteous person who has come here, and I shall go along with you, as it is written: "those who seek your face Ya'akov, Selah" (Tehilim 24: 6). It does not say "seek" in the singular, but in the plural, BECAUSE IT REFERS TO THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS WHO YA'AKOV WELCOMES AS THEY SEEK HIS "WELCOME." Rabbi Chiya said: This we understand from the first part of the verse. as it is written: "This is the generation of them that seek him," WHICH TEACHES US THAT THE INTENTION OF THE VERSE ALLUDES TO THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, THW SEEKERS NAMELY, THE LEADERS OF THE GENERATION.

22. Rabbi Ya'akov said in the name of Rabbi Chiya: Ya'akov, the patriarch, is the Throne of Glory. And the teachings of Eliyahu also state: Ya'akov the patriarch is a Throne by himself, as it is written: "Then will I remember my covenant with Ya'akov" (Vayikra 26: 42). The Holy One, blessed be He, established a covenant with Ya'akov alone, more than THE COVENANT HE ESTABLISHED with all his fathers. He made him a Throne of Glory FOR HIS DIVINE PRESENCE TO REST UPON, distinguishing him from his predecessors. AND THE REASON IS THAT HIS FOREFATHERS, WHO ARE AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, ARE NOT ABLE TO SHINE WITHOUT HIM. THEREFORE, HE IN HIMSELF INCLUDES THEIR LIGHTS AS WELL AS HIS OWN, AND THUS BECOMES A THRONE TO HIMSELF.

23. Rabbi Eliezer was sitting and studying Torah when Rabbi Akiva arrived. He said to him: Sir, what are you studying? He replied: The passage where it is written: "and to make them inherit the throne of glory" (I Shmuel 2:8) --what does "and to make them inherit the throne of glory" mean? This is Ya'akov, the patriarch for whom he made a Throne of Glory by himself that would receive Torah for the souls of the righteous.

מדרש הנעלם

19. רבנן פתחי בהאי קרא, לריח שמניך טובים שמן תורק שמך וגו'. ת"ר האי נשמתא דבר אינש, בשעתא דסלקא מארעא לרקיעא, וקיימא בההוא זיהרא עלאה דאמרן, קודשא בריך הוא מבקר לה.

20. ת"ש. אמר רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, כל נשמתא דצדיקיא, כיון דקיימא באתר שכינתא יקרא, דחזיא למיתב, קודשא בריך הוא קרי לאבהתא, ואמר לון, זילו ובקרו לפלגיא צדיקא דאתא, ואקדימו ליה שלמא, מן שמי. ואינון אמרין, מארי עלמא, לא אתחזי, לאבא למיזל למיחמי לברא, ברא אתחזי למיחמי, ולמחזי, ולמתבע לאבוי.

21. והוא קרי ליעקב, ואמר ליה, אנת דהוה לך צערא דבנין, זיל וקביל פני דפלגיא צדיקא דאתא הקא, ואנא איזיל עמך. הה"ד מבקשי פניך יעקב סלה. מבקש לא נאמר, אלא מבקשי. אמר רביחייא, מרישיה דקרא משמע דכתיב זה דור דורשיו וגו'.

22. אמר רבייעקב אמר רביחייא, יעקב אבינו הוא כסא הכבוד. וכן תאנא דבי אליהו, יעקב אבינו הוא כסא בפני עצמו, דכתיב, וזכרתי את בריתי יעקב, ברית כרת קודשא בריך הוא ליעקב לברו, יותר מכל אבותיו, דעביד ליה כסא הכבוד בר מן קדמאה.

23. רבי אליעזר הוה יתיב, והוה לעי באורייתא. אתא לגביה, ר' עקיבא, אמר ליה, במאי קא עסיק מר. אמר לו בהאי קרא דכתיב וכסא כבוד ינחילם. מהו כסא כבוד ינחילם. זה יעקב אבינו, דעביד ליה כרסי יקר בלחודוי, לקבלא אולפן נשמתא דצדיקיא.

24. And the Holy One, blessed be He, goes with YA'AKOV on the first day of every month. And when the soul sees the glory of the mirror, which is the Shechinah of ??? Master, THEN THE SOUL praises Him and bows down in front of the Holy One, blessed be He. This is THE MEANING OF "Bless Hashem, my soul..." (Tehilim 104:1)

25. Rabbi Akiva said: The Holy One, blessed be He, stands over THE SOUL. And the soul begins by saying: "Hashem my Elohim, You are very great..." continuing with all the verses to the end, as the passage reads, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth..." (Ibid. 35)

Rabbi Akiva continued: As well as this, it praises the Holy One, blessed be He, thanks Him for the body that is left in this world, and says: "Bless Hashem, my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name" (Tehilim 103: 1). THE WORDS, "ALL THAT IS WITHIN ME," ALLUDE TO THE BODY. AT FIRST, THE SOUL PRAISES AND THANKS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, FOR ITS OWN ACHIEVEMENTS. THEN IT SAYS: "BLESS HASHEM, MY SOUL! HASHEM MY ELOHIM, YOU ARE VERY GREAT." AND THEN IT PRAISES AND THANKS HIM FOR THE BODY, MEANING THAT THE SPLENDOR OF THE SOUL IS DRAWN DOWNWARD TO SHINE UPON THE BODY. AND THEN IT SAYS: "BLESS HASHEM, MY SOUL, AND ALL THAT IS WITHIN ME, BLESS HIS HOLY NAME." THESE PRAISES ARE OFFERED FOR THE LIGHT OF THE BODY.

26. And the Holy One, blessed by He, goes ALONG WITH YA'AKOV. How do we know this? From the passage where it is written: "And Hashem appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre." This is Ya'akov, WHO IS CALLED MAMRE. SO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, DID INDEED GO WITH YA'AKOV. AND HE ASKS: Wherefore is the name Mamre? AND HE ANSWERS: Because Ya'akov inherited two hundred worlds in Eden, and he is the Throne BECAUSE HE BECAME THE THRONE OF GLORY. And Rabbi Yitzchak explains: The numerical value OF Mamre is 281. So there are the two hundred of Eden WHICH YA'AKOV ATTAINED, as it is written: "and those that guard the fruit thereof two hundred," (Shir Hashirim 8:12) and 81 is the numerical value of Kise ('throne'). THUS, MAMRE'S NUMERICAL VALUE OF 281 COMES FROM THE TWO HUNDRED WORLDS OF EDEN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH THAT IS CALLED EDEN, AND FROM THE THRONE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM THAT CLOTHE CHOCHMAH. For this reason IT IS SAID: "And Hashem appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre." And for this reason, YA'AKOV is called Mamre. HE INCLUDES THE ASPECT OF EDEN AND THE ASPECT OF THE THRONE TOGETHER, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF MAMRE. HENCE "AND HASHEM APPEARED TO HIM."

27. Rabbi Yehuda asked: What is the meaning of: "by the terebinths" (Heb. elonei)? IF MAMRE IS YA'AKOV, WHY DOES IT SAY "THE TEREBINTHS OF MAMRE?" AND HE ANSWERS: It meant to say 'his might,' as it is written: "by the hands of the mighty one of Ya'akov" (Bereshheet 49:24). THUS, "THE TEREBINTHS OF MAMRE" BEARS RESEMBLANCE TO "THE MIGHTY YA'AKOV," BECAUSE ELONEI MEANS MIGHTY AND STRONG, AND MAMRE IS YA'AKOV. The verse, "and he sat in the tent door" is as it is written: "Hashem, who (Heb. mi) shall abide in Your tabernacle (or: 'tent')." (Tehilim 15:1) THIS MEANS THAT THE "TENT DOOR" IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE COVERED CHASSADIM. The verse, "in the heat of the day" is as written: "But to you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings" (Malachi 3:20). THIS REFERS TO THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT COLUMN. AND THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM, WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS A 'SUN COMING OUT OF ITS SHEATH' BECAUSE THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH DOES NOT SHINE WITHOUT THE SHEATH OF CHASSADIM. AND WHEN IT DOES SHINE WITHOUT CHASSADIM, IT BURNS. ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY," IS

24. וְקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲזִיל עִמּוּהּ, בְּכָל רִישׁ יָרַח וְיָרַח. וְכֹד חֲמִי נִשְׁמַתָּא, יְקָר אֶסְפִּקְלִירָא שְׂכִינְתָּא דְּמֵאֲרִיָּה, מְבָרַכְתָּ וְסִגְדַת קִמִּי קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, הָה"ד בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי וּגּו'.

25. אָמַר רַבִּיעֲקִיבָא, קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא קָאִים עֲלוּהִי, וְנִשְׁמַתָּא פִּתַּח וְאָמַר, ה' אֱלֹקֵי גְדֻלַּת מְאֹד וּגּו', כָּל הַפְּרָשָׁה עַד סִיוְמָא, דְּקָאמַר יִתְמּו חֲטָאִים וּגּו'. וְעוֹד אָמַר רַבִּיעֲקִיבָא, וְלֹא דָא בְּלַחְדּוּ, אֱלֹא, מִשְׁבַּחַת לִיָּהּ, עַל גּוֹפָא דְּאִשְׁתָּאָר בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין, וְאָמַר בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת ה' וְכָל קְרַבִּי וּגּו'.

26. וְקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲזִיל. מִנָּא לָן הָאִי. מֵהָאִי קָרָא דְּכִתְיִב, וְיָרָא אֱלִיו ה' בְּאֵלּוֹנֵי מַמְרָא, זֶה יַעֲקֹב. מֵהוּ מַמְרָא. מִשּׁוּם דְּאַחֲסִין מֵאֲתָן עֲלֵמִין מַעֲרָן, וְהוּא כְּסָא. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מַמְרָא בְּגִימְטְרִיא מֵאֲתָן וְתַמְנִין וְחָד, הוּא מֵאֲתָן דְּעֲרָן, דְּכִתְיִב וּמֵאֲתָנִים לְנוֹטְרִים אֶת פְּרִיו, וְתַמְנִין וְחָד, דְּהוּא כְּסָא. וּבְגִין כְּרִאתְקָרִי וְיָרָא אֱלִיו ה' בְּאֵלּוֹנֵי מַמְרָא. וְעַל שׁוּם דָּא, נִקְרָא מַמְרָא.

27. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, מֵהוּ בְּאֵלּוֹנֵי. ר"ל תּוֹקֶפּוּי, הָה"ד אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב. וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב פִּתַּח הָאֵהָל. הָה"ד ה' מִי יִגּוֹר בְּאֵהָלָךְ וּגּו'. כַּחוֹם הַיּוֹם. דְּכִתְיִב, וְזִרְחָה לָכֶם יִרְאִי שְׁמִי שֶׁמֶשׁ צִדְקָה וּמִרְפָּא בְּכַנְפֶּיהָ.

WHEN THE WICKED ARE CONDEMNED BY IT. BUT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE HEALED BY IT BECAUSE THEY ELEVATE THE MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) AND DRAW DOWN THE CHASSADIM IN ORDER TO CLOTHE CHOCHMAH.

28. Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai said: At that time, WHEN THE SOUL IS AT THE STAGE OF "THE HEAT OF THE DAY," the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, SHARES HIS ABUNDANCE WITH THE SOUL. And when the patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov, heard the Holy One, blessed be He, REFERRING TO THE ENTIRETY OF ZEIR ANPIN, move towards THE SOUL--MEANING THAT THE PATRIARCHS WERE AWARE THAT THE SOUL WAS IN THE STATE OF "THE HEAT OF THE DAY," AND IN NEED OF THE "PLACE OF THE CLOTHING OF CHASSADIM"--they asked Ya'akov to go with them and welcome THE SOUL in peace.

29. And AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK stand over THE SOUL. THIS MEANS THAT AFTER YA'AKOV SHARED THE ABUNDANCE OF CHASSADIM BY WELCOMING IT WITH PEACE, THE TWO COLUMNS OF AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK SHONE UPON IT. As it is written: "And he lifted up his eyes and looked"-- REFERRING TO THE SOUL--"and lo, three men stood over him." The "three men" are the patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov, who stood by him, observing the soul and the good deeds it has performed. THIS MEANS THAT THEY EXAMINE THE MAYIN NUKVIN ('FEMALE WATERS') OF THE SOUL AND SHARE WITH IT THE MAYIN DUCHRIN ('MALE WATERS'). "...and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground," because he saw the Shechinah of His Blessed Glory with them. Hence, it is written: "...therefore do the young maidens love you" (Shir Hashirim 1:3).

30. Another explanation of: "And Hashem appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre." The sages began with this verse that speaks of the time of one's demise. We learned that Rabbi Yehuda said that at the time of a person's death, which is the day of the Great Judgment when the soul is separated from the body, no one leaves the world before he sees the Shechinah, as it is written: "...for no man shall see me and live" (Shemot 33: 20). And three ministering angels accompany the Shechinah to welcome the soul of the righteous, as it is written: "And Hashem appeared to him...in the heat of the day." This is the Day of Judgment that burns like a furnace in order to separate the soul from the body.

28. אָמַר רַבֵּן יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זַכַּי, בְּהֵימָא שְׁעֵתָא אָזִיל קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּבְגִין דְּשִׁמְעִין אֲבֹהֵתָא אֲבֹרָהּ וַיִּצְחָק, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אָזִיל לְגַבִּיָּה, תְּבַעֲיָן מִן יַעֲקֹב לְמִיזֵל עֲמֵהוּן, וְלֹאקְדָּמָא לִיהּ שְׁלָם.

29. וְאִינוּן קִיּוּמִין עֲלוּהִי. מִמָּאִי. דְּכִתִּיב, וַיֵּשֶׁא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו. שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים: אֱלֹוִן אֲבֹהֵתָא, אֲבֹרָהּ יִצְחָק וַיַּעֲקֹב, דְּקִיּוּמִין עֲלוּהִי, וְחָמוּ עוֹבְדִין טָבִין דְּעֵבְרִין. וַיֵּרָא וַיִּרְץ לְקִרְאָתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֵהָל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה. מְשׁוּם דְּחָמִי שְׂכִינַת יִקְרָא עֲמֵהוּן. הֵה"ד, עַל כֵּן עֲלָמוֹת אֵהָבוּן.

30. דְּבַר אַחֵר, וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹוִי ה' בְּאֵלוּנֵי מַמְרָא. רַבֵּן פְּתַחֵי בְּהַאי קְרָא, בְּשַׁעַת פְּטִירְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם. דְּתַנּוּא, אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, בְּשַׁעַת פְּטִירְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם, הוּא יוֹם הַדִּין הַגָּדוֹל, שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה מִתְּפַרֶּדֶת מִן הַגּוֹף. וְלֹא נִפְטָר אָדָם מִן הָעוֹלָם, עַד שְׂרוּאָה אֶת הַשְּׂכִינָה. הֵה"ד, כִּי לֹא יֵרָאֵי הָאָדָם וְחִי. וּבִאִין עִם הַשְּׂכִינָה שְׁלֹשָׁה מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת, לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָתוֹ שֶׁל צְדִיק. הֵה"ד וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹוִי ה' וְגו'. בְּחוּם הַיּוֹם. זֶה יוֹם הַדִּין הַבּוֹעֵר בְּתַנּוּר, לְהַפְרִיד הַנֶּשְׁמָה מִן הַגּוֹף.

### 3. The soul at the time of death

During sleep and upon death of a righteous individual, the soul travels a certain course as it ascends to the Upper Worlds. If the soul is righteous, it is welcomed to the Upper Worlds by the Patriarchs, specifically Ya'akov.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The return of the soul to its original source is vital. It is through this process that the Creator absorbs the souls, which allows them to be born anew each morning. This otherworldly journey occurs each night, whether or not we are cognizant of it. An individual's degree of awareness, however, and their personal level of spirituality [righteousness] determines the particular course the soul travels and the heights it can attain. The higher the soul ascends is directly proportionate to the measure of Light it receives. This portion awakens a deeper awareness of the Light our soul can achieve if it is righteous, as well as the ability to ascend to greater heights and receive greater revelations of spiritual energy during sleep.

31. The verse, "and he lifted up his eyes, and looked, and lo, three men stood by him," refers to those who criticize his behavior and examine his deeds as he confesses them with his mouth. And because the soul sees all this, it leaves the body and reaches the gullet (pharynx), where it remains until it confesses and retells all that the body did together with it in this world. Then the soul of the righteous is happy with what it has done, and is happy with its deposit. We have learned that Rabbi Yitzchak said: The soul of the righteous feels great desire for the moment when it shall leave this world, which is worthless, so that it may enjoy itself in the world to come!

31. וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים. הַמְּבַקְרִים מַעֲשָׂיו מִה שֶׁעָשָׂה, וְהוּא מוֹדֶה עֲלֵיהֶם בְּמִיּוֹ. וְכִיוֹן שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה רוֹאָה כֵּךְ, יוֹצֵאת מִן הַגּוֹף, עַד פֶּתַח בֵּית הַבְּלִיעָה, וְעוֹמֶדֶת שָׁם, עַד שֶׁמְתוּדָה, כָּל מֵה שֶׁעָשָׂה הַגּוֹף עִמָּהּ, בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. וְאִזּוֹ נִשְׁמַת הַצַּדִּיק, הִיא שְׂמִיחָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂיהָ, וְשְׂמִיחָה עַל פְּקֻדָּתָהּ. דִּתְאָנָא, אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, נִשְׁמָתוֹ שֶׁל צַדִּיק מִתְאַדָּה, אֵימָתִי תֵצֵא מִן הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא הַבֶּל, כְּדִי לִהְיוֹת עוֹנֵג בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

#### 4. When Rabbi Eliezer became ill

The Zohar recounts the death of Rabbi Eliezer, the teacher and master of Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Akiva was the teacher and master of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the author of The Zohar. When a righteous soul departs this world, he reveals his greatest amount of Light and energy. This Light is the total accumulation of his spiritual accomplishments during his lifetime. In addition, the Light that Rabbi Eliezer was unable to reveal during his lifetime, also became manifest at the moment of his passing. Sadly, Rabbi Akiva was not present when his Master left this world. The grief Rabbi Akiva endured was twofold: first for the physical loss of Rabbi Eliezer, and second, for the potential volume of Light that would not be revealed to mankind. It is this unrevealed Light that gives the force of darkness a stronger hold on the world. Rabbi Akiva's pain was for the repercussions of this increased darkness and the suffering mankind would inevitably endure. Kabbalistically, the pain experienced by a devout person serves as a Vessel to draw Light, a counterbalance that arouses the positive energy of the Creator in our physical world.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

All of our deeds and behavioral actions in this physical realm of existence, bear positive and negative repercussions, both personally and globally. By raising our consciousness towards the importance of positive deeds, and the potential of positive deeds left unfinished, this portion stimulates personal change in order to reveal greater spiritual Light. Our own vessel is expanded by connecting to Rabbi Akiva's pain for the lack of Light in our present world.

32. The sages discussed the time when the great Rabbi Eliezer became ill AND WAS ABOUT TO DIE. The day was Shabbat Eve, and Rabbi Eliezer made his son, Horkenos, sit to his right. He then revealed great and deep secrets to him. But HORKENOS'S mind was not ready to hear him AT FIRST, because he thought that his father's mind was not sufficiently clear. Only after he saw that his father's mind was completely clear did he receive 189 sublime secrets from him.

32. ת"ר, בְּשַׁחֲלָה רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר הַגָּדוֹל, הָיָה יוֹמָא ע"ש הו"ה, וְאוֹתִיב לִימִינִיהָ הוֹרְקֶנוֹס בְּרִיה, וְהוּה מַגְלִי לִיה, עֲמִיקָתָא וּמִסְתְּרָתָא, וְהוּא לֹא הָוָה מְקַבֵּל בְּדַעְתִּיהָ מִלֵּוּיָא, דְּחָשִׁיב כְּמִטּוֹרֶף בְּדַעְתִּיהָ הָוָה. כִּיּוֹן דְּחָמָא דְּדַעְתָּא דְּאָבוּי מִתִּישְׁבָּא עָלוּי, קָבִיל מְנִיָּה, מָאָה וְתַמְנִין וְתִשְׁעָה רִזִּין עֲלָאִין.

33. When he reached THE SECRET OF the marble stones that are mixed with the supernal Waters, Rabbi Eliezer wept and stopped talking. He said: Get up and go over there, my son! He asked him why. He replied: I see that I am soon to pass from the world. Go along and tell your mother that my Tfilin shall disappear and reach a higher place. IN OTHER WORDS, HE GAVE HER A HINT ABOUT HIS APPROACHING DEATH. And after I have departed from this world, I shall come to see them, THE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY, but they should not cry. Because those above are near, not those below, though the human mind cannot grasp this.

33. כִּד מָטָא לְאַבְנֵי שֵׁשׁ, דְּמִתְעַרְבִי בְּמִיָּא עֲלָאָה, בָּכָה רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר. וּפְסַק לְמִימַר, אָמַר, קוּם הָתָם בְּרִי. אָמַר לוֹ אָבָא לָמָּה. אָמַר לִיה, חֲזִינָא, דְּאוֹחִית חֲלָף מִן עֲלְמָא. אָמַר לוֹ, זִיל וְאִימָא לְאַמָּךְ, דְּתַסְתַּלַּק תַּפְלָאִי, בְּאַתְרַ עֲלָאָה, וּבְתַר דְּאִסְתַּלַּק מִן עֲלְמָא, וְאִיתִי הֵבָא לְמַחְמִי לְהוֹן, לֹא תִבְכִּי. דְּאִינוּן קְרִיבִין עֲלָאִין, וְלֹא תִתְאַוּן. וְדַעְתָּא דְּבַר נֶשׁ, לֹא יֵדַע בָּהּ.

34. As they were still sitting, the wise men of the generation came by to visit him. However, he cursed them for not coming to serve him. As we have learned, it is greater to serve the Torah than study it. In the meantime, Rabbi Akiva arrived. He asked: Akiva, Akiva, why have you not come to attend to me? He responded: Rabbi, I had no spare time. He was angry and said: Indeed, I wonder whether you shall die naturally. On that account, he placed a curse on him so that his death would be the worst of them all. **THIS MEANS THAT HE PLACED A CURSE ON THE OTHER WISE MEN WHO DID NOT COME TO SERVE HIM, SO THAT THEY ALSO WOULD NOT DIE NATURALLY. AND HE SAID THAT THE DEATH OF RABBI AKIVA SHALL BE THE CRUELEST OF THEM ALL.**

35. Rabbi Akiva wept and said to him: Rabbi, teach Torah to me! Rabbi Eliezer opened his mouth **AND, AS HE SPOKE** about the works of the divine Chariot, a fire surrounded them both. The wise men said: From this we learn that we are not worthy; nor do we have the privilege **TO LISTEN TO THE WORDS OF HIS TEACHINGS**. So they sat outside the gate. After everything was over, the fire disappeared.

36. And he taught **THE SECRET** of impure white spots (macula) as bright as the snow, 300 halachic rules, and 216 explanations of the verses of Shir Hashirim. Rabbi Akiva's eyes poured with tears like water. Then the fire reappeared **AND SURROUNDED THEM BOTH** again. When he reached the verse "stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick with love," (Shir Hashirim 2:5) Rabbi Akiva could not bear any more. He raised his voice and burst out bellowing **LIKE A BULL**. And he could not speak out of fear of the Shechinah that was there.

37. And he taught him all of the deep and sublime secrets that exist in Shir Hashirim, and made him solemnly swear that he would never use any of these verses. If he did, then Holy One, blessed be He, would destroy the world because of him, as it is not His desire that people use it, because of its supreme holiness. Afterward, Rabbi Akiva left and burst out crying, his eyes pouring with tears, and said: Woe my teacher, woe my teacher, for the world is to remain an orphan without you. All the other wise men entered and stood by him. They asked him questions about Torah and he answered.

38. Rabbi Eliezer felt confined. He raised both his arms and laid them on his heart. He said: Woe to the world. The upper world has again concealed and hidden all light and illumination from the lower **WORLD, JUST AS IT WAS BEFORE HE CAME INTO THE WORLD**. Woe to my two arms. Woe to the two parts of the Torah, as you shall be forgotten by the world on this day. **AND THE ZOHAR STATES** that Rabbi Yitzchak said: During the entire lifetime of Rabbi Eliezer, the Halacha would 'shine from his mouth' as on the day it was given on mount Sinai.

34. עד דהוו יתבי, עאלו חבימי דרא, למבקר ליה, אולית להו, על דלא אתו לשמשא ליה. דתנינן, גדולה שמושה יותר מלימודה. עד דאתא רבי עקיבא, אמר לו, עקיבא עקיבא, למה לא אתית לשמשא לי. אמר לו רבי לא הוה לי פנאי. ארתח, אמר, אתמהה עלך, אי תמות מיתת עצמך. לטייה, דיהא קשה מכלהון מיתתיה.

35. בבי רבי עקיבא, ואמר ליה, רבי, אולית לי אורייתא. אפתח פומיה רבי אליעזר, במעשה מרכבה. אתא אשא, ואסחר לתרויהון. אמרו חבימיא ש"מ, דלית אנן חזין וכדאין לכך, נפקו לפתחא דברא, ויתיבו תמן הוה מה דהוה, ואזל אשא.

36. ואולית בבחרת עזה, תלת מאה הלכות פסוקות, ואולית ליה רי"ז טעמים, דפסוקי דשיר השירים. והו עינוי דר' עקיבא, נחתין מיא. ואתחזר אשא בקדמיתא. כד מטא להאי פסוקא סמכוני באשישות רפרוני בתפוחים כי חולת אהבה אני. לא וכול למסבל רבי עקיבא, וארים קליה בבכיתא וגעי, ולא הוה ממיל מרחילו דשכינתא, דהות תמן.

37. אורי ליה כל עמיקתא, ורזין עלאין, דהוה ביה בשיר השירים. ואומי ליה אומאה, דלא לישתמש בשום חר פסוק מניה. כי היכי דלא ליחריב עלמא קודשא בריך הוא בגיניה. ולא בעי קמיה דישתמשון ביה ברייתי, מסגיאות קדושתא דאית ביה. לבתר נפיק ר"ע, וגעי, ונבעין עינוי מיא, והוה אמר ווי רבי, ווי רבי, דאשתאר עלמא יתום מנך. עאלו כל שאר חבימיא גביה, ושאלו ליה, ואתיב להון.

38. הוה דחיק ליה לר"א, אפיק תרי דרועוי, ושוינון על לביה. פתח ואמר, אי עלמא, עלמא עלאה חזרת לאעלא, ולאגנזא מן תתאה, כל נהירו ובוצינא. ווי לכון תרי דרעי, ווי לכון תרי תורות, דישתכחון יומא דין מן עלמא. דאמר רביינך, כל יומי דר' אליעזר, הוה נהירא שמעתא מפומיה כיומא דאתיהיב בטורא דסיני.

39. RABBI ELIEZER said: I have learned so much Torah, gaining wisdom and serving SAGES, that even if all the people of the world were to be writers, there would not be enough to write of it. And my pupils have no lack of my wisdom; only as a kohl-pencil (mascara) in the eye, AS MUCH AS A TEARDROP THAT IS SHED BY AN EYE WHEN A DROP OF KOHL ENTERS IT. And I lack very little of the wisdom of my teachers, perhaps only AS MUCH AS a person can drink from the sea. AND THE ZOHAR CONCLUDES that he said this only to show gratitude to his teachers and to hold them in more favor than himself. THIS MEANS THAT WHAT HE HAS OMITTED FROM HIS TEACHERS' WISDOM, WHICH IS AS MUCH AS A PERSON CAN DRINK FROM THE SEA, IS MORE THAN A DROP OF KOHL-PENCIL IN THE EYE, WHICH HE SAID OF HIS STUDENTS' OMISSIONS. THUS, HE SHOWS THAT HE FEELS GRATITUDE TO HIS TEACHERS AND IS GRATEFUL TO THEM MORE THAN TO HIMSELF.

40. And they were asking him THE LAW of footwear of Yibum (the levirate rite)--IF IT BECOMES DEFILED. As his soul left him, he announced: It is pure. Rabbi Akiva was not there WHEN HE DIED. As the day of Shabbat ended, Rabbi Akiva found him dead. As he ripped his clothes and tore his flesh, the blood started to roll over his beard. He wept and shouted as he stepped outside, and said: Heavens, O heavens, tell the sun and the moon that the light that shone more than they is darkened.

41. Rabbi Yehuda said: When the soul of a righteous person wishes to leave THE BODY, it feels happy, because the righteous is confident that he shall receive his reward as he dies. Therefore, it is written: "when he saw them, he ran to meet them," REFERRING TO THE THREE ANGELS THAT ACCOMPANIED THE SHECHINAH AS SHE CAME TO RECEIVE HIS SOUL with happiness, as he welcomed THE ANGELS. Where DOES HE WELCOME THEM? As we have learned, at "the tent door," where he "bowed himself toward the ground," toward the Shechinah. THIS MEANS THAT THE SOUL BOWED TO THE SHECHINAH THAT HAD COME TO IT, AS THE SHECHINAH IS CALLED EARTH.

42. Rabbi Yochanan then opened the discussion by quoting: "...until the day breaks, and the shadows flee away...Turn, my beloved, and be you like a roe or a young hart" (Shir Hashirim 2:17). "Until the day break" is a warning for a person who is still in this world; it is like the "blink of the eye." Come and behold: what does it say? "Even if he lived a thousand years twice," (Kohelet 6:6) on the day of his death, it all seems as one day to him.

43. Rabbi Shimon said: The soul of a person warns him and says, "Until the day break." And it shall seem to you as the blink of the eye while you are still in this world. The words, "and the shadows flee away" are equivalent to the verse that reads: "because our days upon earth are a shadow" (Iyov 8:9); so I beg of you, "Turn, my beloved, and be you like a roe or a young hart."

39. אָמַר אורייתא גמרייתא, וחכמתא סבריתא, ושמושא עבדיתא. דאלו יהון כל בני אינשא דעלמא סופרים, לא יכלין למכתב, ולא חסרי תלמידיו מחכמתי, אלא ככוחלא בעינא. ואנא מרבותי, אלא כמאן דשתי בימא. ולא הוה אלא למיתן טיבותא לרבויי יתיר מניה.

40. והוּוּ שְׁאֵלִין מַנִּיה, בַּהּ הוּא סְנַדְלָא דִּיבּוּם, עַד דְּנִפְק נִשְׁמַתִּיה, וְאָמַר טְהוּר. וְלֹא הוּא תָּמָן ר"ע. כַּד נִפְק שְׁבַתָּא, אֲשַׁכְחִיה ר' עֲקִיבָא דְּמִית, בְּזַע מְאִנִּיה, וְגִרִּיר כָּל בְּשָׂרִיה, וְדָמָא נְחִית וְנָגִיד עַל דִּיּוֹקְנִיה. הוּא צוּח וּבְכִי נִפְק לְבָרָא וְאָמַר שְׁמִיא שְׁמִיא, אָמְרוּ לְשִׁמְשָׁא וּלְסִיְהָרָא, דְּנִהִירוּתָא דִּהוּת נִהִיר יִתִּיר מִנְהוּן, הָא אֲתַחֲשָׁךְ.

41. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, בְּשַׁעָה שְׁנִשְׁמַת הַצַּדִּיק רוּצָה לְצֵאתָ, שְׁמַחָה, וְהַצַּדִּיק בְּטוּחַ בְּמִיתָתוֹ, בְּרִי לְקַבֵּל שְׁכָרוֹ, הֵה"ד וִירָא וִירֵץ לְקִרְאָתָם, בְּשִׁמְחָה, לְקַבֵּל פְּנִיָּהֶם. מֵאִי זֶה מְקוֹם, מִפְּתַח הָאֵהָל, בְּדָקָא אָמְרִן. וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה לְגַבֵּי שְׁכִינָה.

42. ר' יוֹחָנָן פָּתַח וְאָמַר, עַד שְׁיִפּוּחַ הַיּוֹם וְנִסּוּ הַצִּלְלִים סוֹב דִּמָּה לָךְ דּוֹדֵי לְצַבִּי אוֹ לְעַפְר הָאֵינִלִּים. עַד שְׁיִפּוּחַ הַיּוֹם וְגו', זוֹ אֲזַהֲרָה לְאָדָם בְּעוֹדוֹ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא בְּהֶרֶף עֵין. תָּא חֲזִי מָה כְּתִיב וְאֵלּוּ חִיָּה אֵלֶּף שָׁנִים פְּעָמִים וְגו'. בְּיוֹם הַמִּיתָה, כָּל מָה שֶׁהָיָה, נֶחְשֵׁב כְּיוֹם אֶחָד אֲצִלּוֹ.

43. אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, נִשְׁמַתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם מִתְּרָה בּוֹ, וְאֹמְרָתָ, עַד שְׁיִפּוּחַ הַיּוֹם, וַיְדַמָּה בְּעֵינֶיךָ בְּהֶרֶף עֵין, בְּעוֹדֶךָ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. וְנִסּוּ הַצִּלְלִים: הֵה"ד כִּי יֵצֵא יְמִינוֹ עָלַי אֶרֶץ. בְּבִקְשָׁה מִמֶּךָ, סוֹב דִּמָּה לָךְ דּוֹדֵי לְצַבִּי וְגו'.

44. There is another explanation for: "Until the day break..." According to Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi, this is a warning for humankind, while still in this world, which is like the blink of the eye. Just as the roe is swift of leg, so you should be as swift as a "roe or a young hart" in performing your Master's wishes, so that you may inherit the world to come--which is mountains of spices, called "the mountain of Hashem," the mountain of Pleasure, the mountain of Delight.  
End of Midrash Hane'elam

44. דָּבָר אַחֵר. עַד שִׁנְפוֹחַ הַיּוֹם וּגו'. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹנָבֶן פָּזִי, זֶה אֲזַהֲרָה לָאָדָם, בְּעוֹרֹו בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא כְּהֶרֶף עֵין. מִה הַצָּבִי קָל בְּרַגְלָיו, אִף אַתָּה הִיָּה קָל בְּצָבִי אוֹ בְּעוֹפֵר הָאֵילִים, לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹן בּוֹרְאֵךְ, כְּדֵי שֶׁתִּנְחַל הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, שֶׁהוּא הָרִי בְּשָׁמַיִם, הַנִּקְרָא הַר ה', הַר הַתְּעִנוּג, הַהָר הַטּוֹב. (עַד כָּאן מִדְּרַשׁ הַנֶּעְלָם).

#### 5. "And, lo, three men"

As the white light of the sun refracts into the seven colors of the rainbow, the spiritual Light of the Creator refracts into many "colors" that express all His various attributes. Kabbalistically, physical light is merely a lower frequency of the spiritual Light of the Creator. This infinite, all-inclusive Light of the Creator includes a variety of frequencies and spectrum of colors, ranging from the green blades of grass, to the purple hues of interstellar gases radiating from distant galaxies. Everything in the cosmos represents another color frequency in the spectrum of Creation, including the four kingdoms of inanimate, vegetable, animal, and mankind, as well as intangible forces, such as mercy, judgment, pleasure, truth, and fulfillment. Colors also manifest within angels. The angel Michael, who represents the positive Right Column Force of Sharing, radiates the color white. The angel Gavriel, who represents the Left Column Force of Receiving and the negative principle in our universe, radiates the color red. The angel Raphael represents the Central Column Energy of Balance and illuminates the color green. These three colors illustrate the unique function and role that each angel plays in the ongoing process of creation. Michael is the conduit for the energy of general blessings. Gavriel is the portal through which the force of judgment enters our world. Raphael channels the spiritual energy of healing.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The awareness that the Creator manifests His attributes physically, inanimately, and as intangible forces, gives us the opportunity to connect to each of the spiritual frequencies spoken of in this portion. The influence of these forces in our personal life is augmented when we understand their purpose and relevance in the world.

Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

45. The authority and will of the King, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH, appears in three colors, AND THESE ARE THE THREE COLORS OF THE EYE: WHITE, RED, AND GREEN. One color represents the eye's sight from afar. At this distance, the eye is unable to clearly visualize what it sees until it achieves partial vision by contracting itself. Thus, it is written: "Hashem has appeared from a far to me..." (Yirmeyah 31:2) THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, AS THERE CAN BE NO REVELATION OF THE LIGHTS WITHOUT IT!

סֵתְרֵי תוֹרָה  
45. הוֹרְמְנוּתָא דְּמַלְכָּא, אֲתַחְזִי בְּתַלְתָּ גּוּוּנִין, גּוּוֹן חָד, חִיזוּ דְּאֲתַחְזִי לְעֵינָא מִרְחִיק, וְעֵינָא לֹא יָכִיל לְקַיֵּמָא בְּבִרְיוּ דְּחִזִּי, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ מִרְחֹק, עַד דְּנָטִיל עֵינָא, חִיזוּ זְעִיר, בְּקַמִּיטוּ דִּילִיָּה. וְעַל דְּאֲכַתִּיב מִרְחֹק ד' נִרְאָה לִי.

46. The second color represents the eye's sight when the eye is closed. This color is seen by the eye only through a slight shutting, and therefore it is not a clear vision. THE WAY TO SEE is by closing the eye and then opening it a little, to thereby receive this sight. BECAUSE THIS VISION IS NOT CLEAR, it requires interpretation in order to understand what the eye has perceived. Therefore, it is written: "What do you see" (Yirmeyah 1:13)? THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT COLUMN, WHEN THE LIGHTS ARE STOPPED BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF CHASSADIM.

46. גּוּוֹן תְּנִיין: חִיזוּ דְּהָאִי עֵינָא, בְּסַתִּימוּ דִּילִיָּה, דְּהָאִי גּוּוֹן לֹא אֲתַחְזִי לְעֵינָא, בַּר בְּסַתִּימוּ זְעִיר, דְּנָקִיט וְלֹא קַיֵּמָא בְּבִרְיוּ, סְתִים עֵינָא, וּפְתַח זְעִיר, וְנָקִיט הֵהוּא חִיזוּ, וּגּוּוֹן דָּא אֲצַטְרִיךְ לְפִתְרוּנָא, לְקַיֵּמָא עַל מַה דְּנָקִיט עֵינָא, וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב מַה אַתָּה רֹאֶה.

47. The third color represents the brilliance of the mirror, which can be seen only when THE EYE is shut and it is rolled backward. As a result of this rolling, the shining mirror is seen. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT COLUMN. But THE EYE is able to absorb this THIRD color only by envisioning the illumination of the brilliance by shutting the eye, WHICH MEANS THE SECOND COLOR IS INCLUDED IN THE FIRST COLOR.

47. גּוּוֹן תְּלִיתָא: הוּא זֶהר אֲסַפְקְלָרִיָּא, דְּלֹא אֲתַחְזִי בֵּיה כָּלֵל, בַּר בְּגִלְגּוּלָא דְּעֵינָא, כְּדֵי אִיהוּ סְתִים בְּסַתִּימוּ. וּמַגְלִגְלִין לִיָּה בְּגִלְגּוּלָא, וְאֲתַחְזִאי בְּהָאִי גִלְגּוּלָא, אֲסַפְקְלָרִיָּא דְּנִהְרָא. וְלֹא יָכִיל לְקַיֵּמָא בְּהֵהוּא גּוּוֹן, בַּר דְּחִזִּי זֶהר מְנַהֲרָא בְּסַתִּימוּ דְּעֵינָא.

48. Therefore, it is written: "The hand of Hashem was upon me..." (Yechezkel 37:1) and "but the hand of Hashem was strong upon me" (Yechezkel 3:14). THIS ABILITY TO SEE BY SHUTTING THE EYE IS ACCOMPLISHED BY WILL POWER AND IS RELATED TO GVURAH. And all these are conceived by the true prophets, NAMELY THE FIRST TWO COLORS. And only Moshe, the most faithful, had the ability to see high above to the point at which THE BRILLIANCE is not seen at all. THIS REFERS TO THE THIRD COLOR, WHICH IS THE SHINING MIRROR. Of him it is written: "My servant Moshe is not so, who is faithful in all My house" (Bemidbar 12:7).

49. The words "appeared to him" mean that the Shechinah appeared to him through those grades that are attached to Her own aspects, referring to Michael on the right side, Gavriel on the left side, Refael to the front, and Uriel to the back. This is why the Shechinah appeared to him by the terebinths (lit. 'among those oak trees'), the shadows of the world, to show them the first circumcision--the Holy Imprint according to the secret of the Faith in the whole world.

50. Of the words "and he sat in the tent door," HE ASKS: Where is the tent door? AND HE ANSWERS: This is the place that is called the covenant, which is the secret of faith, NAMELY THE NUKVA. The phrase "in the heat of the day" refers to the secret to which Avraham cleaved, WHICH IS the might of the right side--his own grade.

51. The "tent door" is the secret of the 'gate of righteousness,' the gateway to the Faith, WHICH IS THE NUKVA AND THE SECRET OF THE JUDGMENTS OF THE NUKVA. AND IT IS CALLED THE GATEWAY because Avraham entered the Holy Imprint OF CIRCUMCISION there. WITHOUT THIS, HE WOULD NOT HAVE ENTERED THE COVENANT. THIS IS WHY IT IS CALLED A GATEWAY.

"In the heat of the day" refers to THE ASPECT OF the righteous, the grade of the 'United Oneness,' which is entered and joined by whoever is circumcised and is signed by the Holy Imprint. Because the foreskin has been removed from him, he enters into the illumination of these two grades, THE RIGHTEOUS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, which are the secret of Faith.

52. The verse, "And, lo, three men," refers to the three angels--messengers who clothe themselves with air and come down to this world in a human image. And they were three, just as there are three above, NAMELY CHESD, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN. The rainbow, THE NUKVA, appears only in three colors, white, red, and green. This is exactly LIKE THE THREE COLORS OF CHESD, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN.

48. וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב הִיְתָה עָלַי יָד ה'. וְיָד ה' עָלַי חֲזָקָה. וְכִלְהוּ מִתְפָּרֵשׁ מִנְבִּיאֵי קְשׁוּט. בַּר מֹשֶׁה, מֵהֵימָנָא עֲלָאָה, דְּזָכָה לְאַסְתָּבְלָא לְעִילָא, בְּמַה דְּלֹא אֲתַחְזִי בְּלָל. עָלֶיהָ כְּתִיב, לֹא כֵן עֲבָדִי מֹשֶׁה וְגו'.

49. וְיִרְא אֱלֹוִי. אֲתַחְזִי וְאֲתַגְלִי לִיה שְׂכִינְתָּא, גּוֹ אֵינּוֹן דְּרִגִּין דְּאֲתַחְבְּרוּ בְּסִטְרוֹי, מִיכָאֵל לְסִטְרָא יְמִינָא. גַּבְרִיאֵל לְסִטְרָא שְׂמָאלָא. רַפָּאֵל לְקִמְא. אֲוִרִיאֵל לְאַחֲרָא. וְעַל דָּא, אֲתַגְלִיא עָלֶיהָ שְׂכִינְתָּא, בְּהֵינִי אֱלֹוִנִי צוּלְמִין דְּעֵלְמָא, בְּגִין לְאַחְזָאָה קְמִינְהוּ בְּרִית קְדָמָאָה רְשִׁימוֹ קְדִישָׁא, דְּהוּה בְּכָל עֵלְמָא, בְּרָזָא דְּמֵהֵימָנּוּתָא.

50. וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֵהֶל. מֵאֵן פֶּתַח הָאֵהֶל. דָּא אֲתֵר דְּאֶקְרִי בְּרִית, רָזָא דְּמֵהֵימָנּוּתָא. בְּחוּם הַיּוֹם. דָּא רָזָא דְּאֲתַדְבֵּק בֵּיה אַבְרָהָם, תּוֹקְפָא דְּסִטְרָא דְּיְמִינָא, דְּרָגָא דִּילִיָּה.

51. פֶּתַח הָאֵהֶל. רָזָא דְּתִרְעָא דְּצִדִּיק, פֶּתַח דְּמֵהֵימָנּוּתָא, דְּכִדִּין עָאֵל בֵּיה אַבְרָהָם, בְּהֵוֹא רְשִׁימָא קְדִישָׁא. בְּחוּם הַיּוֹם. דָּא צִדִּיק, דְּרָגָא דְּחִבּוּרָא חָדָא, דְּעָאֵל בֵּיה מֵאֵן דְּאֲתַגְזֹר, וְאֲתִרְשִׁים בֵּיה, רְשִׁימָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּהָא אֲתַעְבֵּר, מְעַרְלָה, וְעָאֵל בְּקִיּוּמָא דְּתִרִין דְּרִגִּין אֱלִין, דְּאֵינּוֹן רָזָא דְּמֵהֵימָנּוּתָא.

52. וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים וְגו'. אֱלִין תֵּלַת מְלָאכִין שְׁלִיחִין, דְּמִתְלַבְּשִׁין בְּאִוִּירָא, וְנַחְתִּי לְהָאֵי עֵלְמָא, בְּחִיזוֹ דְּבֵר נֶשׁ. וְתֵלַת הוּוּ, כְּגוּוּנָא דְּלַעִילָא, בְּגִין דְּקִשְׁתָּ לֹא אֲתַחְזִי, אֶלָּא בְּגוּוּנִין תֵּלַתָּא: חוּר, וְסוּמָק, וְיֶרוֹק. וְהֵכִי הוּא וְדָאֵי.

53. And these three people are the three colors, white, red and green. The white color is Michael, because he is on the right side, AS HE COMES FROM CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS WHITE. The red color is Gavriel, who is on the left side, AS HE COMES FROM GVURAH OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS RED. The green color is Refael, WHO COMES FROM TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS GREEN. And these are the three colors of the rainbow. And the rainbow, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, does not appear and is not seen without them. Therefore, it is written: "appeared to him," BECAUSE the appearance of the Shechinah is SEEN by these three colors. IN OTHER WORDS, THE VERSE "AND, LO, THREE MEN STOOD BY HIM," EXPLAINS THE VERSE "AND HASHEM APPEARED TO HIM." SO, "AND HASHEM APPEARED" MEANS THAT THE SHECHINAH WAS REVEALED TO HIM. AND THIS REVELATION WAS MADE BY THE APPEARANCE OF THE THREE COLORS, OF WHICH THE VERSE CONCLUDES, "AND, LO, THREE MEN STOOD BY HIM"--NAMESLY MICHAEL, GAVRIEL, AND REFAEL.

54. And each OF THE THREE ANGELS served a different purpose. Rafael, who governs the power to heal, helped Avraham recover from the circumcision. Another, Michael, who came to inform Sarah that she shall bear a son, rules over the right side. All the abundance and the blessings of the right side are handed over to him.

55. And Gavriel, who came to overturn S'dom, rules over the left side and is responsible for all Judgments in the world, AS JUDGMENTS COME from the left side. And the execution is done by the Angel of Death, THE KING'S CHIEF BAKER, who executes THE SENTENCES THAT ARE PASSED UNDER GAVRIEL'S RULE.

56. Each and every angel accomplished his mission, as is proper. Gavriel goes on his mission to the holy Neshamah, while the Angel of Death goes on his mission to the Nefesh of the Evil Inclination. In spite of all this, the soul does not leave the body until it sees the Shechinah.

57. When AVRAHAM saw THE THREE ANGELS join one another, he saw the Shechinah in Her own colors. And he knelt, BECAUSE THE ANGELS ARE THE THREE COLORS OF ZEIR ANPIN IN WHICH THE SHECHINAH CLOTHES HERSELF, As it is written: "...and knelt himself toward the ground." This is similar to what is described of Ya'akov, of whom it is written: "...and Yisrael knelt himself upon the bed's head" (Beresheet 47:31). THAT IS, HE BOWED to the Shechinah, WHICH IS CALLED THE BED'S HEAD. SO HERE, AS WELL, HE BOWED TO THE SHECHINAH.

58. And he addressed the Shechinah by the name "Adonai," AS HE SAID: "ADONAI ('MY LORDS') IF NOW I HAVE FOUND FAVOR..." (BERESHEET 18:3). IN THE SAME MANNER, the righteous is addressed, WHO IS YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, called Adon ('Master'). Then THE SHECHINAH is called 'ADON', "the lord of all the earth," (Yehoshua 3:11) because She is lit up by the righteous, WHO IS CALLED ADON ('MASTER'), and shines in Her colors. THE COLORS ARE DRAWN FROM THE THREE COLUMNS OF ZEIR ANPIN because She reaches perfection on high through them.

53. וְאֵלֶּיֶן אֵינּוֹן שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים, תִּלְתָּא גּוֹוִנִין, גּוֹוִן חֲנוּר, גּוֹוִן סוּמָק, גּוֹוִן יְרוֹק. גּוֹוִן חֲנוּר: דָּא מִיכָאֵל, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ סִטְרָא דִּימִינָא. גּוֹוִן סוּמָק: דָּא גַבְרִיאֵל, סִטְרָא דְשִׁמְאֵלָא. גּוֹוִן יְרוֹק: דָּא רַפָּאֵל. וְהֵי אֵינּוֹן תִּלְתָּ גּוֹוִנִין דְקֶשֶׁת, דְקֶשֶׁת לֹא אֶתְחַזִּי אֲלֵא עֲמַהוּן, וּבְגִין כֵּן, וִירָא אֱלִינוּ, גְּלוּי שְׂכִינָה, בְּתִלְתָּ גּוֹוִנִין אֱלִין.

54. וְכִלְהוּ אַצְטְרִיכוּ: חַד, לְאַסִּיָּא מִן הַמִּילָה, וְדָא רַפָּאֵל, מֵאֲרִי דְאַסוּן. וְחַד לְבִשְׂרָא לְשָׂרָה, עַל בְּרָא, וְדָא אִיהוּ מִיכָאֵל. בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ אֶתְמַנָּא לִימִינָא, וְכָל טְבִין וּבִרְכָּאן בִּידֵיהּ אֶתְמַסְרִין, מִסִּטְרָא דִּימִינָא.

55. וְחַד לְהַפְכָּא לְסִדּוּם, וְדָא אִיהוּ גַבְרִיאֵל, דְּאִיהוּ לְשִׁמְאֵלָא. וְאִיהוּ מַמְנָא עַל כָּל דִּינִין דְּעֵלְמָא, מִסִּטְרָא דְשִׁמְאֵלָא, לְמִידֵּן וּלְמַעְבַּד עַל יְדָא דְמִלְּאךְ הַמּוֹת, דְּאִיהוּ מֵאֲרִי דְקֶטוּלָא דְבִי מִלְכָּא.

56. וְכִלְהוּ עֲבָדוּ שְׁלִיחְתָּהוֹן, וְכָל חַד וְחַד בְּדִקָּא חֲזִי לֵיהּ. מִלְּאךְ גַבְרִיאֵל, בְּשְׁלִיחוּתָא לְנִשְׁמַתָּא קְדִישָׁא, וּמִלְּאךְ הַמּוֹת בְּשְׁלִיחוּתֵיהּ, לְנִפְשָׁא דִּיצַר הָרַע, וְעַם כָּל דָּא נִשְׁמַתָּא קְדִישָׁא לֹא נִפִּיק, עַד דְּחֲזִי שְׂכִינָתָא.

57. בְּדִ חֲמָא לֹון מִתְחַבְּרִין בְּחָדָא, כְּדִין חֲמָא שְׂכִינָתָא בְּגוֹוִנָהּ, וּסְגִיד. דְּכִתִּיב וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֶרְצָה. כְּגוֹוִנָא דִיעֶקֶב, שְׁנַאמֵר וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל רֹאשׁ הַמֶּטֶה לְשְׂכִינָה.

58. וּלְגַבִּי שְׂכִינָתָא אָמַר, בְּשִׁמָּא אֲדוֹנִי, וּלְגַבִּי צְדִיק אֲדוֹן. דְּהָא כְּדִין אֲקִרִי אֲדוֹן כָּל הָאָרֶץ, בְּדִ אֶתְנַהֲרָא מִצְדִּיק, וְאֶתְנַהֲרָא בְּגוֹוִנָהּ, דְּהָא בְּגִין דָּא, אֶשְׁתַּלִּים לְעִילָא.

59. From this we learn that the "mirror" of below, REFERRING TO THE SHECHINAH, is drawn from BINAH above. These colors, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF THE THREE ANGELS, acquire the power to draw of the Lights from above--from those supernal sources THAT ARE THE THREE COLUMNS OF BINAH ITSELF.

60. Because they accompany and support Her with everything, She is called Adonai. This name was revealed to AVRAHAM entirely through the secrets of the supernal ones--BY THE LIGHTS OF BINAH. And they appeared to him completely exposed, which did not happen before he was circumcised. Clearly, before he was circumcised, the Holy One, blessed be He, did not wish to issue a holy seed from him. However, as soon as he was circumcised, a holy seed immediately came forth. THAT SEED WAS YITZCHAK.

61. Because of this, BECAUSE OF HIS CIRCUMCISION, the Shechinah appeared to him in those holy grades, IN KEEPING WITH THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "And the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament..." (Daniel 12:3) THE FIRST brightness is the brilliance that shines when it is lit up. THE SECOND brightness lights up, shines and sparkles in many directions.

62. The brightness moves up and then down, shines throughout all aspects, is drawn and comes forth, and never ceases to shine. And the brightness procreates.

63. This brightness, which is hidden and concealed, glows brighter than any sparkle, WHICH MEANS THAT ITS SPARKLE IS GREATER THAN ANY OTHER SPARKLE IN THE WORLDS. And all the grades are located within It. It goes forth and disappears, concealed yet exposed, sees yet does not see. This book, WHICH REFERS TO THE BORDER OR LIMITATION, AS THE HEBREW TERM MEANS BOTH BOOK AND BORDER, is the source of the well, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. It comes out TO SHINE ONLY during the day, BECAUSE ZEIR ANPIN SHINES DURING THE DAY. And it disappears at night, WHEN HE DOES NOT SHINE. And He delights Himself at midnight WITH THE COMPANY OF THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS THAT ARE the offspring he issued, IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

64. The brightness shines and lights up the entire Torah, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, to all. This is seen, AS IT RECEIVES CHOCHMAH, because all the colors are concealed within It. It is called Adonai. The three colors are seen below it. And three colors are seen above it. Everything is received from the THREE above, AND STILL, they are not seen, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT RECEIVE CHOCHMAH DIRECTLY THEMSELVES. And it sparkles with twelve sparkles and lights that emanate from it. Altogether there are thirteen, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF 'ONENESS' THAT INCLUDES THEM ALL, by the secret of the Holy Name, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, within the secret of the Endless World (Heb. Ein-Sof). THAT WHICH INCLUDES THEM ALL is called Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHILE THE TWELVE GRADES OF THE NUKVA ARE CALLED ADONAI.

59. מהכא, דחיזו דלתתא, משיך משיכו מלעילא, דהא גוונין אלון משכין משיכא מלעילא, מאינון מקורין עלאין. אדנ"י משכא מלעילא, באלין תלת גוונין דאתלבש בהו, ובהו נטלא כל מה דנטלי מלעילא.

60. ובגין דאינון חבורא דילה, וסמכין דילה, בכלא אתמר שמא אדנ"י. דהא שמא דא אתגלי ליה, כליל ברזין עלאין, אתגלי ליה באתגליא מה דלא הוות מקדמת דנא, דלא הוה גזיר. ועד דאתגזר לא בעא קודשא בריך הוא לאפקא מניה זרעא קדישא, בין דאתגזר, מיד נפק מניה זרעא קדישא.

61. ובגין כך, אתגלי עליה שכינתא, באינון דרגין קדישין. והמשפילים יזהירו כזהר הרקיע. זהר: זהר דזהרין בדליקו זהר. זהר: דאנהיר דאדליק, ונציץ לכמה סטריין.

62. זהר: סליק ונחית. זהר: נציץ לכל עיבר. זהר: נגיד ונפיק. זהר: דלא פסיק לעלמין. זהר: דעביד תולדין.

63. זהר: טמיר וגניז, נציצו דכל נציצין ודרגין, כלא ביה, נפיק וטמיר, סתים וגליא. חזי ולא חזי. ספרא דא, מבוטא דבירא, נפיק ביממא, טמיר בליליא, אשתעשע בפלגות ליליא, בתולדין דאפיק.

64. זהר: דזהיר ואנהיר לכלא, כללא דאורייתא, ודא איהו דאתחזי, וכל גוונין סתימין ביה, ואתקרי בשמא דאדנ"י. תלת גוונין אתחזי לתתא, מהאי, תלת גוונין לעילא, מאלין עלאין אתמשך כללא דלא אתחזי. ונציץ בתריסר נציצין וזהירין דנציצין מניה. תליסר אינון, ברזא דשמא קדישא, וגו רזא דאין סוף, הוי"ה אקרי.

65. When the lower brightness, WHICH IS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE TWELVE CALLED Adonai, joined the upper brightness, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, they formed one name through which the true prophets attain THEIR PROPHECIES and look into the supernal brightness. The NAME is Yud-Aleph-Hei-Dalet-Vav-Nun-Hei-Yud, WHICH IS A COMBINATION OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI AND ADONAI. THROUGH THIS COMBINED NAME, THEY ACHIEVE sublime visions, BECAUSE BY THIS NAME THE VISION OF THE HIDDEN SECRETS CAN BE ACHIEVED, as it is written: "and out of the midst of it, it were the color of electrum out of the midst of the fire" (Yechezkel 1:4).

66. Mishnah: To you who are supernal, great, and good, from the right side, THE FOLLOWING SECRET HAS BEEN SAID: the nine vowels that appear in the Torah are divided by the letters. These letters secretly take short trips. These nine rulers issue these letters, which then expand. The nine vowels remain intact as so as to have the letters. THE LETTERS move only after THE VOWELS appear.

67. These LETTERS are in accordance with the secret of Ein-Sof and are under its influence. The sealed letters travel ONLY as much as THE VOWELS travel. The hidden secrets upon which these letters rest, are both revealed and not revealed.

68. Nine names are engraved in ten; Ehe'yeh IS KETER; Yud-Hei IS CHOCHMAH; Ehe'yeh Asher Ehe'yeh IS BINA; Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHOSE VOWELS ARE LIKE ELOHIM IS YISRAEL-SABA AND TEVUNAH; EI IS CHESED; Elohim IS GVURAH; Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei IS TIFERET; Tzva'ot IS NETZACH AND HOD; and Adon and Shadai BOTH REFER TO YESOD. ADON IS THE CROWN OF YESOD; SHADAI IS YESOD ITSELF.

69. These ten Names are each engraved according to Its aspect. And all these Names were engraved and entered the Ark of the Covenant. Which one is it? It is Adonai, the one that was revealed and appeared AFTER THE CIRCUMCISION to Avraham. IN OTHER WORDS, THE NAME ADONAI IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA AFTER SHE HAD RECEIVED THE OTHER TEN NAMES, WHICH ARE ALL THE GRADES OF ATZILUT. BUT BEFORE HE WAS CIRCUMCISED, HE DID NOT ACHIEVE THE SECRET OF 'SEEING.' UNTIL THE CIRCUMCISION, HE SAW ONLY THROUGH THE NUKVA, WITHOUT HER BEING ATTACHED TO THE UPPER GRADES.

70. Michael is the name of the right, THAT IS, CHESED, which cleaves to the name ADONAI and serves It more than the other ANGELS. Wherever the secret of the name ADONAI appears, SO DOES Michael. If Michael disappears, so does Elohim, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, together with Shadai, WHICH IS YESOD.

65. כִּד אֶתְחַבֵּר זֶהר תִּתָּאֵה אֲדֹנָי, בְּזֶהר עֲלָאָה הוּיָהּ, אֶתְעִבִּיד שְׁמָא סְתִימָה, דְּבִיָּה יִדְעִי נְבִיאִי קְשׁוּט, וּמִסְתַּכְלָאן לְגוּ זֶהרָא עֲלָאָה, וְדָא יֶאֱקֻדְנָקִי. חִיזוּ טְמִירִין, דְּכִתִּיב בְּעֵין הַחֲשֹׁמֶל מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ.

66. מִתְנִיתִין עֲלָאִין רְמָאִין טְבִין דִּימִינָא. תִּשַׁע נְקוּדִין דְּאֻרֵּייתָא, נִפְקִין וּמִתְפַּלְגִין בְּאַתְוּוֹן, וְאַתְוּוֹן בְּהוּ נְטִלִין מְטִלְנוּ דְּקִיקִין בְּרִזִּי. פִּלְטִין אֵלִין תִּשַׁע, שְׁלִיטִין אֵינֻן אַתְוּוֹן אַתְוּוֹן, מְנַיְהוּ אֶתְפִּשְׁטוּ, אֶשְׁתְּאֲרוּ נְקוּדִין לֹאֲעֻנָא לֹון. לֹא נְטִלִין, בְּר כִּד אֵינֻן נִפְקִין.

67. אֵלִין אֵינֻן בְּרִזָּא דְּאֵין סוּף, כִּלְהוּ אַתְוּוֹן מְטִלְלִין בְּרִזָּא דְּאֵין סוּף. כְּמָה דְּאֵינֻן נְטִלִין לֹון, הִכִּי נְמִי נְטִלִי אֵלִין סְתִימִין אַתְוּוֹן, גְּלִיִּין וְלֹא גְלִיִּין, הִנִּי טְמִירִין, עַל מָה דְּשִׁרִּין אַתְוּוֹן.

68. תִּשַׁע שְׁמֵהּ, גְּלִיפִן בְּעֶשֶׂר, וְאֵינֻן: קְדָמָא אֶהֱיָה. יו"ד ה"א. אֶהֱיָה אֲשֶׁר אֶהֱיָה. הוּיָהּ. אֵל. אֱלֹקִים. הוּיָהּ. צְבָאוֹת. אֲרוֹן. שְׂדֵי.

69. אֵלִין אֵינֻן עֶשֶׂר שְׁמֵהּ גְּלִיפִן בְּסִטְרֵיהוֹן. וְכֹל הִנִּי שְׁמֵהּ, אֶתְגְּלִיפוּ, וְעֲלִין בְּחַד אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית, וּמֵאֵן אִיהוּ, שְׁמָא דְּאֶתְקֵרִי אֲדֹנָי. וְדָא אֶתְגְּלִי הִשְׁתָּא לֹאֲבִרְהִם.

70. מִיכָאֵל שְׁמָא דִּימִינָא, דְּקָא אַחִיר וּמִשְׁמָשָׁא לְשְׁמָא דָא, וְתִיר מֵאֵינֻן אַחֲרָנִין, בְּכֹל אֶתְר דְּרִזָּא דְּהֵאִי שְׁמָא תַּמָּן, מִיכָאֵל תַּמָּן, אֶסְתַּלִּיק הֵאִי, מִיכָאֵל אֶסְתַּלִּיק, אֱלֹקִים בְּהִדִּי שְׂדֵי.

71. In the beginning, there were three men who were dining while en clothed in an image of air. They most certainly ate, because their fire ate and consumed everything, thus bringing contentment to Avraham. AND HE CLARIFIES THAT they were truly fire. This fire was covered by an image of the air and was not seen. The food that they ate was a burning fire. And they ate it, and Avraham received pleasure from this.

72. As the Shechinah departed, it is written: "and Elohim went up from Avraham" (Beresheet 17:22). So Michael immediately departed with Her, as it is written: "And there came two angels to S'dom..." (Beresheet 19:1). At the beginning, it is written three, but now it reads "two angels." FROM THIS, WE CONCLUDE THAT THE ANGEL Michael, who is to the right, also departed as the Shechinah rose. AND ONLY TWO ANGELS REMAINED.

73. The angel seen by Manoach, who descended and was en clothed by air, is Uriel. He did not come with those angels of Avraham, but came down on his own to inform Manoach, who is a descendant of Dan, THAT HE SHALL HAVE A SON.

74. Because MANOACH is not as important a man as Avraham, it is not written that he (the angel) ate. Rather, it is written: "Though you detain me, I will not eat of your bread..." (Shoftim 13:16) and "For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven...that the angel of Hashem ascended in the flame of the altar..." (Ibid. 20). Here, however, it is written: "and Elohim went up from Avraham"; IT IS NOT WRITTEN THAT THE ANGELS DEPARTED FROM AVRAHAM. THIS IS because Micheal left WITH ELOHIM, while Refael and Gavriel remained.

75. Of them it is written: "And there came two angels to S'dom at evening." "...at evening..." when Judgment hovers above the world. And afterward, one angel departed, and Gavriel alone remained TO OVERTHROW S'DOM. Because of the merit of Avraham, Lot was saved. Therefore, he was also privileged to have the two angels come and visit him.  
End of Sitrei Torah

71. בְּקִדְמִיתָא שְׁלֹשָׁה אָנָשִׁים, וְאִגְלִימוּ בְּצִיּוּרָא דְּאִוִּירָא, וְהוּוּ אָכְלִי, אָכְלִי וְדָאִי, דְּאִשָּׁא דִּלְהוּ אָכַל וְשָׂעִי כָּלָא, וְאֶעְבִּיד נַחַת רוּחַ לְאַבְרָהָם. אֵינּוֹן אִשָּׁא וְדָאִי, וְהָהוּא אִשָּׁא אֲתַבְּסִי בְּצִיּוּרָא דְּאִוִּירָא, וְלֹא אֲתַחְזִי, וְהָהוּא מִיכָלָא אִשָּׁא מְלַהֵטָא, וְאָכַלָּא לִיהָ, וְאַבְרָהָם מְקַבֵּל נַחַת רוּחַ מֵהָאִי.

72. בֵּינָן דְּאִסְתַּלַּק שְׁכִינְתָּא, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיַּעַל אֱלֹקִים מֵעַל אַבְרָהָם, מִיַּד מִסְתַּלַּק בְּהַרְיָה מִיכָאֵל, דְּכְתִיב וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סְדוֹמָה וְגו'. שְׁלֹשָׁה כְּתִיב בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וְהִשְׁתָּא תְּרִין, אֵלָא מִיכָאֵל דְּאִיהוּ יְמִינָא, אִסְתַּלִּיק בְּהַרְיָה שְׁכִינְתָּא.

73. מֵלֶאךָ דְּאִתְחַזִּי לְמַנּוּחַ, נַחַת וְאִיגְלִים בְּאִוִּירָא, וְאִתְחַזִּי לִיהָ, וְדָא אִיהוּ אִוְרִיָּאל. מַה דְּלֹא נַחַת בְּאֵלִין דְּאַבְרָהָם, נַחַת הָכָא בְּלַחְדוּרֵי, לְבִשְׂרָא לְמַנּוּחַ, דְּאִתִּי מְדָן.

74. וּבְגִין דְּלֹא חָשִׁיב כְּאַבְרָהָם, לֹא כְּתִיב דְּאָכַל, דְּהָא כְּתִיב אִם תַּעֲצֹרֵנִי לֹא אוֹכַל בְּלַחְמֶךָ. וְכְתִיב וַיְהִי בַּעֲלֹת הַלֵּהב מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיַּעַל מֵלֶאךָ ה' בְּלֵהב הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְגו'. וְהָכָא וַיַּעַל אֱלֹקִים מֵעַל אַבְרָהָם. בְּגִין דְּבִיָּה אִסְתַּלִּיק מִיכָאֵל, וְאִשְׁתַּאֲרוּ רַפָּאֵל וְגַבְרִיאֵל.

75. וַעֲלִייהוּ כְּתִיב, שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סְדוֹמָה. בְּעֶרֶב בִּשְׁעֵתָא דְּרִינָא תְּלִיא עַל עֲלָמָא. לְבַתָּר אִסְתַּלַּק חַד, וְאִשְׁתַּכַּח גַּבְרִיאֵל בְּלַחְדוּרֵיהָ. בְּזִכּוּתֵיהָ דְּאַבְרָהָם אִשְׁתַּזִּיב לוֹט, וְאִיהוּ אוֹף הָכִי זְכִי בְּהוּ, וַעֲלֵ דְאִתָּו לְגַבִּיָּה (ע"ר ס"ת).

## 6. "Who shall ascend into the mountain of Hashem"

When an individual strives to understand his purpose in life and seeks the truth of the Creator, his soul will seek to reunite with the Light of the Creator upon leaving this world. Unfortunately, the vast majority of mankind journeys through this physical world without any inkling of his true purpose, or understanding as to the meaning of his existence. Consequently, a man who directs no effort towards spiritual enlightenment and blindly pursues the material world, will automatically seek the path of negativity when it departs its physical existence. The paths of the spiritual world mirror the pathways we forge in the physical world.

### The Relevance of this Passage

There are definite negative blockages within our consciousness that repress our intrinsic desire to seek the meaning of our existence and purpose in life. By helping to remove these impediments, the words and wisdom of this passage stimulate us to pursue the truth of our being. It is a well-known Kabbalistic principle that states, the more we seek to comprehend our purpose and the reality of the Creator, the more spiritual Light we receive.

76. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the text: "Who shall ascend into the mountain of Hashem? Or who shall stand in His holy place?" (Tehilim 24:3). Come and behold: no man is aware of the reason for his existence in the world. MEN DO NOT SEEK TO KNOW THE PURPOSE OF THEIR LIVES ON EARTH. As the days pass by WITH NO RETURN, they rise up and stand before the Holy One, blessed be He, as they were all created AND HAVE ACTUAL EXISTENCE OF THEIR OWN. How do we know that they were created? Because it is written: "The days were created" (Tehilim 139:16).

77. And when the days depart from this world, they all approach the Supernal King, as it is written: "And the days drew close for David to die," (I Melachim 2:1) "...and the days drew close for Ya'akov to die" (Beresheet 47:29).

78. When a person is in this world, he is not aware of nor does he look for the reason he was created. For him, every day is considered as if it passes by in emptiness. And when the soul leaves this world, it does not recognize the path through which it is elevated, because the path that leads up, to the place where the luminous sublime souls shine, WHICH IS THE GARDEN OF EDEN, is not shown to all souls. After it departs from him, THE SOUL follows the same way that person followed while in this world.

79. Come and behold: if a person is drawn after the Holy One, blessed be He, and longs for Him while in this world, then later, when he departs from this world, he also follows THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. And he is shown a path to climb that rises upward TO THE PLACE WHERE SOULS SHINE. IN OTHER WORDS, it follows and continues the same path that his desire followed and longed for each day while in this world.

80. Rabbi Aba said: One day, I came upon a town that belonged to the children of the East. They shared with me a part of the wisdom that they knew from antiquity. Then they searched for books of their own wisdom and gave me one.

81. Inside this book, it was written that according to the intention of a person's desire in this world, he draws a spirit from above upon himself similar to the desire that he clung to. If his desire is to achieve something holy and divine, then he draws the same from above and brings it down upon himself.

82. If he wishes to cleave to the Other Side, and is intent upon it, he draws the same from above down and brings it upon himself. They used to say THAT TO DRAW SOMETHING DOWN FROM ABOVE depends mainly on speech, deed, and the wish to cleave to it. This is how that certain side that he cleaves to is drawn down from above.

76. ר' אבא פתח ואמר, מי יעלה בהר ה' ומי יקום במקום קדשו. תא חזי, כל בני עלמא לא חמאן על מה קיימי בעלמא, ויומין אזלין וסלקין, וקיימי קמי קודשא בריך הוא, כל אינון יומין, דבני נשא קיימי בהוּ בהאי עלמא, דהא בלהו אתבריאו וכלהו קיימי לעילא, ומנלן דאתבריאו, דכתיב ימים יוצרו.

77. וכד מטאן יומין לאסתלקא מהאי עלמא, בלהו קריבין קמי מלכא עלאה, הה"ד ויקרבו ימי דוד למות. ויקרבו ימי ישראל למות.

78. בגין דכד בר נשאיהו בהאי עלמא, לא אשגח ולא אסתכל, על מה קאים, אלא כל יומא ויומא חשיב כאילו הוא אזיל ברקנייא, דהא כד נשמתא נפקת מהאי עלמא, לא ידעת לאן אורחא סלקין לה, דהא אורחא לסלקא לעילא לאתר דנהירו דנשמתין עלאין נהרין, לא אתיהיב לכלהון נשמתין, דהא כגוונא דאיהו אמשיך עליה בהאי עלמא, הכי אתמשכת לבתר דנפיק מניה.

79. תא חזי, אי בר נשאתמשיך בתר קודשא בריך הוא ותיאובתא דיליה אבתריה בהאי עלמא, לבתר כד נפיק מניה, איהו אתמשיך אבתריה, ויהבין ליה אורח לאסתלקא לעילא, בתר ההוא משיכו דאתמשיך ברעותא, כל יומא בהאי עלמא.

80. אמר רביאבא, יומא חד אערענא בחד מתא, מאינון דהוו מן בני קדם, ואמרו לי מההיא חכמתא דהוו ידעין מיומי קדמאי, והוו אשכחן ספרין דחכמתא דלהון, וקריבו לי חד ספרא.

81. והוה כתיב ביה, דהא כגוונא דרעותא דבר נשאיכוון ביה בהאי עלמא, הכי אמשיך עליה רוח מלעילא, כגוונא דההוא רעותא דאתדבק ביה, אי רעותיה איכוון במלה עלאה קדישא, איהו אמשיך עליה לההיא מלה, מלעילא, לתתא לגביה.

82. ואי רעותיה, לאתדבקא בסטרא אחרא, ואיכוון ביה, איהו אמשיך לההיא מלה מלעילא לתתא לגביה. והוו אמרי דעקרא דמלתא תלויא במלון, ובעובדא, וברעותא לאתדבקא, ובדא אתמשך מלעילא לתתא ההוא סטרא דאתדבק בה.

83. And I have found IN THAT BOOK all the rites and ceremonies for worshipping the stars and constellations, as well as what is required to worship them and how to direct one's will toward them in order to to draw them closer.

84. In the same manner, for whoever desires to cling to the Holy Spirit above, it depends on the act, words, and the intent of the heart, so that he may succeed in drawing it down upon himself so that he may cling to it.

85. And they were saying: Whatever path a person follows in this world is the path along which he is drawn when he leaves this world. And whatever he clung to and pursued while in this world, he clings to in the World of Truth--if to holiness then to holiness; if to impurity then to impurity.

86. If to holiness, then he is drawn toward that same side OF HOLINESS. He clings to it above, and becomes a serving minister before the Holy One, blessed be He, among all the angels. And so he is attached to the supernal WORLD and stands among those holy beings, as it is written: "then I will give you access among these that stand by" (Zechariah 3:7).

87. And so, in the same manner, if HE HAS CLEAVED to impurity WHILE IN THIS WORLD, then he is drawn to the IMPURE side. He becomes one of them and is attached to them. And they are called the 'demons of people.' So when he departs from this world, they take him and cast him into Gehenom--into that place where the impure, who have defiled themselves and their spirits, are judged and punished. He then clings to them, becoming 'a demon', just like the demons of the world.

88. I said to them: My sons, the sayings of this book are close to the sayings of the Torah. But you should stay away from these books, so that you will not be attracted to those beliefs and all those aspects that are mentioned there. Otherwise, heaven forbid, you may abandon the service of the Holy One, blessed be He!

89. People are led astray because of these books. The people of the east were wise and inherited this wisdom from Avraham, who gave it to the sons of the concubines. As it is written: "But to the sons of the concubines, which Avraham had, Avraham gave gifts, and sent them away from his son, while he yet lived, eastward, to the east country" (Beresheet 25:6). Afterward, they developed their wisdom in many directions.

83. ואֲשַׁכְחָנָא בֵּיהּ, כָּל אֵינוֹן עוֹבְדִין וּמוֹלַחֲנִין דְּכַכְבֵּיָא וּמוֹזְלִי, וּמְלִין דְּאַצְטְרִיכוּ לוֹן, וְהֵאִיר רְעוּתָא לְאַתְכוּוֹנָא בְּהוּ, בְּגִין לְאַמְשָׁכָא לוֹן לְגַבִּיּהוּ.

84. כְּגוּוֹנָא דָא, מֵאֵן דְּבַעֵי לְאַתְדַּבְקָא לְעִילָא, בְּרוּחַ קוּדְשָׁא, דְּהָא בְּעוֹבְדָא וּבְמִלִּין, וּבְרְעוּתָא דְלָבָא לְכוּוֹנָא בְּהֵיא מְלָה, תְּלוּיָא מְלָתָא לְאַמְשָׁכָא לִיהּ לְגַבִּיּהּ, מְעִילָא לְתַתָּא, וּלְאַתְדַּבְקָא בְּהֵיא מְלָה.

85. וְהוּוּ אָמְרִי, כִּמְה דְּבַר נֶשׁ אֶתְמַשֵּׁךְ בְּהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, הָכִי נִמְי מְשַׁכִּין לִיהּ, כִּד נִפִּיק מֵהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא. וּבְמַה דְּאַתְדַּבְק בְּהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, וְאַתְמַשֵּׁךְ אֲבַתְרִיָּה, הָכִי אֶתְדַּבְק בְּהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, אִי בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּקוּדְשָׁא, וְאִי בְּמַסָּבָא בְּמַסָּבָא.

86. אִי בְּקוּדְשָׁא, מְשַׁכִּין לִיהּ לְגַבִּי הֵהוּא סֵטֶר, וְאַתְדַּבְק בֵּיהּ לְעִילָא, וְאַתְעֵבִיד כְּחַד מַנְיִיָּהוּ, לְאַתְדַּבְקָא לְשִׁמְשָׁא קְמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בִּין אֵינוֹן שְׂאָר מְלָאכִין. כִּמְה דְּהָכִי אֶתְדַּבְק לְעִילָא, וְקֵאִים בִּין אֵינוֹן קְדִישִׁין, דְּכְתִיב וְנָתַתִּי לָךְ מֵהַלְכִים בִּין הָעוֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה.

87. הָכִי נִמְי כְּגוּוֹנָא דָא, אִי בְּמַסָּבָא, מְשַׁכִּין לִיהּ לְגַבִּי הֵהוּא סֵטֶר, וְאַתְעֵבִיד כְּחַד מַנְיִיָּהוּ, לְאַתְדַּבְקָא בְּהוּ, וְאֵינוֹן אֶקְרוּן נֹזְקֵי בְּנֵי נֶשָׁא. וּבְהֵיא שְׁעָתָא דְנִפִּיק מֵהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, נִטְלִין לִיהּ וּשְׂאֲבִין לִיהּ בְּגִיָּהֶם, בְּהֵיא אֶתֶר דְּרִינִי לוֹן לְבָנֵי מַסָּבָא, דְּסָאִיבוּ גְרַמְיִיָּהוּ וְרוּחִיָּהוּ, וּלְבַתֵּר אֶתְדַּבְק בְּהוּ. וְאִיהוּ נֹזְקָא, כְּחַד מֵאֵינוֹן נֹזְקֵי דְעֲלָמָא.

88. אֲמִינָא לוֹן, בְּנֵי, קְרִיבָא דָא לְמִלִּין דְּאוּרִיּוּתָא, אֲבָל אֵית לָכוּ לְאַתְרַחְקָא מֵאֵינוֹן סַפְרִין, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִסְטִי לְבִיּוּכוּ לְאַלִּין פּוֹלַחֲנִין, וּלְכָל אֵינוֹן סַטְרִין דְּקָאֻר הָכָא, דִּילְמָא חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם תִּסְטוֹן מִבַּתֵּר פּוֹלַחְנָא דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

89. דְּהָא כָּל סַפְרִים אֵלִין, אֲטַעֲיִין לוֹן לְבָנֵי נֶשָׁא, בְּגִין דְּבָנֵי קְדָם חִכְמִין הוּוּ, וְיִרְוּתָא דְחִכְמָתָא דָא, יִרְתוּ מֵאַבְרָהָם, דִּיהֵב לְבָנֵי פְלִגְשִׁים, דְּכְתִיב וּלְבָנֵי הַפְּלִגְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאַבְרָהָם נָתַן אֲבָרָהָם מִתְּנוֹת וַיִּשְׁלַח מֵעַל יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בְּעוֹדָנוּ חֵי קְדָמָה אֶל אֶרֶץ קְדָם. וּלְבַתֵּר אֶתְמַשְׁכוּ בְּהֵיא חִכְמָה לְכִמְה סַטְרִין.

90. But the seed of Yitzchak, the portion of Ya'akov, is not so. As it is written: "And Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak" (Ibid. 5). This is the holy portion of faith that Avraham cleaved to. And from this side and fate did Ya'akov come. What is written about him? It is written: "And, behold, Hashem stood above him," (Beresheet 28:13) and "But you, Yisrael, are my servant, Ya'akov..." (Yeshayah 41:8). For this reason, a person should be drawn after the Holy One, blessed be He, and cleave to Him always, as it is written: "and to Him shall you cleave..." (Devarim 10: 20).

91. Come and behold. It is written: "Who shall ascend into the mountain of Hashem..." (Tehilim 24:3) And after this, he continues to explain that "he that has clean hands." THIS MEANS THAT he has not made an idol with his hands, and his hands did not hold what they should not have held. Furthermore, IT SHOULD BE EXPLAINED THAT THE PHRASE "CLEAN HANDS" MEANS HIS HANDS were not defiled, and he did not defile the body with them, as those who defile themselves with their hands and become impure. This is what "clean hands" means. A "pure heart" is the heart of someone who has not diverted his heart to the Other Side, but rather is drawn after the service of the Holy One, blessed be He!

92. Of the verse, "who has not lifted up his soul (Nefesh) in vain," observe that it is written "Nafsho" ('his soul'), but pronounced "Nafshi" ('my soul'). The explanation is that 'my soul' is the soul of David, the aspect of faith WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN; 'his soul' is actually the soul of a human being. THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS WRITTEN AND HOW IT IS PRONOUNCED. Thus, when a person passes away from this world and his soul (Nefesh) leaves with proper deeds, he will have the privilege of being among all those holy ones, as it is written: "I will walk before Hashem in the land of the living" (Tehilim 116:9). THEREFORE HE SAYS: Because he "has not lifted up his soul in vain...He shall receive the blessing from Hashem..."

#### 7. "And, lo, three men...and they ate"

A discussion arises as to whether Avraham the Patriarch perceived the three angels, Michael, Gavriel, and Raphael as angelic entities or as physical beings. According to the Zohar, Avraham was able to perceive them as angels by virtue of his circumcision, which removed negativity and elevated his consciousness. The lesson being conveyed concerns the importance of a person's consciousness and its ability to influence perception.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Two people often perceive a singular image or event differently because their individual consciousness are on two different levels. Both perceptions are indeed correct; however, one perspective is limited if it remains on a lower level of consciousness, and the other is far-reaching if it occupies a higher level. Achieving transcendence over this physical realm by raising our own consciousness is the intent of this portion. We achieve a heightened sense of awareness, perceiving the true spiritual reality during the day-to-day rigors of physical existence.

93. Come and behold: after Avraham had circumcised himself, he sat down and was in pain. The Holy One, blessed be He, sent him three visible angels to inquire of his well-being. You may wonder how they were visible, for who is able to see angels, as it is written: "Who makes his angels spirits (also, 'winds')" (Tehilim 104:4).

90. אָבֶל זֶרַעַא דִּיצְחָק חוּלְקָא דִּיעֶקֶב, לֹא הָיָה, דְּכִתִּיב וַיִּתֵּן אַבְרָהָם אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ לִיצְחָק. דָּא חוּלְקָא קְדִישָׁא דְמַהִימְנוּתָא, דְּאִתְדַבֵּק בֵּיה אַבְרָהָם. וְנִפְק מֵהָהוּא עַדְבָּא, וּמֵהָהוּא סְטָרָא יַעֲקֹב. מַה כְּתִיב בֵּיה וְהָיָה ה' נֹצֵב עָלָיו. וְכִתִּיב וְאַתָּה יַעֲקֹב עֲבָדִי וְגו'. בְּגִינֵי כֵךְ בָּעֵי לֵיה לְבַר נֶשׁ, לְאַתְמִשְׁכָּא בְּתַר קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּלְאַתְדַבֵּק בֵּיה תָדִיר, דְּכִתִּיב וְבו תִּדְבֹּק.

91. תָּא חֲזִי מִי יַעֲלֶה בְּהַר ה' וְגו'. וּלְבַתֵּר אֶהְדֵּר וּפִירֵשׁ. נָקִי כַפַּיִם. דְּלֹא עֲבִיד בִּידוּי טוּמְסָא, וְלֹא אִתְתַּקֵּף בְּהוּ בְּמַה דְּלֹא אֶצְטְרִיךְ. וְתוּ, דְּלֹא אֶסְתָּאב בְּהוּ, וְלֹא סָאִיב בְּהוּ לְגוּפָא, כְּאִינוּן דְּמִסְאָבִין גְּרַמְיִיהוּ בִּידִין לְאַסְתָּאבָא, וְדָא הוּא נָקִי כַפַּיִם. וְכִי לָבֵב, בְּגוּוּנָא דָא דְּלֹא אֲמַשִּׁיךְ רַעוּתִיהּ וּלְבִיָּהּ, לְסְטָרָא אַחֲרָא, אֲלֵא לְאַתְמִשְׁכָּא בְּתַר פּוֹלְחָנָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

92. אֲשֶׁר לֹא נָשָׂא לְשׂוֹא נַפְשִׁי. נַפְשׁוֹ כְּתִיב, נַפְשִׁי קָרִי, וְהָא אֻקְמוּהָ נַפְשִׁי דָא נַפְשׁ דְּדוּר, סְטָרָא דְמַהִימְנוּתָא. נַפְשׁוֹ דָא נַפְשׁ דְּבַר נֶשׁ מִמֶּשׁ. בְּגִין דְּכִד יִפּוֹק מֵהָאֵי עֲלֵמָא, וְנַפְשִׁיהּ יִסְתַּלַּק בְּעוֹבְדִין דְּכִשְׂרִין, עַל מַה דִּיתַקְיִים בְּהוּ, לְמִיָּהךְ בֵּין כָּל אִינוּן קְדִישִׁין, כְּדִ"א אִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי ה' בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים. וּבְגִין דְּלֹא נָשָׂא לְשׂוֹא נַפְשִׁי, יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת ה' וְגו'.

93. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּתַר דְּאַתְגְּזֹר אַבְרָהָם, הָוָה יְתִיב וְכָאִיב, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא שָׂדֵר לְגַבִּיָּה תַּלְת מַלְאָכִין בְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא, לְאַקְדָּמָא לֵיה שְׁלָם. וְאִי תִימָא, דְּהָא בְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא, וְכִי מֵאן יָכִיל לְמַחְמִי מַלְאָכִין, וְהָא כְּתִיב עוֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת וְגו'.

94. AND HE REPLIES: He certainly did see them because they came to earth in the image of men. And it should not be hard for you to understand because they are definitely holy spirits. But when they come down to this world, they enclothe themselves with the air and the elements of covering and enveloping, until they appear to people exactly in their image.

95. Come and behold: Avraham saw them in the image of men. And even though he was in pain because of the circumcision, he ran forth to greet them, so that he would not miss anything and would not behave differently than before his circumcision, WHEN HE ALWAYS ACCEPTED AND WELCOMED NEW GUESTS.

96. Rabbi Shimon said: He definitely did see them in the form of angels. THIS CAN BE UNDERSTOOD from the words: "And he said... my lords (Heb. adonai)" with the letters Aleph and Dalet. THESE LETTERS, WHICH FORM THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH, ARE THE FIRST TWO LETTERS OF THE NAME ADONAI. For it was the Shechinah that was approaching, and these angels were Her supports and throne. They are the three colors--WHITE, RED, AND GREEN--that are under THE SHECHINAH.

97. And he saw THAT THEY WERE ANGELS because after he was circumcised, he was able to see what he did not see before he was circumcised. At first, he thought they were human beings. Later, he realized that they were angels on a mission FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. THEY FULFILLED THIS MISSION when they said to him, "Where is Sarah, your wife," (Bereshheet 18:9) and informed him about Yitzchak.

98. In the word, "Elav ('to him')," WHICH APPEARS IN THE VERSE "AND THEY SAID TO HIM," the letters with dots are Aleph, Yud, and Vav. And this sign, ayo, alludes to what is above, implying the Holy One, blessed be He. AND THEY ASKED ABOUT HIM: AYO (LIT. 'WHERE IS HE')? And he replied: "Behold, in the tent." THIS MEANS THAT HE WAS ATTACHED TO THE SHECHINAH, BECAUSE here it is written: "in the tent," and there it is written: "a tabernacle (tent) that shall not be taken down..." (Yeshayah 33:20). THUS, IT REFERS TO THE SHECHINAH, JUST AS IN THE LATTER VERSE. Come and behold: Because ayo has dots already, why is it then written: ayeh (lit. 'where')? AND HE REPLIES: Because the secret of the Faith is the union of the male and female as one. THIS IS WHY THEY ASKED OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, "WHERE IS HE (AYO)?" AND THEY ASKED OF THE SHECHINAH, "WHERE IS SHE (AYEH)?" THIS MEANS THAT THEY AROUSED HIM TO FORM A UNION OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WITH HIS SHECHINAH. The verse continues, "And he said: Behold, in the tent," because therein lies the bond of everything--NAMELY THE NUKVA WHO IS CALLED "THE TENT" AND THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE.

94. אֵלָא וְדַאי חָמָא לֹון, דְּנַחְתִּי לְאַרְעָא, כְּגִוּנָא דְּבְנֵי נָשָׁא, וְלֹא יִקְשָׁה לָךְ הָאִי, דְּהָא וְדַאי אֵינֻן רוּחִין קְדִישִׁין, וּבְשַׁעְתָּא דְּנַחְתִּי לְעֵלְמָא, מִתְלַבְּשִׁין בְּאַוִּירִי וּבִיסוּדֵי דְּגוּלְמִין, וְאַתְחִזּוּ לְבְנֵי נָשָׁא מִמֶּשׁ, כְּחִיזּוּ דְּיוֹקְנָא דְּלֵהוּן.

95. וְתָא חֲזִי אַבְרָהָם חָמָא לֹון, כְּחִיזּוּ בְנֵי נָשָׁא, וְאִף עַל גְּבִדְהוּהָ כְּאִיב מְמִילָה, נִמְקַ וְרַהֵט אַבְתְּרִייהוּ, בְּגִין דְּלֹא לְמַגְרַע מַה דְּהוּהָ עֲבִיר מְקַדְמַת דְּנָא.

96. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן וְדַאי כְּחִיזּוּ דְּמִלְאַכִּין חָמָא לֹון, מִמַּה דְּכְתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנִי בְּאֶלֶף דַּל"ת, שְׂכִינְתָּא הוּהָ אֲתֵיָא, וְאֵלִין הוּוּ סְמִיכִין דִּילָהּ, וְכִרְסִיָּא לְגַבָּהּ, בְּגִין דְּאֵינֻן גּוּוּנִין תְּלַת דְּתַחוּתָא.

97. וְחָמָא הִשְׁתָּא בְּגִין דְּאַתְגַּזֵּר, מַה דְּלֹא הוּהָ חָמִי מְקַדְמַת דְּנָא, עַד לֹא אֲתַגַּזֵּר, בְּקַדְמִיתָא לֹא הוּהָ יָדַע, אֵלָא דְּאֵינֻן בְּנֵי נָשָׁא, וּלְבַתֵּר יָדַע דְּאֵינֻן מִלְאַכִּין קְדִישִׁין, וְאַתּוּ בְּשִׁלְיחוּתָא לְגַבִּיָּה. בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּאָמְרוּ לִיהּ אִי"ה שְׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ, וּבִשְׁרוּ לִיהּ בְּשׁוּרַת יִצְחָק.

98. אֵלִינוּ: אֲתַוּוֹן נְקֻדּוֹת אִי"ו, וְסִימָן אִי"ו רִמּוֹז לְמַה דְּלַעֲיָלָא, רִמּוֹז לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֵהָל, כְּתִיב הֵכָא הִנֵּה בְּאֵהָל, וְכְתִיב הֵתִם אֵהָל בַּל יִצְעַן וּגו'. תָּא חֲזִי, בֵּינָן דְּנִקּוּד אִי"ו, אֲמַאי כְּתִיב לְבַתֵּר אִיָּה. אֵלָא, בְּגִין דְּחַבּוּרָא דְּדִכְר וְנוֹקְבָא כְּחֻדָּא, רָזָא דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא. בְּדִין אָמַר, וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֵהָל, תָּמָן הוּא קְשׁוּרָא דְּכֻלָּא וְתָמָן אֲשֶׁתִּכַּח.

99. Of the question, "Where is she?" HE ASKS: Did the celestial angels not know that Sarah was in the tent? If so, why then is it written THAT THEY ASKED ABOUT HER SAYING, "Ayeh ('where?')?" AND HE REPLIES: THE ANGELS have no knowledge of this world, except what is given them to know. Come and behold: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt...I am Hashem" (Shemot 12:12). AND HE ASKS: The Holy One, blessed be He, has so many messengers and angels. WHY DID HE HAVE TO "PASS THROUGH THE LAND OF EGYPT" BY HIMSELF? AND HE REPLIES: Because THE ANGELS do not know how to distinguish between the sperm of a first born and that which is not. Only the Holy One, blessed be He, alone knows this.

100. This is similar to the text: "and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men..." (Yechezkel 9:4). Why do THE ANGELS need THIS MARK? Because THE ANGELS know only what they are informed of. For example, how do they know all that the Holy One, blessed be He, plans on doing in the world? They know because the Holy One, blessed be He, sends announcements throughout the heavens, informing them of what He is about to perform in the world. THE ANGELS HEAR THESE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND KNOW!

101. In the same way, when the Angel of Destruction roams the world, people should hide at home and not be seen at the marketplace. This will prevent the Angel of Destruction from destroying and hurting them. As it is written: "and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning," (Shemot 12:22) because from them--FROM THE ANGELS--we can and should hide. But there is no need to hide from the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Says Hashem" (Yirmeyah 23:24).

102. "Where is Sarah, your wife?" HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THEY ASKED ABOUT HER. WHEN THEY HEARD SHE WAS IN THE TENT, THEY DID NOT ENTER IT TO INFORM HER. INSTEAD, THEY REMAINED OUTSIDE WHILE THEY INFORMED AVRAHAM. AND HE ANSWERS: They did not want to announce THE GOOD NEWS in front of her. So immediately after he said, "Behold, in the tent," it is then written: "he said: I will return and definitely come back to you at this time next year, and, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son" (Beresheet 18:10). Come and behold: it was very polite and proper that they said nothing to Avraham before he invited them to eat. This way, it did not seem that he invited them to eat because of the good news they brought him. Therefore, only after the verse stated "and they ate," did they inform him about the good news.

103. HE ASKS: IT IS WRITTEN: "and they ate," but do celestial angels eat? AND HE REPLIES: For the sake of Avraham's honor, it seemed AS THOUGH THEY ATE. THIS MEANS THAT THEY MADE IT SEEM AS THOUGH THEY WERE EATING. Rabbi Elazar said: They did actually eat, because they are the "fire that consumes fire." And it is not as though THEY WERE EATING. So they ate everything Avraham offered them, because from the side of Avraham they ate on a supernal level. THIS MEANS THAT THE DRAWING DOWN OF CHASSADIM IS THE SECRET OF 'EATING ON A SUPERNAL LEVEL,' AND AVRAHAM IS THE SECRET OF CHESED. THEREFORE, EVERYTHING HE OFFERED THEM CAME FROM HIS OWN ATTRIBUTE, FROM THE ATTRIBUTE OF CHESED. AND THEY ATE, JUST AS THEY EAT ABOVE IN THE HEAVENS.

99. אֵינָהּ וּגּו'. וְכִי לֹא הָיוּ יָדְעֵי מַלְאָכֵי עֲלָאִי, דְּשָׂרָה הִנֵּה בְּאֶהֱלָא, אֲמַאי כְּתִיב אֵינָהּ. אֲלֵא לֹא יָדְעֵי בְּהָאִי עֲלֵמָא, אֲלֵא מַה דְּאֶתְמַסֵּר לְהוּ לְמַנְדַּע. תָּא חֲזִי, וְעִבְרַתִּי בְּאַרְץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי ה'. וְכִי בְּמַה שְׁלִיחִין וּמַלְאָכִין אֵית לִיה לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֲלֵא בְּגִין דְּאֵינֻן לֹא יָדְעֵי בֵּין טַפָּה דְּבוּכְרָא, לְהָהוּא דְּלֹא בּוּכְרָא, בְּרִיךְ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּלַחֲדוּדֵי.

100. בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא, וְהִתְוִיתָ תּוּ עַל מַצְחוֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים. וְאֲמַאי צְרִיכִין. אֲלֵא, בְּגִין דְּאֵינֻן לֹא יָדְעֵי, אֲלֵא מַה דְּאֶתְמַסֵּר לֹוֹן לְמַנְדַּע. בְּגִין כָּל אֵינֻן מְלִין דְּזַמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאִיִּתְאָה עַל עֲלֵמָא. וּמ"ט, בְּגִין דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲעֵבֵר כְּרוּזָא בְּכָלְהוּ רְקִיעִין, בְּהֵיא מְלָה דְּזַמִּין לְאִיִּתְאָה עַל עֲלֵמָא.

101. בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָּא, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּמַחְבֵּלָא אֲשַׁתְּכַח בְּעֲלֵמָא, בְּעֵי בְּרִיךְ נֶשׁ לְאַתְכֶּסִּיא בְּבִיתֶיהָ, וְלֹא יִתְחַזִּי בְּשׁוּקָא, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִתְחַבֵּל, כְּדָבָר אַחֲרֵאֲתָם לֹא תֵצֵאוּ אִישׁ מִפֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ עַד בֹּקֶר. מְנִיֵּהוּ דִּיכִיל לְאַסְתִּתְרָא, אִין, אֲבָל מִקְמֵי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לֹא בְּעֵי לְאַסְתִּתְרָא, מַה כְּתִיב אִם יִסְתֵּר אִישׁ בְּמַסְתָּרִים וְאֲנִי לֹא אֲרָאֵנּוּ נְאֻם ה'.

102. אֵינָהּ שָׂרָה אֲשַׁתְּךָ. דְּלֹא בְּעוּ לֹזְמֵר קְמָה, בֵּינֵן דְּאָמַר הִנֵּה בְּאֶהֱלָא, מִיָּד וְאָמַר שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעַת חֲזִיה וְהִנֵּה בֵּן לְשָׂרָה אֲשַׁתְּךָ וּגּו', תָּא חֲזִי אוֹרַח אֲרַעָא, דְּעַד לֹא אֲזַמִּין אֲבִרְהָם קְמִיֵּהוּ לְמִיכָל, לֹא אָמְרוּ לִיה מְדִי, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִתְחַזִּי דְּבִגִּין הֵיִיא בְּשׁוּרָה, קָא אֲזַמִּין לְהוּ לְמִיכָל, בְּתַר דְּכְתִיב וְאֵאכְלוּ, בְּרִין אָמְרוּ לִיה הֵיִיא בְּשׁוּרָה.

103. וְאֵאכְלוּ, סִלְקָא דְּעַתְךָ, וְכִי מַלְאָכֵי עֲלָאִי אֲכִילוּ, אֲלֵא, בְּגִין יִקְרָא דְּאַבְרָהָם, אֲתַחֲזִי הִכִּי. אָמַר ר' אֲלַעְזָר וְאֵאכְלוּ וְדָאִי, בְּגִין דְּאֵינֻן אֲשָׁא דְּאֲכִיל אֲשָׁא, וְלֹא אֲתַחֲזִי, וְכָל מַה דִּיהֵב לֹוֹן אֲבִרְהָם אֲכִילוּ, בְּגִין דְּמַסְטְרָא דְּאַבְרָהָם אֲכִילֵי לְעִילָא.

104. Come and behold: everything Avraham ate was according to the rites of purity. And because of this, he served it to the angels, who ate. In his home, he observed the rites of purity so strictly that an impure person could not serve at his home unless he (Avraham) immersed him in a ritual bath IF HE WAS SLIGHTLY IMPURE. Or he made him keep purity properly for seven days at his home, IF HE WAS SEVERELY IMPURE. AFTERWARD, HE IMMERSSED HIM.

105. Come and behold. It is written: "If there be among you any man who is not clean by reason of uncleanness that chances by night..." (Devarim 23:11) what should he do? The verse continues, "when evening comes on, he shall bathe himself in water..." (Ibid. 12) But if he becomes defiled through any other SEVERE cause, like gonorrhea or leprosy on the impurity of menstrual flow, which include two kinds of defilement, then the ritual immersion FOR CLEANSING HIMSELF FROM THE NOCTURNAL POLLUTION AT EVENING is not sufficient. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, HE SHOULD KEEP PURITY FOR SEVEN DAYS. THEN HE SHOULD IMMERSSE AGAIN. THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HE WHO experienced nocturnal pollution before he was defiled with the other kind of defilement and he who was defiled only afterward.

Avraham and Sarah dedicated their lives to help people make the transformation to a more positive and spiritual way of life. Avraham and Sarah's devotion to this objective aroused genuine miracles of nature.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

A miracle, a wonder of nature, is essentially a mirror reflecting a profound spiritual change within human nature. Because our natural inclination is self-indulgence at the expense of others, the Light of this passage gives us the strength to overpower our natural tendencies and apportion part of our life to the service of others, exemplified by Avraham and Sarah. When a person dedicates his life to sharing with others, the Creator causes great wonders to be revealed in order to help him toward this pursuit.

106. Avraham and Sarah prepared ritual baths for every person—he for the men and she for the women. And why was Avraham occupied in purifying other people? Because he is pure and is called pure, as it is written: "Who can bring a pure thing out of an impure? Not one," (Iyov 14:4) where "pure" applies to Avraham, who came out of Terach, WHO IS IMPURE.

107. Rabbi Shimon said: THIS IS WHY AVRAHAM ENGAGED IN RITUAL IMMERSION--to rectify Avraham's grade. And what is his grade? It is 'waters'-- NAMELY CHASSADIM, THAT ARE CALLED 'WATERS'. Because of this, he prepared people to be purified with water. And when he invited the angels, his first words were as it is written: "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched..." (Beresheet 18:4)--to strengthen himself with that grade which contains water, NAMELY CHESED.

108. This is how he purified people from all sins, including those from the Impure Side and idol worshipping. And just as he purified the men, so did she purify the women. Therefore, all those who came to him were completely purified FROM IDOL WORSHIPING AND DEFILEMENT.

104. תָּא חֲזִי, כָּל מָה דְּאָכִיל אַבְרָהָם, בְּטַהֲרָה אִיהוּ קָא אָכִיל, וּבִגִּין כְּרִיאָקְרִיב קְמִייהוּ, וְאָכְלִי, וְנָטִיר אַבְרָהָם בְּבִיתִיהּ דְּכִיָּא וּמִסְאָבוּתָא, דְּאָמִילוּ בֵּר נָשׁ דְּאִיהוּ מִסָּאב, לֹא הָוֵה מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בְּבִיתִיהּ, עַד דְּעֵבִיד לִיה טְבִילָה, אִו עֵבִיד לִיה לְנִטְרָא שְׁבַעָה יוֹמִין, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי לִיה, בְּבִיתִיהּ, וְהָכִי הוּא וְדָאִי.

105. תָּא חֲזִי כְּתִיב אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִהְיֶה טָהוֹר מִקְרָה לַיְלָה וְגו'. מֵאִי תִקְנִיתִיהּ, וְהָיָה לַפְנוֹת עָרֵב יִרְחָץ בְּמַיִם. אֲעֲרַע בֵּיה טוּמְאָה אַחֲרָא, כְּגוֹן זִיבָה, אִו סְגִירַת נִדָּה, דְּהוּוּ תְרֵי מִסְאָבוּ, לֹא סְגִיָּא לִיה בְּהִיָּא טְבִילָה, בֵּין דְּאֲעֲרַע בֵּיה קְרִי, קוֹדֵם דְּקָבִיל טוּמְאָה אַחֲרָא, בֵּין דְּאֲעֲרַע בֵּיה לְבַתָּר.

106. וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה הָווּ מִתְקַנֵּי טְבִילָה לְכָלֵּהוּ, אִיהוּ לְגַבְרֵי וְאִיהִי לְנָשִׁי. מ"ט אַעֲסַק אַבְרָהָם לְדַכָּאָה לְבִנֵּי נָשָׂא, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ טָהוֹר, וְאָקְרִי טָהוֹר, דְּכְתִיב מִי יִתֵּן טָהוֹר מִטְמֵא לֹא אַחֲרֵי. טָהוֹר דָּא אַבְרָהָם דִּנְפַק מִתְרַח.

107. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אָמַר, בְּגִין לְתַקְנָא הֵהוּא דְרָגָא דְאַבְרָהָם, וּמֵאֵן אִיהוּ מַיִם. בְּגִין כֶּךָ, אֲתַקִּין לְדַכָּאָה בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא בְּמִיָּא. וּבִשְׁעָתָא דְאַזְמִין לְמַלְאָכִין, שִׁירוּתָא דְמַלְוִי, מָה כְּתִיב, יוֹקָח נָא מַעֲט מַיִם. בְּגִין לְאַתְתַּקְמָא בְּהֵהוּא דְרָגָא דְמִיּוֹן שְׂרָאן בַּהּ.

108. וּבְגִינֵי כֶךָ, הָוֵה מְדַבֵּי לְכָל בְּנֵי נָשָׂא מִכָּלֵּא, מְדַבֵּי לֹון מִסְטָרָא דְע"ז, וּמְדַבֵּי לֹון מִסְטָרָא דְמִסְאָבָא, וְכַמָּה דְאִיהוּ מְדַבֵּי לְגוּבְרִין, ה"נ שְׂרָה מְדַבַּת לְנָשִׁין, וְאַשְׁתַּכַּחוּ כְּלָהוּ דְאַתְתִּין לְגַבְיִיהוּ דְכִיּוֹן מִכָּלֵּא.

109. Come and behold: wherever Avraham lived, he planted a tree. But it did not grow properly in all the places; it only grew properly when he lived in Cna'an. And by this tree, he knew who was attached to the Holy One, blessed be He, and who worshiped idols.

110. For if a person cleaved to the Holy One, blessed be He, the tree spread out its branches, covered his head, and formed a pleasant shade for him. But if a person was attached to idolatry, the tree raised its branches high. Then Avraham knew THAT HE WORSHIPPED IDOLS. Avraham reprimanded him and did not let him go until he cleaved to faith in the Holy One, blessed be He!

111. In addition, whoever was pure was accepted by the tree. But whoever was impure was not accepted. Avraham then knew IF A PERSON WAS UNCLEAR. If this was the case, he purified him with water.

112. And there was a spring of water beneath the tree. If a person WHO WAS SLIGHTLY IMPURE needed an immersion, the water immediately rose and the branches of the tree ascended upward. Avraham thus knew that he was impure and had to be immersed in water immediately. But if a person did not need to be cleansed immediately, the spring dried up. Then Avraham knew that he was still impure and needed to wait for seven days.

113. Come and behold: even when he invited the angels, he told them to rest "yourselves under the tree," (Beresheet 18:4) in order to test them. In this way, he examined every person. And the secret is that he said this for the sake of the Holy One, blessed be He, who is THE SECRET OF the Tree of Life for everyone. This is why he TOLD THEM: "and rest yourselves under the tree," WHICH IS THE HOLY ONE BLESSED BE HE, and not under idol worshiping.

114. Come and behold: Adam sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, as it is written: "But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil..." (Beresheet 2:17). But after he sinned, thereby bringing death upon the entire world, it is written: "and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Beresheet 3:22). And when Avraham appeared, he ameliorated the world by using another tree, the Tree of Life, to introduce the proper faith to all peoples of the world.

The sacrifices that occurred inside the ancient temple and the incense that was burned were powerful tools that were used to remove forces of negativity and evil from the entire world. The absence of the physical Temple in our day prevents us from utilizing these instruments. The Zohar, however, explains that the words of the Torah that speak of the sacrifices and incense rouse those same forces of purification into being. Moreover, they transform prosecuting angels into entities that speak only good and favorable words about a person in the Supernal Courts.

The Relevance of this Passage

It was foreseen that a time would come when many physical tools of spirituality would be lost to the ages. The gift of the Torah, the Zohar, and specifically this passage, replenish the spiritual energy

109. תָּא חֲזִי, אֵילָנָא נָטַע אַבְרָהָם, בְּכָל אֶתְרֵי דְדִיּוּרִיָּה תַּמָּן, וְלֹא הָוָה סָלִיק בְּכָל אֶתְרֵי כְדָקָא יְאוּת, בְּרִי בִשְׁעֵתָא דְדִיּוּרִיָּה בְּאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן. וּבִהְיוּתָא אֵילָנָא הָוָה יָדַע מֵאֵן דְּאַתְאַחִיד בֵּיהּ בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּמֵאֵן דְּאַתְאַחִיד בְּע"ז.

110. מֵאֵן דְּאַתְאַחִיד בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֵילָנָא הָוָה פָּרִישׁ עֲנַפּוּי וְחָמִי עַל רִישִׁיהּ וְעֵבִיד עֲלֵיהּ צֶלָא יְאֵה, וּמֵאֵן דְּאַתְאַחִיד בְּסִטְרָא דְע"ז, הָהוּא אֵילָנָא הָוָה אֶסְתַּלַּק, וְעֲנַפּוּי הוּוּ סָלִיקִין לְעֵילָא. בְּרִין הָוָה יָדַע אַבְרָהָם, וְאַזְהִיר לֵיהּ וְלֹא אַעֲדִי מִתַּמָּן, עַד דְּאַתְאַחִיד בְּמַהִימְנוּתָא דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

111. וְהָכִי מֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ דְכִינָא, מְקַבֵּל לֵיהּ אֵילָנָא. מֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ מְסָאב לֹא מְקַבֵּל לֵיהּ. בְּרִין יָדַע אַבְרָהָם וּמְדַבֵּי לֹון בְּמִיָּא.

112. וּמַעֲיִינָא דְמִיָּא הָוָה תַּחֲתֵי הָהוּא אֵילָנָא, וּמֵאֵן דְּצָרִיךְ טְבִילָה, מִיד מִיִּין סָלִיקִין לְגַבִּיָּהּ, וְאֵילָנָא אֶסְתַּלַּקִין עֲנַפּוּי, בְּרִין יָדַע אַבְרָהָם דְּאִיהוּ מְסָאבָא, וּבְעֵי טְבִילָה מִיד, וְאִם לֹא, מִיָּא נְגִיבִין, בְּרִין יָדַע דְּבְעֵי לְאַסְתַּאבָא וְלֹאסְתַּמְרָא שְׁבַעָה יוֹמִין.

113. תָּא חֲזִי, דְּאִמִּילוּ בִשְׁעֵתָא דְאַזְמִין לֹון לְמַלְאכִין, אָמַר לֹון, וְהִשְׁעֵנוּ תַּחַת הָעֵץ. בְּגִין לְמַחְמִי וְלְמַבְדֵּק בְּהוּ, וּבִהְיוּתָא אֵילָנָא הָוָה בְּרִיךְ לְכָל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא, וְרָזָא בְּגִין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא קֹא אָמַר דְּאִיהוּ אֵילָנָא דְחַיִּי לְכָלָא, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, וְהִשְׁעֵנוּ תַּחַת הָעֵץ, וְלֹא תַּחַת עֲבוּדָה זָרָה.

114. וְתָא חֲזִי כִּד חָב אָרֶם, בְּעֵץ הָרַעַת טוֹב וְרַע חָב, דְּכַתִּיב וּמַעֲץ הָרַעַת וּגו'. וְאִיהוּ בֵּיהּ חָב, וּגְרָם מוּתָא לְעֲלָמָא. מַה כְּתִיב, וְעַתָּה פֶּן יִשְׁלַח יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מִעֵץ הַחַיִּים וּגו'. וְכִד אָתָּא אַבְרָהָם, בְּאֵילָנָא אַחֲרָא אֶתְקִין עֲלָמָא, דְּהוּא אֵילָנָא דְחַיִּי, וְאוּדַע מְהִימְנוּתָא לְכָל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא.

lost in the absence of such tools. Accordingly, we can purify negative influences in our own life and the world at large. In addition, we arouse the power to transform decrees of judgment into words of praise on our behalf.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

115. Rabbi Chiya said in the name of Rav: If we look into this passage, we should do so wisely. If THIS PASSAGE DISCUSSES matters of the soul, AS HE STARTED TO EXPLAIN, then there is no connection between the beginning and the end, nor between the end and the beginning. THIS MEANS THAT IT IS HARD TO EXPLAIN THE END OF THE PASSAGE IN RELATION TO THE SOUL, REFERRING TO THE WORDS, "LET A LITTLE WATER, I PRAY YOU, BE FETCHED..." THEREFORE, THE END IS NOT CONNECTED TO THE BEGINNING, AND VICE VERSA. But if THE PASSAGE DISCUSSES the departure of man from this world, let the whole passage deal with this. So either we explain the whole passage in this way or the other WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXPLAIN THE MEANING OF, "let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet..." AS WELL AS THE MEANING OF, "And I will fetch a morsel of bread...Avraham hastened into the tent, to Sarah...And Avraham ran to the herd...And he took butter, and milk" (Beresheet 18:4-8).

116. When Rabbi Dimi arrived he said: The soul could have no use for the body were it not for the sacrifice-offering implied here THAT APPEAR IN THE VERSES "LET A LITTLE WATER," AND SO ON. Even when the offerings ceased, AS THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED, the Torah did not cease to exist. Thus, he can delve in study of the Torah, and it will help him even more than the sacrifices.

117. Rabbi Yochanan said: When the Holy One, blessed be He, described the sacrificial offerings in detail, Moshe said--Master of the universe, this is all right when the children of Yisrael live in their land, but what shall they do when they are exiled from their land? He replied: Moshe, let them study Torah, and I shall forgive them, for Its sake, more than for all other sacrifices in the world, as it is written: "This is the Torah of the burnt offering, of the meal offering..." (Vayikra 7:37) This means that the Torah is instead of the burnt offering, instead of the meal offering, instead of the sin offering, and instead of the guilt offering.

118. Rabbi Cruspedai said: For whoever utters the phrases of the sacrificial offerings in the synagogues and in academies for the study of Torah, and meditates on them, it is a sealed Covenant that all those angels who mention his sins in order to persecute him can only do him good.

## מדרש הנעלם

115. אמר רבי חייא אמר רב, אי הוינא מסתכלין בפרשתא דא, נסתכל בחכמתא, אי עניינא דנשמתא היא, לאו רישא סופא, ולא סופא רישא. ואי עניינא לפטירת איניש מעלמא היא, נסתור כל פרשתא, או נוקים פרשתא בהאי או בהאי. מהו יוקח נא מעט מים ורחצו רגליכם וגו'. ואקחה פת לחם וגו'. וימהר אברהם האלה אל שרה וגו'. ואל הבקר רץ אברהם וגו'. ויקח חמאה וחלב וגו'.

116. בד אתא רב דימי, אמר, לא מצאה הנשמה תועלת לגוף, אלמלא מה שרמז בכאן, רמז הקרבנות. בטלו הקרבנות, לא בטלה התורה, האי דלא אעסק בקרבנות, ליעסק בתורה, ויתהני ליה יתיר.

117. דאמר רבי יוחנן, בשפירש הקודשא בריך הוא הקרבנות, אמר משה, רבוננו של עולם, תינח בזמן שהיו ישראל על אדמתם, בין שיגלו מעל אדמתם מה יעשו, אמר לו, משה, יעסקו בתורה ואני מוחל להם בשבילה, יותר מכל הקרבנות שבעולם, שנאמר זאת התורה לעולה למנחה וגו'. כלומר זאת התורה, בשביל עולה, בשביל מנחה, בשביל חטאת, בשביל אשם.

118. אמר רביכרוספדאי, האי מאן דמדבר בפומיה, בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשות, עניינא דקרבניא ותקרבנותא, ויכוון בהו, ברית ברותה הוא, דאינון מלאכי דמדברין חוביה, לאבאשא ליה, דלא יכלין למעבד ליה, אלמלא טיבו.

119. And what proves this to be true? This passage: "And, lo, three men stood by him." What is meant by "stood by him?" It means to judge him and pronounce his sentence. As soon as the soul of the righteous saw this, it is written: "And Avraham hastened into the tent..." What is meant by "into the tent?" This refers to the academy for the study of Torah. And what does he say? He says: "Make ready quickly three measures..." This refers to offerings, to which the soul alludes, as it is written: "And Avraham ran to the herd..." Then they are pleased and appeased, and cannot do him any harm.

120. Rabbi Pinchas continued the discussion with the passages: "and, behold, the plague had begun among the people..." (Bemidbar 17:12); "Moshe said to Aharon, Take a censer..." (Ibid. 11); "the plague was stayed" (Ibid. 13). WE LEARN THIS THROUGH THE USE OF SIMILAR WORDS. It says here "quickly" IN THE VERSE "AND TAKE IT QUICKLY TO THE CONGREGATION." There it is written: "Make ready quickly three measures." As in the first verse, the word "quickly" here applies to a sacrificial offering as a means of salvation. THIS SUPPORTS THE EXPLANATION OF RABBI CRUSPEDAI.

121. Rabbi Pinchas then said: Once, while I was walking, I met Eliyahu and said to him--Sir, may you say to me something for the well-being of the people. He said to me: The Holy One, blessed be He, signed a covenant with this provision. If the angels who report the transgressions of man enter his presence while human beings simultaneously recite the sacrificial offerings that Moshe commanded, and say them with full intention and with all their hearts, then all THE ANGELS will mention their names for good.

122. ELIYAHU SAID TO ME: Further, there is a signed covenant stating that when there is a plague among people, He sends forth this announcement among all the hosts of the heavens. If the humans enter the synagogues and yeshivahs on earth and recite with all their heart and soul the paragraph of the incense that Yisrael once performed, the plague will stop.

123. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Come and behold. It is written: "And Moshe said to Aharon, take a censer and put fire in it from off the altar, and put on incense." Aharon asked him, "Why?" Moshe replied: "for the wrath has gone out from before Hashem..." It then says: "and he ran into the midst of the congregation; and behold, the plague had begun among the people...And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed." (Bemidbar 17:11-13) Hence, the Angel of Destruction lost his dominion and the "plague was stayed." THUS, IT IS STATED EXPRESSLY THAT THE INCENSE STOPPED THE PLAGUE.

119. וּמֵאֵן יוֹכַח, הָאִי פִּרְשָׁתָא יוֹכַח, דְּכִיּוֹן דְּאָמַר וְהָנָה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נִצְבִּים עָלָיו, מָהוּ עָלָיו, לְעִיּוֹן בְּדִינָהּ, כִּיּוֹן דְּחָמָא נִשְׁמַתָּא דְּצִדִּיקָא כֶּךָ, מָה כְּתִיב, וַיִּמְהַר אַבְרָהָם הָאֵהָלָה וְגו'. מָהוּ הָאֵהָלָה. בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ. וּמָהוּ אוֹמֵר מִהְרֵי שְׁלֹשׁ סָאִים, עֲנִין הַקְּרָבָנוֹת, וְנִשְׁמַתָּא מִתְּכוּוֹנָת בָּהּ, הָהָ"ד וְאֵל הַבֶּקֶר רֶץ אַבְרָהָם. וּכְדִין נִיּוּחָא לָהּ, וְלֹא יִכְלִין לְאַבְאָשָׁא לִיָּהּ.

120. רַבִּי פִּנְחָס פָּתַח קְרָא, דְּכְתִיב וְהָנָה הַחֹל הַנֶּגֶף בָּעָם, וְכְתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל אֶהֱרֹן קַח אֶת הַמִּחְתָּה וְגו'. וְכְתִיב וַתַּעֲצֹר הַמִּגְפָּה. כְּתִיב הִכָּא מִהֵר, וְכְתִיב הֵתָם מִהְרֵי שְׁלֹשׁ סָאִים. מָה לְהֵלֶן קִרְבָּן לְאַשְׁתִּזְבָּא, אֵף כָּאֵן קִרְבָּן לְאַשְׁתִּזְבָּא.

121. אָמַר רַבִּי פִּנְחָס, זְמַנָּא חֲדָא הוּינָא אֲזֵלִי בְּאַרְחָא, וְעֶרְעִית בֵּיהּ בְּאַלְיָהּ, אֲמִינָא לִיָּהּ, לְיִמָּא לִי מִרְמָלָה דְּמַעֲלִי לְבְרִיּוּתָא, אָמַר לוֹ, קִיּוֹם גְּזִירָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְעָאֵלוּ קָמִיָּה כָּל אֱלִין מִלְּאַכִּינָא, דְּמִמֶּנּוּ לְאַדְכָּרָא חוּבֵי דְּבֵר נֶשׁ, דִּי בְּעִדָּנָא דִּידְכָרוֹן בְּנֵי אִנְשָׁא קִרְבָּנָא דְּמִנֵּי מֹשֶׁה, וְשׁוּי לְבִיָּה וְרַעוּתִיָּה בָּהּ, דְּכָלְהוּ יִדְכָרוֹן לִיָּה לְטָב.

122. וְעוֹד בְּעִדָּנָא דִּיעֶרַע מוֹתָנָא בְּבִנֵי אִנְשָׁא, קִיּוּמָא אֲתַגְזֹר, וְכוּזָא אַעֲבֹר עַל כָּל חִילָא דְּשִׁמְיָא, דְּאִי יוּעֲלוֹן בְּנוֹהֵי בְּאַרְעָא, בְּבִתֵּי כְּנַסְיוֹת וּבְבִתֵּי מִדְּרָשׁוֹת, וַיִּמְרוֹן בְּרַעוּת נַפְשָׁא וּלְבָא, עֲנִיּוּנָא דְּקִטּוֹרֶת בּוֹסְמִין, דִּהּוּ לָהּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, דִּיתַבְטַל מוֹתָנָא מִנִּיָּהּ.

123. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק בּוֹא וּרְאֵה, מָה כְּתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל אֶהֱרֹן קַח אֶת הַמִּחְתָּה וְתֵן עָלֶיהָ אֵשׁ מִעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשִׁים קִטְרֶת. אָמַר לוֹ אֶהֱרֹן לָמָּה. אָמַר כִּי יֵצֵא הַקֶּצֶף מִלִּפְנֵי ה' וְגו'. מָה כְּתִיב וַיֶּרֶץ אֶל תוֹךְ הַקָּהָל וְהָנָה הַחֹל הַנֶּגֶף בָּעָם. וְכְתִיב וַיַּעֲמֹד בֵּין הַמֵּתִים וּבֵין הַחַיִּים וַתַּעֲצֹר הַמִּגְפָּה. וְלֹא יִכִּיל מִלְּאַכָּא דְּמַחְבֵּלָא, לְשַׁלְטָאָה וְנִתְבַּטְּלָא מוֹתָנָא.

124. Rabbi Acha went to the village of Tarsha, where he stayed at an inn. The people of that village whispered about him, saying: A great man has arrived here; let us go to him. They said to him: Do you not have mercy on us because of the plague? He said to them: What plague? They replied: A plague struck the village seven days ago. And every day that passes, it becomes worse.

125. He responded: Let us go to the synagogue and plead for mercy in front of the Holy One, blessed be He. As they were on their way, people came up to them and told them the names of people who had died or were about to die. Rabbi Acha said to them: This is not the time to stand around talking, time presses.

126. Choose forty men from the worthiest among you and divide them into four groups. I shall be among you. Ten men should go to each of the four corners of the city. There, you shall recite, with the might of your souls, the phrases of the incense offering, which the Holy One, blessed be He, handed over to Moshe. And you should also recite the phrases of the sacrificial offerings.

127. And so they recited those phrases three times in each of the four corners of the city. He then told them: Let us visit those who are about to die. Choose from among you PEOPLE WHO MAY GO to their houses and recite WHAT WE HAVE SAID. When they finish, say these verses: "And Moshe said to Aharon, take a censer...And Aharon took...And he stood between the dead..." (Bemidbar 17:11-13) They followed these instructions, and then THE PLAGUE ceased.

128. They heard a voice that said: Secrets, primary secrets have been sweetened above; for the Judgment of heaven does not apply here, because people know how to cancel the Judgment! Rabbi Acha's heart became faint, and he fell asleep. He heard them say to him: As you have done this, go and tell them to repent, because they have sinned before Me! He woke up and made them repent and atone completely for their deeds. And they took it upon themselves never to cease studying Torah. And they changed the name of the village to Mata Machseya ('the village of Mercy'), BECAUSE THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SHOWED MERCY TOWARDS THE VILLAGE.

124. ר' אחא אזל לכפר טרשא, אתא לגבי אושפיזיה, לחישו עליהו כל בני מתא, אמרו גברא רבא אתא הכא, נזיל לגביה, אתו לגביה, אמרו ליה לא חס על אוברנא, אמר להו מהו. אמרו ליה, דאית שבעה יומין, דשארי מותנא במאתא, וכל יומא אתתקף ולא אתבטל.

125. אמר להו, נזיל לבי כנישתא, ונתבע רחמי מן קדם קודשא בריך הוא. עד דהו אזלי אתו ואמרו, פלוני ופלוני מיתו, ופלוני ופלוני נטו למות. אמר להו רבי אחא, לית עתא לקיימא הכי, דשעתא דחיקא.

126. אבל אפרישו מנכון ארבעין בני נשא, מאינן דזבאין יתיר, עשרה עשרה לארבעה חולקין, ואנא עמכון, עשרה לזווייתא דמאתא, ועשרה לזווייתא דמאתא, וכן לארבע זווייתא דמאתא, ואמרו ברעות נמשכון עניינא דקטרת בוסמין, דקודשא בריך הואיב למשה, ועניינא דקרנא עמיה.

127. עברו כן תלת זמנין, ואעברו בכל מאתא, לארבע זווייתא, והו אמרין כן, לבתר אמר להו, נזיל לאינן דאושטו למימת, אפרישו מנייכו לבתיהון, ואמרו כדן, וכד תסיימו אמרון אלין פסוקינא ויאמר משה אל אהרן קח את המחתה ותן עליה אש וגו'. ויקח אהרן וגו'. ויעמד בין המתים וגו'. וכן עברו ואתבטל מנייהו.

128. שמעו ההוא קלא דאמר, סתרא סתרא קמיותא, אוחילו לעילא, דהא דינא דשמיא לא אשרי הכא, דהא ידעי לבטלא ליה, חלש לביה דרבי אחא, אדמוך, שמע דאמרי ליה, בר עברת דא, עביר דא, זיל ואימא לון דיחזרון בתשובה, דחייבין אינן קמאי. קם ואחזר להו בתשובה שלימתא, וקבילו עליהו דלא יתבטלון מאורייתא לעלם, ואחליפו שמה דקרתא, וקארון לה מאתא מחסיא.

129. Rabbi Yehuda said: It is not enough for the righteous to cancel the decree, they must bless them as well. And you should know that it is indeed so! Because the soul says to the body: "Make ready quickly three measures of a fine meal," and other phrases. And so it cancels the sentence of Judgment. And what is then written? And he said: "I will return and definitely come back to you at this time next year." Behold, this is the blessing.

130. Now what do the angels do after seeing that this person has taken good advice upon himself? They go to the wicked and examine their cases, in order to judge them, as it is written: "And the men rose up from there, and looked toward S'dom" (Beresheet 18:16)--to the place of the wicked, in order to sentence them.

131. Rabbi Yehuda continued: This is the way of the righteous. As soon as he realizes that the angels are examining his case, he immediately repents, prays, and offers his fat and blood as a sacrifice before his Maker until the persecutor s have gone!

132. After saying: "And he lifted up his eyes and looked and, lo, three men stood by him..."--what does it say about the soul? "And Avraham hastened into the tent, to Sarah." He went in a rush, without any delay, as the soul hastens to the body to bring it back to the right path and search for anything that may atone for its sins, until the prosecutors depart from it.

133. Rabbi Eliezer says: Why does it say, "Now Avraham and Sarah were old, advanced in days, and the manner of women ceased to be with Sarah" (Beresheet 18:11)? Because the soul preserved its stature and the body remained on earth for all those years, "advanced in days." It is after many years and days that it ceases to come to and fro like other men and it is announced that the body shall be resurrected.

134. What does it say? "After I am grown old shall I have pleasure" (Ibid. 12). After being wasted in the dust for many years until this day, "shall I have pleasure" and be renewed. "...my lord being old also..." means that it has been many years since you left me, and you have not visited me since.

135. And the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "Is anything too hard for Hashem? At the time appointed..." (Ibid. 14). What is meant by "the time appointed?" This is the time that is known to me for the resurrection of the dead. "...and Sarah shall have a son," that is, it shall be revived as a three year old.

129. אמר רבינו יהודה, לא די להם לצדיקים, שמבטלין את הגזרה, אלא לאחר כן, שמברכין להם, ידע לך שכן הוא, דכיון שהנשמה אומרת לגוף, מהרי שלש סאים וגו'. וכל אותו הענין, ומבטל את הדין, מה בתיב ויאמר שוב אשוב אליך בעת חיה. הרי ברכה.

130. כיון שרואים אותה המלאכים, שזה לקח עצה לנפשו, מה עושים, הולכים אצל הרשעים, לעיין בדינם, ולעשות בהם משפט. הה"ד ויקומו משם האנשים וישקיפו על פני סדום, למקום הרשעים, לעשות בהם משפט.

131. דאמר רבי יהודה כך הרכו של צדיק, כיון שרואה שמעינין בדינו, אינו מתאחר לשוב ולהתפלל ולהקריב חלבו ודמו לפני צורו, עד שמסתלקין בעלי הדין ממנו.

132. דכיון שאמר וישא עיניו וירא והנה שלשה אנשים נצבים עליו, מה בתיב בנשמה, וימהר אברהם האלה אל שרה. בחפזו ובמהירות, בלא שום העכבה, מיד ממחרת הנשמה אצל הגוף, להחזירו למוטב, ולבקש במה שיתבפר לו, עד שמסתלקין ממנו בעלי הדין.

133. ר' אליעזר אומר, מ"ד ואברהם ושרה זקנים באים בימים חדל להיות לשרה ארח בנשים. אלא, כיון שהנשמה עומדת במעלתה, והגוף נשאר בארץ מכמה שנים, באים בימים. שנים וימים הרבה, וחדל לצאת ולבא ולעבור ארח בשאר כל אדם, אתבשר להחיות הגוף.

134. מהו אומר, אחרי בלותי היתה לי עדנה, אחרי בלותי בעפר מהיום כמה שנים, היתה לי עדנה וחדוש, ואדוני זקן, שהיום כמה שנים, שיצאת ממני, ולא הפקידני.

135. וקודשא בריך הואאמר, היפלא מה' דבר למועד. מהו למועד. אותו הידוע אצלי להחיות המתים. ולשרה בן. מלמד שיתחדש בן שלש שנים.

136. Rabbi Yehuda, the son of Rabbi Simon, said: Because the soul is replenished by the splendor of above, the Holy One, blessed be He, tells the angel Dumah--Go and inform the body of such and such, that I shall resurrect it in the future, at the appointed time, when I shall resurrect the righteous. And it replies: "After I am grown old shall I have pleasure?" After I have waxed in the dust and have dwelt in the soil and worms have eaten my flesh, and I am a clot of earth, shall I be resurrected?

137. The Holy One, blessed be He, says to the soul, as it is written: "And Hashem said to Avraham...Is anything too hard for Hashem? At the time appointed..." (Beresheet 18:13-14) which is known to Me, I will resurrect the dead. I will return to you that same body which is sacred, renewed as before, because you are like the holy angels. And that day shall be merry before Me and I shall rejoice in them, as it is written: "May the glory of Hashem endure forever, let Hashem rejoice in his works..." (Tehilim 104:31).  
End of Midrash Hane'elam

#### 8. "And he said I will certainly return to you"

The Creator informs Avraham, that though barren, his wife, Sarah, will be able to give birth to a child. The Zohar explains that only the Creator Himself possesses the key to childbirth.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Whereas man has the power to affect many miracles over nature by changing his own nature, it is only the Creator who can bestow the gift of childbirth. The words that convey this truth allow us to receive and share the energy of childbirth with all of those in need of it.

138. "And he said, 'I will certainly return to you at this season...'" (Beresheet 18:10). Rabbi Yitzchak asked: Why is it written: "I will certainly return?" I should have said, 'He will certainly return,' as the key to impregnating barren women is in the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He, and not in the hands of any other messenger.

139. As we have learned, there are three keys that were not handed over to any messenger: the keys of life, of the resurrection of the dead, and of the rains. As they were not handed over to any messenger, why is it written "I will certainly return," WHICH MEANS THAT THE ANGEL WILL RETURN "AT THIS TIME" AND VISIT HER? AND HE REPLIES: It is clear that the Holy One, blessed be He, who stood by them said this phrase. This is why it is written: "I will certainly return to you."

136. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בְּרַבִּי סִימוֹן, בִּיּוֹן שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה נִיזוֹנֶת מִזִּיּוֹה שֶׁל מַעְלָה, קוֹדֵשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר לְאוֹתוֹ הַמַּלְאָךְ הַנִּקְרָא דוּמָה, לֵךְ וּבַשָּׂר לְגוֹף פְּלוֹנִי, שְׁאֲנִי עֲתִיד לְהַחְיֹתוֹ, לְמוֹעֵד שְׁאֲנִי אֲחִיָּה אֶת הַצְדִּיקִים לְעֲתִיד לָבֵא. וְהוּא מַשִּׁיב, אַחֲרֵי בְלוֹתִי הִיָּתָה לִי עֲדָנָה. אַחֲרֵי בְלוֹתִי בַּעֲפָר, וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּאֶדְמָה, וְאָכַל בְּשָׂרִי רֶמָה, וְגוֹשׁ עֲפָר, תִּהְיֶה לִי חֲדוּשׁ.

137. קוֹדֵשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר לְנֶשְׁמָה, הֵה"ד וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָהָם וּגו'. הִיפְלֵא מַה' דְּבַר לְמוֹעֵד הַיָּדוּעַ אֲצִלִּי, לְהַחְיֹת אֶת הַמֵּתִים, אֲשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ אוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף שֶׁהוּא קָדוֹשׁ, מַחוּדָשׁ כְּבָרָאשׁוֹנָה, לְהִיּוֹתְכֶם מַלְאָכִים קְדוּשִׁים. וְאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם עֲתִיד לִפְנֵי לְשִׁמְחָה בָּהֶם, הֵה"ד יְהִי כְבוֹד ה' לְעוֹלָם וְשִׁמְחָה ה' בְּמַעֲשָׁיו (ע"כ מדרה"נ).

138. וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב שׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיָּה. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב, שׁוּב וְשׁוּב מִבְּעֵי לִיָּה, דְּהָא מִפְתָּחָא דָּא לְמַפְקַד עֲקֵרוֹת, בִּידָא דְקוֹדֵשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אִיהוּ, וְלֹא בִידָא דְשְׁלִיחָא אַחֲרָא.

139. כְּמָה דְתַנִּינָן, תֵּלַת מִפְתָּחוֹת אֵינּוֹן, דְּלֹא אֲתַמְסְרוּ בִידָא דְשְׁלִיחָא, דְּחַיָּה, וְתַחֲיִית הַמֵּתִים, וְגִשְׁמִים. וְהוּאִיל דְּלֹא אֲתַמְסְרוּ בִידָא דְשְׁלִיחָא, אֲמַאי כְּתִיב שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב. אֵלֹא וְדַאי קוֹדֵשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דְהוּא קָאִים עֲלֵיהּ, אָמַר מַלְאָךְ, בְּגִין כִּךְ כְּתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ.

140. Come and behold: wherever it is merely written: "And he said" or "And he called," WITHOUT MENTIONING WHO SAID OR CALLED, it is a reference to the Angel of the Covenant, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH, and no other. "And he said..." appears in the verse "And he said, if you will diligently hearken to the voice..." (Shemot 15:26) but the verse does not mention who said this. It is also written in the verse "And he called upon Moshe..." (Vayikra 1:1) but again, it does not say who called. Again, it is written: "And to Moshe, he said..." (Shemot 24:1) but it does not say who. In all these places, it is the Angel of the Covenant, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH. And everything has been said in reference to the Holy One, blessed be He, BECAUSE THE SHECHINAH IS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. This is why it is written: "And he said, I will certainly return to you...and, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son." **THUS, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO HAS THE KEY FOR IMPREGNATING BARREN WOMEN IN HIS HANDS, ALONE MAY SAY, "I WILL CERTAINLY RETURN..."**

#### 9. "And, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son"

When we do not pursue spiritual growth for the purpose of drawing close to The Creator, our true Father, we behave as disrespectful, uncaring children. Therefore, recognizing the Creator as our true Father should be motivation for spiritual growth and transformation.

##### The Relevance of this Passage

A child cannot truly grow and develop to its fullest without the tenderness, care, and nurturing that a loving parent provides. When we live life without appreciation or comprehension of the Creator, we cannot grow and develop spiritually. The influences of this passage arouse an awareness of the Creator, our true source and origin, along with all the other precious qualities found in children who seek security and comfort from a parent.

141. "And, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son" (Beresheet 18:10). HE ASKS: Why does the verse not read, 'And, lo, you shall have a son?' AND HE REPLIES: So that he may not assume that he will be born to Hagar as before. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion by saying: "A son honors his father, and a servant his master" (Malachi 1:6). The words "A son honors his father" refer to Yitzchak honoring Avraham.

142. When did he honor him? Yitzchak was 37 years old when Avraham bound him on the altar and offered him as a sacrifice. Avraham was so old that he could not have countered an attack from Yitzchak--not even a kick with one foot. But Yitzchak honored his father, who bound him like a lamb, AND SHOWED NO RESISTANCE, in order to fulfill his father's will.

143. An example of a servant honoring his master is Eliezer to Avraham, whom Avraham sent to Charan. There, Eliezer honored Avraham by fulfilling his wishes, as it is written: "And Hashem has blessed my master greatly..." (Beresheet 24:35), as well as "And he said, I am Avraham's servant" (Ibid. 34). He did all of this to show respect to Avraham.

144. Eliezer is a man who carried silver, gold, precious stones, and camels. He himself was good looking and impressive in appearance. Nevertheless, he did not say that he was a dear friend or a relative of Avraham. Instead, he said, "I am Avraham's servant," in order to raise the esteem of Avraham and make them respect him.

140. וְתָא חֲזִי, בְּכָל אֲתֵר דְּכְתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר סֶתֶם, אוּ וַיִּקְרָא סֶתֶם, הוּא מְלָאכָא דְבְרִית, וְלֹא אַחֲרָא. וַיֹּאמֶר: דְּכְתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר אִם שְׁמַע תִּשְׁמַע וְגו'. וַיֹּאמֶר, וְלֹא קֹאמֶר מֵאן הוּא. וַיִּקְרָא: דְּכְתִיב וַיִּקְרָא אֶל מֹשֶׁה, וְלֹא קֹאמֶר מֵאן הוּא. אָמַר: דְּכְתִיב וְאֵל מֹשֶׁה אָמַר וְגו'. וְלֹא אָמַר מֵאן הוּא. אֲלֵא בְּכָל הַנִּי מְלָאכָא דְבְרִית הוּא. וְכָלֵא בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתָתָמַר. וּבְגִין כֵּן, כְּתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ וְגו'. וְהִנֵּה בֶן וְגו'.

141. וְהִנֵּה בֶן לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְךָ. מ"ט לֹא כְתִיב וְהִנֵּה בֶן לָךְ, אֲלֵא בְּגִין דְּלֹא יַחֲשׁוּב דְּהָא מִן הַגֵּר אִיהוּ, כְּדִבְקֻדְמִיתָא. רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן פָּתַח וַיֹּאמֶר, בֶּן יִכְבֵּד אָב וְעַבְד אֲדוֹנֵיו. בֶּן יִכְבֵּד אָב, דָּא יִצְחָק לְאַבְרָהָם.

142. אֵימַתִּי כְּבִיד לִיה, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְעֶקֶד לִיה עַל גְּבִי מִדְּבַחָא, וּבַעַא לְמַקְרַב לִיה קִרְבָּנָא, וַיִּצְחָק בֶּר תִּלְתִּין וּשְׁבַע שָׁנִין הוּא, וְאַבְרָהָם הוּא סָבָא, דְּאִילוּ הוּא בַּעִיט בְּרַגְלָא חַר, לֹא יָכִיל לְמִיקַם קַמִּיה, וְאִיהוּ אֻקֵּיר לִיה לְאַבּוּי, וְעֶקֶד לִיה כְּחַד אֵימָרָא, בְּגִין לְמַעַבְד רַעוּתִיה דְּאַבּוּי.

143. וְעַבְד אֲדוֹנֵיו: דָּא אֱלִיעֶזֶר לְאַבְרָהָם. כִּד שְׂדֵר לִיה לְחֶרֶן, וְעַבְד כָּל רַעוּתִיה דְּאַבְרָהָם, וְאֻקֵּיר לִיה, כְּמָה דְּכְתִיב וְה' בֵּרַךְ אֶת אֲדוֹנֵי וְגו'. וְכְתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר עַבְד אַבְרָהָם אֲנִכִי. בְּגִין לְאֻקֵּיר לִיה לְאַבְרָהָם.

144. דְּהָא בֶּר נֶשׁ דְּהוּא מִיִּיתִי כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב, וְאַבְנֵי יָקָר וְגַמְלִין, וְאִיהוּ כְּדָקָא נְאוּת, שְׁמִיר בְּחִיזוּ, לֹא אָמַר דְּאִיהוּ רַחֲמָא דְאַבְרָהָם, אוּ קְרִיבָא דִּילִיה. אֲלֵא אָמַר, עַבְד אַבְרָהָם אֲנִכִי, בְּגִין לְסַלְקָא בְּשַׁבְחָא דְאַבְרָהָם, וְלְאֻקֵּיר לִיה בְּעִינֵיהּ.

145. Therefore, the verse reads, "A son honors his father, and a servant his master,"-- but you Yisrael, my children, you are ashamed to say that I am your father or that you are My servants. So "...if then I am a father, where is my honor...?" (Malachi 1:6). Thus, it is written: "And, lo...a son." This is definitely the son, who unlike Yishmael properly honors his father.

146. "And, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son," as she died because of him, WHEN SHE HEARD OF HIM BEING BOUND UPON THE ALTAR. And because of him, she suffered anguish in her soul until she bore him. "And, lo, Sarah...shall have a son" MEANS THAT she was exalted on his account when the Holy One, blessed be He, sat in Judgment on the world--because at that time, ON ROSH HASHANAH, WHEN YITZCHAK WAS BORN, "Hashem visited Sarah..." Clearly, He remembered Sarah for the sake of Yitzchak. This is why "Sarah...shall have a son." ANOTHER EXPLANATION OF "And, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son" is that BECAUSE the woman receives the child from the man, THE FEMALE HAS THE CHILD. THEREFORE, THE VERSE SAYS, "AND, LO, SARAH...SHALL HAVE A SON."

147. "And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him" (Beresheet 18:10). AND HE ASKS: What do the words "which was behind him" mean? Should it not have been written: 'and she was behind him,' AS IF TO SAY THAT SHE WAS BEHIND THE INFORMING ANGEL? HE REPLIES: There is a secret here. "And Sarah heard it" REFERS TO the words "tent door," which correspond to the lower grade, that is, the gate of faith, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH. "...which was behind him..." MEANS THAT the upper grade, WHO IS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, confirmed the declaration. Ever since Sarah came into the world, she did not hear anything from the Holy One, blessed be He, save at that moment.

148. Yet another explanation is that Sarah sat at the "tent door" in order to listen to their words. And she heard the good news that Avraham received. THIS IS WHY IT IS WRITTEN: "AND SARAH HEARD IT IN THE TENT DOOR, which (he) was behind him." IT MEANS THAT Avraham sat behind the Shechinah.

149. "Now Avraham and Sarah were old, advanced in days (lit. 'coming with days')..." (Beresheet 18:11). AND HE ASKS: What is meant by 'coming with days'? AND HE REPLIES: THIS MEANS THAT THEY ARE 'COMING' to the end of their 'days.' Avraham was a hundred years old, and Sarah was ninety. They reached their fill of days, as is proper. 'Coming with days' can be read as 'for the day has come,' WHICH CAN MEAN THAT the day has ended. HERE, AS WELL, "COMING WITH THE DAYS" MEANS THAT THEIR DAYS WERE COMPLETED.

150. "...and the manner of women ceased to be with Sarah..." At that hour, she suddenly saw herself having "pleasure" again, AS THE "MANNER OF WOMEN" REVIVED WITHIN HER. Thus she said: "...my lord being old also..." meaning that Avraham was too old to be able to beget children. HOWEVER, SHE DID NOT SAY THAT SHE HERSELF WAS TOO OLD.

145. וְעַל דָּאבִּן יִכְבֵּד אָב וְעַבֵּד אֲדֹנָיו. וְאַתּוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנִי, קִלְנָא בְּעֵינֵינוּ לִזְמַר דְּאָנָא אַבּוּכוֹן, אוּ דְּאִתּוֹן עֲבָדִין לִי. וְאִם אָב אֲנִי אֵיךְ כְּבוֹדִי וְגו'. בְּגִין כְּרוּהֵנָּה בִּן: דָּא הוּא בִּן וְדָאִי, וְלֹא יִשְׁמַעְאֵל. דָּא הוּא בִּן דְּאוֹקִיר לְאַבּוּי כְּדָקָא חֲזִי.

146. וְהֵנָּה בִּן לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ. בִּן לְשָׂרָה, דְּבִגְיִנְיָה מִיתָת, דְּבִגְיִנְיָה כְּאִיבַת נַפְשָׁה, עַד דְּנִמְקַת מִינָּה. וְהֵנָּה בִּן לְשָׂרָה. לְאַסְתִּלְקָא בְּגִינְיָה, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יְתִיב בְּדִינָא עַל עֲלָמָא. דְּכִדִּין וְה' פִּקֵּד אֶת שָׂרָה וְגו'. דְּהָא מַדְבְּרִי לְשָׂרָה בְּגִינְיָה דִּיצְחָק. וְעַל דְּאִיְהוּ בִּן לְשָׂרָה. וְהֵנָּה בִּן לְשָׂרָה. דְּהָא נֹקְבָא נְטִילָא לְבָרָא מִן דְּכוּרָא.

147. וְשָׂרָה שׁוֹמַעַת פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו. מֵאִי וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו, וְהִיא אַחֲרָיו מִבְּעֵי לִיָּה. אֶלָּא רָזָא אֵיְהוּ, וְשָׂרָה שׁוֹמַעַת, מֵה דִּהוּה אֲמַר פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל, דָּא דְּרָגָא תַּתָּא פֶּתַח דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא. וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו. דְּאוּרִי לִיָּה, דְּרָגָא עֲלָאָה. מִן יוֹמָא דִּהוּת שָׂרָה בְּעֲלָמָא, לֹא שְׁמַעַת מִלָּה דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בִּר הָהוּא שַׁעְתָּא.

148. דְּבִר אַחֲרֵי, דִּהוּת יִתְבָּא שָׂרָה פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל, בְּגִין לְמַשְׁמַע מַלְיָן, וְהִיא שְׁמַעַת הָאִי מִלָּה דְּאִתְבַּשְׁר בֵּה אַבְרָהָם. וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו. אַבְרָהָם, דִּהוּה יְתִיב אַחֲוָרִי דְּשְׁכִינְתָּא.

149. וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקֵנִים בָּאִים בְּיָמִים. מֵאִי בָּאִים בְּיָמִים. שְׁעוּרִין דְּיוֹמִין דְּאִתְחַזִּי בְּרִין לָהּ, חַד מֵאָה, וְחַד תַּשְׁעִים, עָאלוּ בְּיוֹמִין, שְׁעוּרָא דְּיוֹמִין, כְּדָקָא יָאוּת. בָּאִים בְּיָמִים. כְּדָבֵר אַחֲרֵי בָּא הַיּוֹם, דְּאִעֲרֵב יוֹמָא לְמִיעֵל.

150. חֲדַל לְהִיּוֹת לְשָׂרָה אֶרַח כְּנָשִׁים. וְהִיא שַׁעְתָּא חֲמַת גְּרָמָה בְּעַדְנָא אַחֲרָא. וּבְגִין כְּרָאמְרָה וְאֲדֹנִי זְקֵן. דְּהָא אֵיְהוּ לֹא כְּדָאִי לְאוּלְדָּא, בְּגִין דְּאֵיְהוּ סָבָא.

10. "Her husband is known in the gates"

Rabbi Yehuda reveals a powerful secret: The Light of the Creator manifests itself in direct proportion to a person's degree of certainty in the reality of the Creator. If we doubt the existence of the Creator, there is no God force in our personal life. It is our consciousness that creates our existence.

For this reason, it is only our absolute conviction and certainty that will bring forth the Creator's existence and influence in our lives, giving us an active role in the process of Creation.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

All of us are born into this world with varying degrees of doubt in the existence of the Creator. Moreover, the essence of spiritual work and the notion of free will involves removing these layers of uncertainty throughout our life. Doubt, however, is a formidable foe requiring a large measure of certitude and conviction in return. Certainty in the existence of the Creator emerges from this passage, combined with a recognition in the power of our consciousness to influence and shape our reality.

151. Rabbi Yehuda said: "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land" (Mishlei 31:23). Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, was exalted in His glory, because He is hidden and greatly elevated. Since the creation of the world, nobody has ever been able to grasp and conceive His entire wisdom. Thus, no one is able to comprehend it.

151. ר' יהודה פתח, נודע בשערים בעלה בשבתו עם זקני ארץ. תא חזי קודשא בריך הוא אסתלק ביקריה, דאיהו גניז וסתים, בעלויא סגיא. לאו איתוי בעלמא, ולא הוה מן יומא דאתברי עלמא, דיכול לקיימא על חכמתא דיליה, ולא יכול לקיימא ביה.

152. He is concealed and exalted high above the reach of all the lower and supernal beings. He is so far above that they all proclaim: "Blessed be the glory of Hashem from His place" (Yechezkel 3:12). The people on earth say that THE SHECHINAH is high above, as it is written: "His glory is above the heavens," (Tehilim 113:4) but the supernal beings say that THE SHECHINAH is down below, as it is written: "His glory is over all the earth" (Tehilim 57:12). So that all the supernal and human beings declare: "Blessed be the glory of Hashem from His place," because He is unknowable, and no one is able to grasp Him. Thus, how does one explain the verse: "Her husband is known in the gates"?

152. בגין דאיהו גניז וסתים, ואסתלק לעילא לעילא, וכלהו עלאי ותתאי לא יכלין לאתדבקא, עד דכלהו אמרין ברוך כבוד ה' ממקומו. תתאי אמרי דאיהו לעילא, דכתיב על השמים כבודו. עלאי אמרי דאיהו לתתא, דכתיב על כל הארץ כבודך. עד דכלהו עלאי ותתאי, אמרי ברוך כבוד ה' ממקומו. בגין דלא אתיידע, ולא הוה מאן דיכול לקיימא ביה, ואת אמרת נודע בשערים בעלה.

153. Most certainly, "Her husband is known in the gates" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, who is known and conceived according to what each one assumes in his mind and is able to grasp with the Spirit of Wisdom. Thus, he is able to understand according to what he is able to assume. Therefore, it is written: "Her husband is known in the gates (Heb. she'arim)," THAT IS, THOSE ASSUMPTIONS (HEB. SHI'URIM), WHICH EVERYONE FORMS ACCORDING TO HIS OWN MIND, even though full knowledge of Him is far beyond the reach of anyone.

153. אלא ודאי, נודע בשערים בעלה. דא קודשא בריך הוא. דאיהו אתיידע ואתדבק, לפום מה דמשער בלביה, כל חד, במה דיכול לאדבקא ברוחא דחכמתא. ולפום מה דמשער בלביה, הכי אתיידע בלביה. ובגיני כך, נודע בשערים, באינון שערים. אבל דאתיידע בדקא נאות, לא הוה מאן דיכול לאדבקא ולמנדע ליה.

154. Rabbi Shimon asks: "Her husband is known in the gates." What are the gates? They are the same as the gates mentioned in: "Lift up your heads, gates, and lifted them up, you everlasting doors" (Tehilim 24:9). It is through these gates, which are the supernal grades, that the Holy One, blessed be He, is known. For were it not FOR THESE GATES, no one would have been able to commune with Him.

154. רבי שמעון אמר, נודע בשערים בעלה. מאן שערים. בדבר אחרשאו שערים ראשיכם והנשאו פתחי עולם. ובגין אלו שערים, דאינון דרגין עלאין, בגינייהו אתיידע קודשא בריך הוא. ואי לא, לא יכלין לאתדבקא ביה.

155. Come and behold: even the soul of man cannot be understood directly. It is grasped only through the members of the body, which represent the grades THAT BELONG TO THEM, which reveal the actions of the soul. This is why THE SOUL is conceivable and at the same time inconceivable. IT IS CONCEIVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY, BUT IS NOT CONCEIVABLE IN ITS OWN ESSENCE. In such a manner, the Holy One, blessed be He, is conceivable and inconceivable. He is the soul to the soul and the spirit to the spirit, hidden and concealed from all. But to he WHO MERITS those gates, NAMELY, THE SUPERNAL GRADES that are the openings of the soul, the Holy One, blessed be He, is made known. SO HE IS CONCEIVABLE BY THE SUPERNAL GRADES, WHICH ARE HIS DOINGS, BUT HE IS INCONCEIVABLE FROM THE ASPECT OF HIS OWN ESSENCE.

156. Come and behold: there is gate upon gate, grade upon grade, through which the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, is made known. This REFERS TO the "tent door," which is the gate of righteousness, WHICH IS MALCHUT. Thus, it is written: "Open to me the gates of righteousness" (Tehilim 118:19). And this is the first gate to enter. From this gate, all the other supernal gates can be seen. So whoever enters this gate knows the other gates as well, because they all rest on it.

157. But now, this LOWER gate, WHICH IS CALLED THE "TENT DOOR" AND THE "GATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS" is unknown, because the children of Yisrael are in exile. As a result, all the gates are gone from it. Thus, they are incapable of knowledge and conception. But when Yisrael shall return from exile, all the supernal grades will be destined to dwell upon this gate of righteousness, as should properly be.

158. Then, people will have knowledge of the supernal Wisdom, of which they previously knew nothing, as it is written: "And the spirit of Hashem shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Hashem" (Yeshayah 11:2). In the future, all these shall rest upon this lower gate, which is the "tent door," NAMELY MALCHUT. And they shall all rest upon King Mashiach to judge the world, as it is written: "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor..." (Ibid. 4)

155. תָּא חֲזִי, דְּהָא נִשְׁמַתָּא דְּבִר נֶשׁ, לֹא אִיהוּ מֵאן דִּיכּוּל לְמַנְדֵּעַ לֵה, אֱלָא בְּגִין אֲלִין שְׂוִימִין דְּגוּפָא, וְאִינוּן דְּרִגִין דְּעִבְרִין אֻמְנוּתָא דְּנִשְׁמַתָּא, בְּגִין כְּךָ אֲתִידַע וְלֹא אֲתִידַע. כְּךָ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֲתִידַע וְלֹא אֲתִידַע. בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ נִשְׁמַתָּא לְנִשְׁמַתָּא, רוּחָא לְרוּחָא, גָּנִיז וְטָמִיר מְכַלָּא, אֲבָל בְּאִינוּן שְׁעִירִים, דְּאִינוּן פְּתִיחִין לְנִשְׁמַתָּא אֲתִידַע קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

156. תָּא חֲזִי, אֵית פְּתִיחָא לְפְתִיחָא, וּדְרָגָא לְדְרָגָא, וּמְנִיחֵהוּ יָדִיעַ יִקְרָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. פְּתַח הָאֵהָל, דָּא הוּא פְּתִיחָא דְּצֶדֶק. כְּדָבָר אַחֲרֵפְתָּחוּ לִי שְׁעָרֵי צֶדֶק וְגו'. דָּא פְּתִיחָא קְדָמָאָה, לֹאֲעֵלָא בֵּיהּ, וּבִהְיָאִי פְּתִיחָא, אֲתַחֲזִין כָּל שְׂאָר פְּתִיחִין עֲלָאִין, מֵאן דְּזָכִי לֵהָאִי, זָכִי לְמַנְדֵּעַ בֵּיהּ, וּבְכֻלָּהוּ שְׂאָר פְּתִיחִין, בְּגִין דְּכֻלָּהוּ שְׂרָאן עֲלֵיהּ.

157. וְהִשְׁתָּא דְּפְתִיחָא דָּא לֹא אֲתִידַע, בְּגִין דִּישְׂרָאֵל בְּגָלוּתָא, וְכֻלָּהוּ פְּתִיחִין אֲסִתְּלִקוּ מִנֵּיהּ, וְלֹא יִכְלִין לְמַנְדֵּעַ וּלְאַתְדַּבְּקָא. אֲבָל בְּזִמְנָא דִּיפְקִין יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן גָּלוּתָא, זְמִינִין כֻּלָּהוּ דְּרִגִין עֲלָאִין, לְמִשְׁרֵי עֲלֵיהּ כְּדָקָא יֵאוּת.

158. וּכְדִין יִנְדַּעוּן בְּנֵי עֲלְמָא, חֲכָמָתָא עֲלָאָה יִקְרָא, מַה דְּלֹא הוּוּ יָדְעִין מִקְדָּמַת דְּנָא. דְּכִתְיִב וְנָחָה עָלֵינוּ רוּחַ ה' רוּחַ חֲכָמָה וּבִינָה רוּחַ עֲצָה וְגִבּוּרָה רוּחַ דַּעַת וְיִרְאַת ה'. כֻּלָּהוּ זְמִינִין לֹאֲשֻׁרָאָה עַל הָאִי פְּתִיחָא תַּתָּאָה, דְּאִיהוּ פְּתַח הָאֵהָל. וְכֻלָּהוּ זְמִינִין לֹאֲשֻׁרָאָה עַל מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא, בְּגִין לְמִידִן עֲלְמָא. דְּכִתְיִב וְשָׁפֵט בְּצֶדֶק דְּלִים וְגו'.

# 11. "And he said, 'I will certainly return to you'"

The Zohar expounds upon the Right Column aspect of Avraham and the Left Column aspect of Isaac in the metaphysical scheme of things. Both the Right and Left Columns of energy are basic building blocks in Creation, similar to the proton and the electron. This spiritual truth is conveyed through the biblical story where Avraham names his son Isaac as opposed to the tradition of the mother naming the child. The story is a metaphor, indicating the importance of the Right and Left Column--the desire to share and the desire to receive, respectively.

## The Relevance of this Passage

Mankind's behavioral actions always embody a particular blend of the Right and Left columns of energy--our ego's desire to receive versus our soul's desire to share. We develop an awareness of the importance of the actions we take through the Right and Left Column pathways. This allows us to continually seek balance through the process of transforming our desire to receive for the self alone into actions of receiving for the sake of sharing with others.

159. Therefore, it was this grade, NAMELY THE "TENT DOOR," WHICH IS MALCHUT, that informed Avraham OF YITZCHAK'S BIRTH, as we have explained the words: "And he said, I will certainly return to you at this season..." Although it reads, "And he said," it does not say who said. So this is the "tent door," BECAUSE "AND HE SAID" REFERS TO THE SHECHINAH. And Sarah heard this grade, WHICH IS THE "TENT DOOR," from which she had heard nothing before, AS IT WAS SPEAKING WITH AVRAHAM, as it is written: "And Sarah heard it THE WORDS OF the tent door," which declared "I will certainly return to you at this season, and, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son."

160. Come and behold: the love of the Holy One, blessed be He, for Avraham is so great that Yitzchak was not born until after Avraham was circumcised. And only after he was circumcised was he informed of Yitzchak, because only then was the seed holy; before he was circumcised, the seed was not holy. And then it became as it is written: "wherein is its seed after its kind," (Beresheet 1:12) WHICH REFERS TO A KIND AS HOLY AS AVRAHAM.

161. Come and behold: before Avraham was circumcised, his seed was not holy because it passed through the foreskin and clung to the lower foreskin. But after he was circumcised, his seed issued in holiness and it clung to the holiness of above, and he begot up above. Thus, Avraham clung to his grade, WHICH IS CHESED, properly. Come and behold: when Avraham begot Yitzchak, he was born holy, as should properly be. So these waters, WHICH ALLUDE TO AVRAHAM WHO IS CHESED, conceived and bore darkness. IN OTHER WORDS, YITZCHAK, WHO IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT COLUMN, WAS DARKNESS, BEFORE HE WAS CLOTHED WITH THE CHASSADIM OF AVRAHAM. AFTER HE ISSUED FROM AVRAHAM, HE WAS CLOTHED BY HIS CHASSADIM AND BECAME 'LIGHT.'

162. One day, Rabbi Elazar asked his father, Rabbi Shimon: Why did the Holy One, blessed be He, name him Yitzchak before he was born, as it is written: "and you shall call his name Yitzchak?" (Beresheet 17:19). AND WE SHOULD NOT SAY IT WAS BECAUSE SHE SAID "ELOHIM HAS MADE LAUGHTER (HEB. TZECHOK) FOR ME..." (BERESHEET 21:6). Because even before he came into the world, the Holy One, blessed be He, called him Yitzchak, BEFORE REASON WAS GIVEN FOR IT.

163. He replied: But we have learned that fire, WHICH IS THE LEFT ASPECT AND GVURAH, received water, WHICH IS THE RIGHT ASPECT AND CHESED, as water came from the aspect of Gvurah. THIS MEANS THAT THE LEFT AND RIGHT WERE COMBINED AND BECAME INCLUDED IN EACH OTHER. THUS, THE LEFT ASPECT BECAME THE ASPECT OF THE WINE THAT GLADDENS ELOHIM AND MAN. And it is required of the Levites, WHO ARE DRAWN FROM THE LEFT COLUMN, that they bring happiness to that side, NAMELY THE LEFT SIDE, with musical instruments and praising songs that correspond to that side. THIS MEANS THAT MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AND PRAISING SONGS ARE ALSO DRAWN FROM THE LEFT SIDE. And this is why Yitzchak means laughter and enjoyment; he came from that side, THE LEFT SIDE, and clung to it.

159. בְּגִינִי כֵן, כִּד אֶתְבָּשֶׁר אֲבִרְהָם, הָאִי דְרָגָא הוּא אֲמַר, בְּמָה דְאֶתְמַר, דְּכִתִּיב וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיָּה. וַיֹּאמֶר, לֹא כְתִיב מֵאֵן הָוָה, וְדָא הוּא פְתַח הָאֵהֶל. וְעַל דָּא, וְשָׂרָה שׁוֹמְעַת, הָאִי דְרָגָא דִּהּוּה מְלִיל עֲמִיָּה, מֵאֵן דְּלֹא הָוָה שְׁמַעַת מִקְדָּמַת דְּנָא. דְּכִתִּיב וְשָׂרָה שׁוֹמְעַת פְּתַח הָאֵהֶל, דִּהּוּה מְבִשֶׁר וַיֹּאמֶר, שׁוּב אֲשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיָּה וְהִנֵּה בֶן לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ.

160. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּמָה הוּא חֲבִיבוּתָא דִּקְדוּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְגַבִּיָּה דְאֲבִרְהָם, דִּהָא לֹא נִפְק מִנִּיהּ יִצְחָק עַד דְּאֶתְגַּזֵּר, לְבָתֵּר דְּאֶתְגַּזֵּר אֶתְבָּשֶׁר בֵּיהּ בִּיִצְחָק, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ כְדִין זִרְעָא קְדִישָׁא, וְעַד לֹא אֶתְגַּזֵּר, לֹא אִיהוּ זִרְעָא קְדִישָׁא. וְכִדִּין אִיהוּ, בְּמָה דְכִתִּיב אֲשֶׁר זִרְעוּ בּוֹ לְמִינִיהּ.

161. וְתָא חֲזִי עַד לֹא אֶתְגַּזֵּר אֲבִרְהָם, הָהוּא זִרְעָא דִּילִיָּה לֹא הָוָה קְדִישָׁא, בְּגִין דְּנִפְק בְּגוֹ עֶרְלָה, וְאֶתְדַּבֵּק בְּעֶרְלָה לְתַתָּא. לְבָתֵּר דְּאֶתְגַּזֵּר, נִפְק הָהוּא זִרְעָא בְּגוֹ קְדִישָׁא, וְאֶתְדַּבֵּק בְּקְדוּשָׁה דְּלַעִילָא, וְאוֹלִיד לְעִילָא, וְאֶתְדַּבֵּק אֲבִרְהָם בְּדִרְגָּה כְּדָקָא יָאוּת. תָּא חֲזִי, כִּד אוֹלִיד אֲבִרְהָם לִיִצְחָק, נִפְק קְדִישָׁא כְּדָקָא יָאוּת. וְהָאִי מֵאִי אַעֲדוּ, וְאוֹלִידוּ חֲשׂוּכָא.

162. רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר שְׁאִיל יוֹמָא חַד, לְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אַבּוּי, אֲמַר לוֹ הָאִי דְקָרָא לֵיהּ קְדוּשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יִצְחָק, דְּכִתִּיב, וְקָרָאת אֶת שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק, אֲמַאי, דִּהָא אֶתְחַזִּי דְּעַד לֹא נִפְק לְעֵלְמָא, קָרָא לֵיהּ יִצְחָק.

163. אֲמַר לוֹ הָאִי אֶתְמַר, דְּאֲשָׁא נָטַל מִיָּא, דִּהָא מִיָּא מְסֻטְרָא דְּגְבוּרָה קָא אֶתִּין. וְדָא שְׁאִיל, לְלוּאִי דְּאִינוּן בְּדִיחִין לְהָוָה סְטָרָא, בְּמֵאנִי זְמַר וְתִשְׁבַּח, לְקַבִּיל הָאִי סְטָרָא, בְּגִין כְּרִיצָחָא אִיהוּ חֲדָה, בְּגִין דְּאֶתִּי מִהָוָה סְטָרָא, וְאֶתְדַּבֵּק בֵּיהּ.

164. Come and behold: Yitzchak himself is pleasure and laughter because he exchanged water for fire, and fire for water. THUS, THE LEFT AND RIGHT ARE INCLUDED IN EACH OTHER--BECAUSE YITZCHAK IS THE ASPECT OF THE LEFT, WHICH IS THE FIRE THAT BECAME INCLUDED WITHIN THE WATER, WHICH IS CHESED AND THE RIGHT ASPECT. THIS CAUSES ALL DELIGHT AND HAPPINESS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE LEFT SIDE. This is why the Holy One, blessed be He, named him YITZCHAK (LIT. 'HE WILL LAUGH') even before he came into the world, and announced it to Avraham.

165. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, allowed all children, EXCEPT YITZCHAK, to be named by their parents. Even women named their children. But here the Holy One, blessed be He, did not allow Yitzchak's mother to name him--only Avraham, as it is written: "and you shall call his name Yitzchak" (Beresheet 17:19)--you and no one else, in order to exchange water with fire, and fire with water, WHICH REFERS TO THE INCLUSION OF THE LEFT WITH THE RIGHT AND THE RIGHT WITH THE LEFT, so that Yitzchak may be included within his side, THE RIGHT SIDE.

## 12. "And the men rose up from there"

Before any negative occurrence befalls an individual, the Creator always sends us a gift. This gift is an opportunity to perform a positive action so that we can protect ourselves from any judgments decreed against us. This principle is concealed in the Biblical story of Avraham. The three angels were sent to Avraham by the Creator. When Avraham invites these three angels into his home, it is an act of true kindness. Consider Avraham's situation: He was one hundred years old, it was the third day after his circumcision, which is the most painful day, and the weather was unbearably hot. Nevertheless, Avraham put aside his own self interest and welcomed the three strangers [angels] into his home where he bathed and fed them. This positive action saved the life of Avraham's nephew, Lot, when the cities of Sodom and Gomorra were destroyed.

### The Relevance of this Passage

It is human nature to be governed by the primal instinct of self-survival. Yet, it is also uniquely human to put aside one's own needs in consideration of others, albeit, a much more difficult duty to perform. We are empowered with the strength to overcome our natural tendency to be self-absorbed in our own problems. We create the consciousness and awareness to recognize opportunities for sharing. In turn, our positive actions of sharing will give us the ability to overcome or circumvent difficult situations in life.

166. After Avraham was told about Yitzchak, it is written: "And the men rose up from there, and looked toward S'dom" (Beresheet 18:16). Rabbi Elazar said: Come and behold. The Holy One, blessed be He, shows goodness to all beings, but especially to those who follow His path. And even when He decides to judge the world, He arranges for anyone who loves Him to perform a meritorious act before the world is punished.

167. This corresponds to what we have learned. When the Holy One, blessed be He, loves a person, He sends him a present. And what is THAT PRESENT? It is a poor man for whom he can perform a meritorious act. So now that he is meritorious and deserving, the Holy One, blessed be He, draws a cord of grace from the right side upon him. He winds the cord around his head and marks him, so that when Judgment falls on the world, the Angel of Destruction will take notice of him AND NOT HURT HIM. Because he raises his eyes and notices that mark, he avoids him. This is why the Holy One, blessed be He, arranged beforehand to make him meritorious.

164. תָּא חֲזִי, יִצְחָק בְּרִיחוּתָא, חֲרוּה דְּאַחֲלָף מִיָּא בְּאִשָּׁא, וְאִשָּׁא בְּמִיָּא. וְעַד אֶקְרִי הָבִי. וּבְגִין בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא קְרִי לִיה הָבִי, עַד לֹא יִפּוּק לְעֵלְמָא, שְׂמָא דָּא, וְאוּדַע לִיה לְאַבְרָהָם.

165. וְתָא חֲזִי, בְּכֻלְהוּ אַחֲרֵינִין שְׁבַק לֹון קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְמַקְרִי לֹון שְׂמָהּ, וְאַפִּילוּ נָשִׁי הוּוּ קְרָאן לְבְנֵיהוּ שְׂמָהּ, אֲבָל הֵכָא לֹא שְׁבַק קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַמִּיהָ, לְמַקְרִי לִיה שְׂמָא, אֶלָּא לְאַבְרָהָם, דְּכְתִיב וְקִרְאתָ אֶת שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק, אֲנִי וְלֹא אַחֲרָא, בְּגִין לְאַחֲלָפָא מִיָּא בְּאִשָּׁא, וְאִשָּׁא בְּמִיָּא, לְאַכְלָלָא לִיה בְּסִטְרִיהָ.

166. בֵּינֹון דְּאַתְבָּשָׁר אַבְרָהָם בִּיצְחָק, מַה כְּתִיב וַיִּקְוּמוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּשְׁקִימוּ עַל פְּנֵי סְדוֹם. רַבִּי אֱלֵעָזָר אָמַר, תָּא חֲזִי, בְּמַה אָנְהָג קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא טִיבוּ עִם כָּל בְּרִיּוֹן, וְכָל שָׁכֵן, לְאַיְנוּן דְּאִזְלוּ בְּאוֹרְחוֹ, דְּאַפִּילוּ בְּזִמְנָא דְּבַעֲי לְמִידָן עֵלְמָא, אִיהוּ גְרִים לְמֵאן דְּרָחִים לִיה, לְמַזְכִּי בְּמַלְהָ, עַד לֹא יִיתִי הֵהוּא דִּינָא לְעֵלְמָא.

167. דְּתַנִּינֵן, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא רָחִים לִיה לְבַר נָשׁ, מְשַׁדֵּר לִיה דּוֹרוּנָא, וּמֵאן אִיהוּ מְסַכְנָא, בְּגִין דִּיזְכִּי בִיה. וּבֵינֹון דְּזָכִי בִיה, אִיהוּ אֲמַשִּׁיךְ עֲלִיהָ, חַד חוּטָא דְּחָסֵד, דְּאַתְמַשֵּׁךְ מְסִטֵּר יְמִינָא, וּפְרִישׁ אֲרִישִׁיָּה, וְרָשִׁים לִיה, בְּגִין דְּכַד יִיתִי דִּינָא לְעֵלְמָא, הֵהוּא מַחְבֵּלָא יִזְדַּהֵר בִּיה, וְזָקִיף עֵינָיו וְחָמָא לְהֵהוּא רְשִׁימוֹ וְכִדִּין אֶסְתַּלַּק מִנִּיהָ, וְאִזְדַּהֵר בִּיה. בְּגִינֵי כֵךְ, אֶקְרִים לִיה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּמַה דִּיזְכִּי.

168. Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, planned to execute Judgment on S'dom, He prepared a meritorious act for Avraham by sending him a present, WHICH REFERS TO THE THREE ANGELS. Because of them, he became deserving. Thereby, he saved Lot, the son of his brother, from destruction. This is why it is written: "and Elohim remembered Avraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow," (Beresheet 19:29) and not, 'and Elohim remembered Lot.' As a result of Avraham's meritorious act, he was saved. And "remembered" MEANS THAT He remembered the previous meritorious act that He performed with the three angels.

169. In the same manner, when harsh Judgment hangs over the world, the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers the charitable deeds that men performed. Every time a person performs a meritorious action, it is noted above. THEREFORE, even when there is harsh judgment on the world, the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers the good that a person has done and has merited through other people. As it is written: "but charity (righteousness) delivers from death" (Mishlei 11:4). According to this, the Holy One, blessed be He, arranged in advance that opportunity for Avraham to perform a meritorious act, so that by his merit Lot would be saved.

170. Come and behold: "And the men rose up from there, and looked toward S'dom." They rose from the meal that Avraham prepared for them, thereby performing a meritorious act. And even though they were angels, WHO DO NOT NEED A MEAL, he nevertheless attained merit because of them. And they purposely left no food over from the meal, so that Avraham would attain merit through the act, as it is written: "and they did eat," as by their fire the food was eaten and consumed.

171. You might say: But there were three angels: one of fire, one of water, and one of air. SINCE GAVRIEL IS MADE OF FIRE, MICHAEL IS MADE OF WATER, AND REFAEL OF AIR, ONLY GAVRIEL COULD HAVE CONSUMED THE FOOD WITH HIS FIRE. MICHAEL AND REFAEL WERE NOT ABLE TO DO SO, AS THEY ARE NOT MADE OF FIRE. AND HE REPLIES: Each and every one of them includes the others in himself. SO EACH ONE OF THEM WAS MADE OF FIRE, WATER, AND AIR. This is why IT IS WRITTEN ABOUT ALL OF THEM: "and they did eat"--THE FIRE IN EACH OF THEM CONSUMED THE FOOD. Similarly to this, "and they saw Elohim, and did eat and drink," (Shemot 24:11) MEANING that they were indeed nourished from THE SPLENDOR OF the Shechinah, WHICH IS CONSIDERED AS EATING. Thus, in this PASSAGE AS WELL, "and they did eat" MEANS THAT they nourished themselves, THROUGH THEIR EATING, from the side to which Avraham was attached, NAMELY THE RIGHT SIDE, WHICH IS CHASSADIM. And this is why they left nothing from what Avraham offered them--SO THAT THEY COULD DRAW DOWN AS MUCH CHASSADIM AS POSSIBLE.

172. On the same principle, one should drink from the cup of benediction, so that by his drinking he will merit the blessing of above. Hence, THE ANGELS also ate from what Avraham had prepared for them, in order to be nourished from the side of Avraham--NAMELY, FROM THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM, as the sustenance of all the angels above proceeds from that side.

168. וְתָא חַזִּי, כִּד בְּעֵי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַיְתָא דִּינָא עַל סְדוֹם, אֲזִי קוּדְם לְאַבְרָהָם, וְשִׁדְר לִיה דִּירוּנָא לְמִזְבֵּי עֲמָהוּן, בְּגִין לְשׁוּבָא לְלוֹט בֶּר אַחוּהָ מִתַּמָּן, הֵה"ד וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹקִים אֶת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת לוֹט מִתּוֹךְ הַהֶפְכָּה. וְלֹא כְתִיב וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹקִים אֶת לוֹט, דִּהָא בְּזִכְרוּתִיה דְּאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁתִּיב. וּמֵאִי וַיִּזְכֹּר, דְּדָכִיר לִיה מֵאִי דְאַזְבֵּי קוּדְם, עִם אֵינוֹן תַּלְת מַלְאַכִּין.

169. בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָא, בֶּר נִשְׁדִּיזְבֵּי בְּצִדְקָה עִם בְּנֵי נֶשָׁא, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דִּינָא שְׂרִיא בְּעֲלָמָא, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲדָכֵר לִיה לְהֵהִיא צִדְקָה דְּעֵבֵד. בְּגִין דְּבָכֵל שַׁעְתָּא דִּזְבֵּי בֶר נֶשׁ, הֵכִי אֲכִתִּיב עֲלִיהָ לְעִילָא, וְאַפִּילוּ בְּשַׁעְתָּא דִּינָא שְׂרִיא עֲלוּי, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲדָכֵר לִיה, לְהֵהוּא טִיבּוּ דְּעֵבֵד, וְזָכָה עִם בְּנֵי נֶשָׁא. כְּדָבֵר אַחֲרֻצְדָּקָה תַּצִּיל מִמּוֹת. בְּגִינֵי כֶךְ, אֲקָדִים לִיה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַבְרָהָם, בְּגִין דִּיזְבֵּי, וַיִּשְׁוִיב לְלוֹט.

170. וַיִּשְׁקִיפוּ עַל פְּנֵי סְדוֹם. תָּא חַזִּי, וַיִּקְוּמוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים. מֵהֵהִיא סְעוּדָה דְּאַתְקִין לוֹן אַבְרָהָם, וְזָכָה בָּהּ. אִף עַל גְּבִדְמַלְאכִין הוּוּ, זָכָה בָּהּ, וְכָל הָהוּא מִיכְלָא, לֹא אֲשַׁתָּאֵר מִנִּיהָ כְּלוֹם בְּגִינֵי דְאַבְרָהָם, וְלִמְזְבֵּי בִיה, דִּהָא כְּתִיב וַיֹּאכְלוּ, בְּאֶשָּׁא דְלֵהוֹן אֲתֹאכִיל.

171. וְאִי תִימָא, הָא תַּלְת מַלְאַכִּין הוּוּ, הָאִי אֶשָּׁא, וְהָאִי מֵיָא, וְהָאִי רוּחָא. אֲלָא, כָּל חַד וְחַד כָּלִיל בְּחִבְרִיה, וּבְגִינֵי כֶךְ, וַיֹּאכְלוּ. בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָא וַיַּחֲזוּ אֶת הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ. אֲכִילָה וְדֹאִית אֲכָלוּ, דְּאַתְזִנוּ מִן שְׂכִינְתָא, אוֹף הֵכָא וַיֹּאכְלוּ. גְּרָמוּ לְאַתְזִנָא מֵהֵהוּא סְטָרָא דְאַבְרָהָם אֲתִדְבַּק בִּיה, וּבְגִין כֶךְ, לֹא אֲשַׁאֲרוּ מִמָּה דִּיחֵיב לוֹן אַבְרָהָם כְּלוֹם.

172. בְּגִוּוֹנָא דָא בְּעֵי לִיה לְבֶר נֶשׁ, לְמִשְׁתֵּי מֵהֵהוּא כְּסָא דְבִרְכָה, בְּגִין דִּיזְבֵּי לְהֵהִיא בְּרָכָה דְלְעִילָא. אוֹף אֵינוֹן אֲכָלוּ, מִמָּה דְאַתְקִין לוֹן אַבְרָהָם, בְּגִין דִּיזְכוּן לְאַתְזִנָא מִסְטָרָא דְאַבְרָהָם. דִּהָא מֵהֵהוּא סְטָרָא, נִמְיָק מְזוּנָא לְכָלֵהוּ מַלְאכֵי עֲלָאִי.

173. The verse, "and looked toward..." ALLUDES TO the awakening of the quality of Mercy to save Lot. WE LEARN THIS BY COMPARING VERSES. It is written here, "and looked toward," and it is written elsewhere, "Look forth from your Holy habitation" (Devarim 26:15). Because THE LOOKING THERE ALLUDES to Mercy there, it does so here as well.

174. "And Avraham went with them to bring them on the way" (Beresheet 18:16), that is, he escorted them. Rabbi Yesa said: If Avraham knew that they were angels, why did he have to escort them? Rabbi Elazar responded: Even though he knew they were angels, he did for them what he was accustomed to do for people. Thus, he escorted them, because it behooves one to escort his guests, since everything depends on this. IN OTHER WORDS, THE PRECEPT OF INVITING GUESTS DEPENDS ON ESCORTING THEM, WHICH IS THE FINAL ACT. AND IT IS NOT CONSIDERED A PRECEPT UNTIL AFTER THE PERSON CONCLUDES IT.

175. As he was escorting them, the Holy One, blessed be He, appeared to him, as it is written: "And Hashem said: Shall I hide from Avraham that which I do?" (Ibid. 17) The phrase "And Hashem" APPLIES TO Him and His heavenly court, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, as the Holy One, blessed be He, accompanied them.

176. Come and behold: when a person escorts his friend, he draws the Shechinah to join him, and walks along with him to protect him. This is the reason why a person should escort his guest; he joins him with the Shechinah and draws the Shechinah to join him.

### 13. "Shall I hide from Avraham"

The Creator never allows any intense judgments to rain down upon Creation without first warning the righteous souls who dwell among mankind. This warning offers the righteous the opportunity to take the necessary positive measures to counteract decreed judgments. These righteous souls warn others and create opportunities for people to change their ways.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

According to the wisdom of Kabbalah, positive actions of sharing are not founded upon the vague concepts of morals, ethics, or codes of right and wrong. Rather, there is a direct dividend to the doer of good deeds. Our charitable actions and positive behavior serve our own spiritual interests, particularly during times of great judgment. We are given the ability to recognize opportunities for sharing and spiritual change when we are preoccupied with our own hardships. An appreciation for the righteous living among us is awakened within our soul, furnishing us with greater protection from any negative events that might be looming over the horizon.

177. Therefore, because of this, THAT IS, BECAUSE HE ESCORTED HIS GUESTS, HE WAS FULLY MERITORIOUS, "and Hashem said: 'Shall I hide from Avraham that which I do?'" Rabbi Chiya opened the discourse with the verse: "For Hashem Elohim will do nothing, until He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). Blessed are the righteous of the world, that the Holy One, blessed be He, chose them. And all that He has done in the heavens and shall do in the world, He accomplishes through righteous people. And He never hides anything from them.

173. וַיִּשְׁקִיפוּ: אֶתְעֲרוּתָא דְרַחֲמֵי לְשִׁיזְבָּא לְלוֹט. כְּתִיב הָבָא וַיִּשְׁקִיפוּ, וּכְתִיב הֵתֵם הַשְׁקִיפָה מִמַּעוֹן קִדְשְׁךָ. מֶה לְהֵלֵךְ לְרַחֲמֵי, אוֹף הָבָא לְרַחֲמֵי.

174. וְאַבְרָהָם הוֹלֵךְ עִמָּם לְשַׁלְחָם. לְמַעַבְדַּר לֹון לֹוִיָּהּ. אָמַר רַבִּינִיּוֹסָא אִי תִימָא דְאַבְרָהָם יָדַע דְּמִלְּאָכִין אֵינוֹן, אֲמַאי אַעֲבִיד לֹון לֹוִיָּהּ. אֱלָא אָמַר ר' אֶלְעָזָר, אָף עַל גְּבִידוּתָא יָדַע, מֶה דְּהוּה רִגִּיל לְמַעַבְדַּר עִם בְּנֵי נִשָּׂא, עָבַד בְּהוּ, וְאַלּוֹי לֹון. בְּגִין דְּכָךְ אַצְטְרִיךְ לִיָּה לְבַר נְשַׁלְמַעַבְדַּר לֹוִיָּהּ לְאוֹשְׁפִיזִין, דְּהָא כָּלָא בְּהָא תִּלְיָא.

175. וּבַעֲדוֹ דְּאִיהוּ הָוָה אָזִיל עִמָּהוֹן, אֲתַגְּלִי קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עָלֵיהּ דְּאַבְרָהָם, דְּכְתִיב וְה' אָמַר הַמִּכְסָּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה. וְה'; הוּא וּבֵית דִּינִיָּה, בְּגִין דְּקוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הָוָה אָזִיל עִמָּהוֹן.

176. תָּא חֲזִי כִּד בַּר נִשְׁעֵבִיד לֹוִיָּהּ לְחַבְרִיָּה, אִיהוּ אֲמַשִּׁיךְ לְשְׁכִינְתָּא לְאַתְחַבְרָא בְּהַרְדִּיָּה. וְלִמְהַךְ עֲמִיָּה בְּאוֹרְחָא לְשִׁזְבָּא לִיָּה. וּבְגִין כְּרַבְעֵי לִיָּה לְבַר נְשַׁלְלוּי לְאוֹשְׁפִיזָא, בְּגִין דְּחַבְרָא לִיָּה לְשְׁכִינְתָּא, וְאַמַּשִּׁיךְ עָלֵיהּ לְאַתְחַבְרָא בְּהַרְדִּיָּה.

177. בְּגִין כְּרִיָּה אָמַר הַמִּכְסָּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה. ר' חִינְיָא פָּתַח כִּי לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה ה' אֱלֹקִים דְּבַר כִּי אִם גְּלָהּ סוּדוֹ אֶל עַבְדֵּי הַנְּבִיאִים. זְכָאִין אֵינוֹן זְכָאִי עֲלֵמָא, דְּקוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתַרְעֵי בְּהוּ, וְכָל מֶה דְּאִיהוּ עָבִיד בְּרִקְיָעָא, וְזִמִּין לְמַעַבְדַּר בְּעֲלֵמָא, עַל יְדֵי דְּזְכָאִין עָבִיד לִיָּה, וְלֹא כְּסִי מְנִיָּהוּ לְעֲלֵמִין כָּלּוּם.

178. For the Holy One, blessed be He, wants the righteous to join Him. This is so that they may warn people and advise them to repent their iniquities so that they will not be punished by celestial punishment, and so that they will have no excuse to complain to Him, SAYING THAT HE DID NOT WARN THEM AND THEY DID NOT KNOW. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, reveals to them the secret that He is about to punish them. He does not want them to be able to claim that He is punishing them without a trial.

179. Rabbi Elazar said: Woe to the wicked who do not seek TO KNOW, and do not know how to refrain from sin. Hence, the Holy One, blessed be He, whose deeds are just and whose actions are right, never act before He reveals His plans to the righteous, so that other people will have no excuse to complain about Him. SIMILARLY, men should act in a way that prevents other people from uttering accusations against them. Therefore, it is written: "And you shall be clean before Hashem and before Yisrael" (Bemidbar 32:22).

180. And THE RIGHTEOUS should act accordingly, to prevent other people from complaining ABOUT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, and warn them that if they sin and do not guard themselves, the attribute of Judgment of the Holy One, blessed be He, might have a reason to ACCUSE them. And how may they ESCAPE THIS ATTRIBUTE OF JUDGMENT? By repenting and performing good deeds.

181. Come and behold: "And Hashem said: 'Shall I hide from Avraham'." Rabbi Yehuda said: The holy One, blessed be He, has given the entire land to Avraham, as an everlasting heritage, as it is written: "For all the land which you see, to you I give it..." (Beresheet 13:15) as well as, "lift up your eyes and see..." (Ibid. 14). Later, when the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to uproot and destroy these places, NAMELY S'DOM AND AMORAH, He said: I have already given the land to Avraham, and he is the father of them all, as it is written: "for a father of a multitude of nations have I made you" (Beresheet 17:5). So it is not fitting for me to smite the children without informing their father whom I have called "Avraham my friend" (Yeshayah 41:8). Therefore, I must inform him. Thus, "And Hashem said: 'Shall I hide from Avraham that which I do?'"

182. Rabbi Aba said: Behold the humility of Avraham, even though the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: "Because the cry of S'dom and Amorah is great" (Beresheet 18:20). Although He delayed Himself by informing Avraham that He wanted to punish S'dom, he did not pray before Him to save Lot from punishment. Why? So that he did not ask for a reward for his deeds.

178. בגין דקודשא בריך הוא בעי לשתמא בהדיה לצדיקיא. בגין דאינון אתיין, ומזהרין לבני נשא, לאתבא מחובייהו, ולא יתענשון מגו דינא עלאה, ולא יהא לון פתחא דפומא לגביה. בגיני כך, קודשא בריך הוא אודע לון רזא, דאיהו עביר בהו דינא. תו בגין דלא יימרון, דהא בלא דינא עביר בהו דינא.

179. אמר רבי אלעזר, ווי לון לחייביא, דלא ידעין ולא משגיחין, ולא ידעין לאסתמרא מחובייהו. ומה קודשא בריך הוא די כל עובדוהי קשוט, ואורחתיא דין, לא עביר כל מה דעביר בעלמא, עד דגלי להו לצדיקיא, בגין דלא יהא לון פתחא דפומא לבני נשא. גבי בני נשא לא כ"ש דאית לון למיעבד מליהו דלא ימללון בני נשא סטיא עליהון. וכן כתיב והייתם נקיים מה' ומישראל.

180. ואית לון למיעבד, דלא יהא לון פתחון פה לבני נשא, ויתרון בהון, אי אינון חטאן, ולא משגיח לאסתמרא, דלא יהא ליה למדת דינא דקודשא בריך הוא, פתחא דפומא לגבייהו. ובמה, בתשובה ועובדין דכשרן.

181. תא חזי, וה' אמר המכסה אני מאברהם. אמר רבייהודה, קודשא בריך הוא יהב כל ארעא לאברהם, למהוי ליה אחסנת ירותא לעלמין. דכתיב בי את כל הארץ אשר אתה ראה לך אתננה וגו'. וכתיב שא נא עיניך וראה. ולבתר קודשא בריך הוא אצטריך לאעקרא אתרין אלין. אמר קודשא בריך הוא, כבר יהבית ית ארעא לאברהם, והוא אבא לכלא, דכתיב בי אב המון גוים נתתיך. ולא יאות לי לממחי בנין, ולא אודע לאבהון, דקרית ליה אברהם אוהבי. ובגין כןאצטריך לאודע ליה, בגין כןוה' אמר המכסה אני מאברהםאשר אני עשה.

182. אמר רבי אבא, תא חזי, ענותנותא דאברהם, דאף על גבדאמר ליה קודשא בריך הוא, זעקת סדום ועמורה בי רבה. ועם כל דא דאוריך עמיה, ואודע ליה, דבעי למעבד דינא בסדום, לא בעא קמיה לשזבא ליה ללוט, ולא יעביר ביה דינא. מ"ט, בגין דלא למתבע אגרא מן עובדו.

183. Because of this, EVEN THOUGH HE DID NOT ASK FOR IT, the Holy One, blessed be He, sent for Lot and saved him for the sake of Avraham, as it is written: "And Elohim remembered Avraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow" (Beresheet 19:29).

184. What is meant by "in which Lot dwelt?" WHY WERE THEY NAMED AFTER HIM? This has been explained; it is because they were all wicked and there was nobody among them who was good, save Lot. From this we learn that wherever the wicked stay, that place is doomed to be destroyed. FROM THE VERSE "IN WHICH LOT DWELT," WE LEARN THAT FOR ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE WHO DWELT THERE, IT WAS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE A DWELLING PLACE, BUT RATHER A PLACE OF DESTRUCTION AND DESOLATION UNFIT FOR HABITATION. AND THIS WAS BECAUSE THEY WERE WICKED PEOPLE.

185. Of the verse "the cities in which Lot dwelt," HE ASKS: Could it be that Lot lived in all of them? AND HE REPLIES: Because of his presence in those cities, they were not destroyed, and the people were able to dwell there. THIS IS WHY THEY ARE NAMED AFTER HIM. But if you say this was because of the merit of Lot, you are incorrect; it was because of the merit of Avraham.

186. Rabbi Shimon said: Come and behold. The service that a person does for the righteous protects him in this world. In addition, even if he is a sinful person, he will learn from the righteous person's behavior and emulate it.

187. Come and behold: as Lot accompanied Avraham, he did not learn all his ways, but he did learn how to show kindness to other people. Thus, as long as Lot dwelt there, the people settled in the cities, which continued to exist. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN: "IN WHICH LOT DWELT."

188. Rabbi Shimon said: Behold how the Shechinah stayed with Avraham during the time that the Holy One, blessed be He, was with him. Rabbi Elazar said to him: But it was the Shechinah, Herself, that spoke to him, AND NOT ONLY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE ALONE. Because the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to Avraham through this grade, as it is written: "And I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov, by the name of El Shadai," (Shemot 6:3) WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH. IF SO, THEN WHAT IS THE POINT OF NOTING THE FACT THAT THE SHECHINAH DID NOT LEAVE AVRAHAM DURING THE TIME WHEN THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WAS WITH HIM? RABBI SHIMON said: It is certainly so, AND YOU ARE DEFINITELY RIGHT.

189. Come and behold. It is written: "And Hashem said (lit. 'And said Hashem'): 'Because the cry of S'dom and Amorah is great...'" At first, IT IS WRITTEN: "And Hashem said," (Beresheet 18:17) WHICH APPLIES TO HIM AND HIS HEAVENLY COURT, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH. And later, IT IS WRITTEN: "And said Hashem: Because the cry of S'dom and Amorah is great," WHICH DOES NOT REFER TO HASHEM ALONE, BUT RATHER TO the upper grade YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI that appeared to him over the lower grade, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

183. וְעַל דָּא שְׁלַח קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְלוֹט, וְשׂוּיב לֵיהּ, בְּגִינִיָּה דְאַבְרָהָם. דְּכִתְיב וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹקִים אֶת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת לוֹט מִתּוֹךְ הַהֶפֶכָה וְגו'.

184. מֵאִי אֲשֶׁר יֵשֵׁב בְּהֵן לוֹט. הָא אֲתָמֵר. אֲבָל בְּגִין דְּכִלְהוּ חַיִּיבִין, וְלֹא אֲשַׁתְּכַח מִכְּלָהוּ, דְּאִית לֵיהּ מִיָּדִי דְּזִכּוֹ, בְּר לוֹט. מִכָּאן אֹלִיפְנָא, בְּכָל אֲתֵר דְּדִיּוּרִין בֵּיה חַיִּיבִין, חָרִיב אִיהוּ.

185. אֲשֶׁר יֵשֵׁב בְּהֵן לוֹט. וְכִי בְּכִלְהוּ הוּא יִתִּיב לוֹט, אֲלֹא בְּגִינִיָּה הוּא יִתִּיב, דְּלֹא אֲתַחֲרְבוּ. וְאִי תִימָא בְּזִכּוּתֵיהּ, לֹא. אֲלֹא בְּזִכּוּתֵיהּ דְּאַבְרָהָם.

186. אָמַר רַבִּישְׁמַעוֹן, תָּא חַזִּי, דְּשִׁמוּשָׁא דְּעֵבִיד בְּרִי נָשׁ לְזִבְאָה, הֵהוּא שְׁמוּשָׁא, אֲגִין עֲלֵיהּ בְּעֵלְמָא. וְלֹא עוֹד, אֲלֹא דָאֵף עַל גַּב דְּאִיהוּ חַיִּיבָא, אֹלִיף מֵאוּרְחוּי וְעֵבִיד לוֹן.

187. תָּא חַזִּי, דְּהָא בְּגִין דְּאֲתַחֲפֵר לוֹט בְּהֵרִיָּה דְּאַבְרָהָם, אָף עַל גַּבְדְּלָא אֹלִיף כָּל עוֹבְדוֹ, אֹלִיף לְמַעַבְד טִיבו עִם בְּרִיין, בְּמָה דְּהוּא עֵבִיד אַבְרָהָם, וְדָא הוּא דְּאוֹתִיב לְכָל אִינוּן קֶרְתִּי, כָּל הֵהוּא זְמַנָּא דִּיתְבוּ, בְּתֵר דְּעָאֵל לוֹט בְּיִנְיָהוּ.

188. אָמַר רַבִּישְׁמַעוֹן, תָּא חַזִּי, דְּשְׁכִינְתָּא לֹא אַעֲרִי מִנִּיָּה דְּאַבְרָהָם, בְּהֵיָא שְׁעֵתָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אָמַר לֵיהּ, אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי אֲלַעֲזָר, וְהָא שְׁכִינְתָּא הוּא מְלִיל עֲמִיָּה, דְּהָא בְּרִגָא דָּא אֲתַגְלִי עֲלֵיהּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּכִתְיב וְאָרָא אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֶל יִצְחָק וְאֶל יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שְׁדֵי. אָמַר לֵיהּ הֲכִי הוּא וְדָאִי.

189. וְתָא חַזִּי מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר ה' זַעֲקַת סְדֹם וְעִמּוֹרָה כִּי רַבָּה. בְּקִדְמִיתָא וְה' אָמַר, וּלְבִסּוּף וַיֹּאמֶר ה' זַעֲקַת סְדֹם וְעִמּוֹרָה וְגו'. דָּא אִיהוּ דְּרִגָא עֲלָאָה, דְּאֲתַגְלִי לֵיהּ עַל דְּרִגָא תַתָּאָה.

190. "And Hashem said, Shall I hide from Avraham..." What is written before? "And the men rose up from there, and looked toward S'dom," in order to punish the wicked. And what is written after? "Shall I hide from Avraham."

191. Rabbi Chisda said: The Holy One, blessed be He, does not execute Judgment on the wicked until He has consulted the souls of the righteous. This is as it is written: "By the blast (also, 'soul') of Eloha they perish," (Iyov 4:9) and "Shall I hide from Avraham." The Holy One, blessed be He, said: How can I punish the wicked without consulting the souls of the righteous, telling them that the wicked have sinned before Me, and I am about to punish them. This is as it is written: "And Hashem said: 'because the cry of S'dom and Amorah is great, and because their sin is very grievous'."

192. Rabbi Abahu said: The soul remains standing in its place and is afraid to come nearer and say anything to Him until Matatron says he will present it. Then, it may say what it wants. This is as it is written: "And Avraham drew near, and said, 'will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?'" (Beresheet 18:23) "Far be it from You to do after this manner..." (Ibid. 25).

193. "Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city..." (Ibid. 24) Hence, the soul starts by saying: Master of the universe, they may have learned the fifty portions of the Torah. And even though they did not learn the portions for its sake alone, they are still entitled to a reward in the world to come and should not be sent to Gehenom. After this, it is written: "And Hashem said: If I find in S'dom fifty just men within the city..." (Ibid. 26).

194. He commented: But there are more than fifty portions in the Torah, there are 53. But, as Rabbi Avahu said: Every one of the five books in the Torah includes the Ten Commandments, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF the Ten Divine injunctions (sayings) by which the world was created. Multiply by the five books and you have fifty.

195. The soul goes on, saying: Master of the universe, even though the people did not study the Torah, they may have already been punished for their sins in court and have been forgiven, as it is written: "Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed..." (Devarim 25:3). And if they have felt ashamed in front of them, this is sufficient for them to be pardoned and not be sent to Gehenom. The following verse says: "I will not do it for the forty's sake" (Beresheet 18:29).

מִדְרַשׁ הַנֶּעֱלָם

190. וְה' אָמַר הַמִּכְסָּה אֲנִי מַאֲבִרָהּם וּגו'. מֶה כָּתִיב לַמַּעֲלָה, וַיָּקֻמוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּשְׁקְפוּ עַל פְּנֵי סֹדֶם. לַעֲשׂוֹת דִּין בְּרָשָׁעִים, מֶה כָּתִיב אַחֲרָיו הַמִּכְסָּה אֲנִי מַאֲבִרָהּם.

191. אָמַר רַבִּי חֲסֵדָא, אֵין הַקּוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עוֹשֶׂה דִּין בְּרָשָׁעִים, עַד שְׁנִמְלֵךְ בְּנִשְׁמָתָן שֶׁל צְדִיקִים, הֵה"ד מִנִּשְׁמַת אֱלֹהִים יֵאבְדּוּ, וְכָתִיב הַמִּכְסָּה אֲנִי מַאֲבִרָהּם. אָמַר הַקּוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כְּלוֹם יֵשׁ לוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת דִּין בְּרָשָׁעִים, עַד שְׁאֵמְלֵךְ בְּנִשְׁמָת הַצְּדִיקִים, וְאוֹמֵר לָהֶם, הֲרָשָׁעִים חָטְאוּ לִפְנֵי, אַעֲשֶׂה בָּהֶם דִּין, דְּכָתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר ה' זַעֲקַת סֹדֶם וְעִמְרָה כִּי רַבָּה וַחֲטָאתָם וּגו'.

192. אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ, הַנִּשְׁמָה עוֹמֶדֶת בְּמִקּוּמָהּ, וְהִיא יִרְאֶה לְהִתְקַרֵּב אֵלָיו, וְלוֹמַר לִפְנֵיו כְּלוֹם, עַד שְׁיֵאמַר לְמַטְטְרוֹן, שְׁיִגִּישְׁנָה לִפְנֵיו, וְתֹאמַר מֶה שָׂרְצָתָהּ, הֵה"ד, וַיֵּגֶשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֵף תִּסָּפֶה צְדִיק עִם רָשָׁע חֲלִילָה לָךְ וּגו'.

193. אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים וּגו' הַנִּשְׁמָה פּוֹתַחַת וְאוֹמֶרֶת, רְבוּנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, שְׁמָא נִתְּעַסְקוּ בְּנִי פְרָשִׁיּוֹת שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, וְאֵף עַל פִּישְׁלָא נִתְּעַסְקוּ לְשִׁמָּה, שְׂכָר יֵשׁ לָהֶם לְעוֹלָמְהָבָא, וְלֹא יִכְנָסוּ לְגִיהֵנוֹם. מֶה כָּתִיב בְּתִרְיָהּ, וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אִם אִמָּצָא בְּסֹדֶם חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים וּגו'.

194. וְהָא יִתִּיר אֵינּוֹן פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת, נ"ג הוּו. אֵלָא, אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ, חֲמִשָּׁה סִפְרִים הֵם בְּתוֹרָה, וּבְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד גְּבֻלָּלִים עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרוֹת, עֲשֶׂרֶת מֵאֲמֵרוֹת, שְׁבָהֶם גְּבֻרָא הָעוֹלָם, חָשׁוּב עֲשֶׂרֶת בְּכָל חַד מִנְהוֹן, הוּא חֲמִשִּׁים.

195. עוֹד פּוֹתַחַת הַנִּשְׁמָה וְאוֹמֶרֶת, רְבוּנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, אֵף עַל פִּישְׁלָא נִתְּעַסְקוּ בְּתוֹרָה, שְׁמָא קִבְּלוּ עוֹנָשִׁם, עַל מֶה שְׁחָטְאוּ, בִּב"ד, וְנִתְּכַפֵּר לָהֶם. שְׁנֵאמַר אַרְבָּעִים יִכְנָו לֹא יוֹסִיף. וּמִמָּה שְׁנִתְּבַיִּישׁוּ לִפְנֵיהֶם, דִּינִים לְהִתְכַּפֵּר לָהֶם, שְׁלֹא יִכְנָסוּ לְגִיהֵנוֹם. מֶה כָּתִיב אַחֲרָיו, לֹא אַעֲשֶׂה בְּעַבּוֹר הָאַרְבָּעִים.

196. The verse continues: "Perhaps there shall be thirty found there" (Ibid. 30). Maybe there are righteous people among them who have achieved the thirty attributes indicated in the verse: "Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year," (Yechezkel 1:1) and that are included within the 32 paths, which are formed by the 22 Hebrew letters and the ten Sfirot. The latter, at times, are counted as eight.

197. It speaks further: "Perhaps there shall be twenty found there..." (Beresheet 18:31) Perhaps they will raise sons to study the Torah, thereby receiving their reward of the Ten Commandments, twice every day. This is according to Rabbi Yitzchak, who said: He who educates his son in the Torah and takes him to the house of his Rabbi (teacher) in the morning and in the evening is described by the words of the Torah as though he has performed the entire Torah twice a day. What does it say? "And he said: "I will not destroy it for the twenty's sake" (Ibid.).

198. It goes on: "Perhaps ten shall be found there..." (Ibid. 32). It says: Master of the universe, maybe they were among the first ten who arrived at the synagogue. If so, they have earned the reward of all the people who came in after them. Then, it is written: "I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."

199. The soul of the righteous has all this to say for the sinners. And because they have nothing, it is written: "And Hashem went His way, as soon as he left speaking to Avraham, and Avraham returned to his place" (Beresheet 18:33). What is "to his place?" It is the place of his well-known grade.

200. Rabbi said: It is behooves for a person to pray for the sinners so that they may repent and not enter Gehenom, as it is written: "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth..." (Tehilim 35:13). And Rabbi continued: A person should never pray that the sinners may leave the world. Because had the Holy One, blessed be He, taken Terach out of this world for worshipping idols, Avraham would have never come into the world; the tribes of Yisrael would not have existed, nor would King David or King Mashiach; the Torah would not have been given; and none of the righteous and pious men, with all the prophets, would have been in the world. Rabbi Yehuda said: Because the Holy One, blessed be He, sees that the sinners have nothing from all that was mentioned above, it is written: "And there came two angels to S'dom..." (Beresheet 19:1)

196. עוד פותחת ואומרת, אולי יש שם שלשים, אולי יש ביניהם צדיקים, שהשיגו שלשים מעלות, הרמוזים בפסוק ויהי בשלשים שנה והם כלולים בל"ב נתיבות. שהם כ"ב אותיות, וי"ס. לפעמים הם כלולים לשמונה.

197. עוד פותחת ואומרת, אולי ימצאון שם עשרים, שמא יגדלו בנים לתלמוד תורה, ויש להם שכר, לעשרת הדברות, שתי פעמים בכל יום, דאמר ר' יצחק כל המגדל בנו לתלמוד תורה, ומוליכו לבית רבו, בבקר ובערב, מעלה עליו הכתוב כאלו קיים התורה, ב' פעמים בכל יום. מה כתיב, ויאמר לא אשחית בעבור העשרים.

198. עוד פותחת ואומרת, אולי ימצאון שם עשרה. אומרת רבוננו של עולם, שמא היו מאותם העשרה הראשונים של בית הכנסת, שנוטל שכר כנגד כולם, שבאים אחריהם, מה כתיב ויאמר לא אשחית בעבור העשרה.

199. כל זה יש לנשמת הצדיק, לומר על הרשעים, ביון שלא נמצא בידם כלום, מה כתיב, וילך ה' כאשר בלה לדבר אל אברהם. ואברהם שב למקומו. מהו למקומו. למקום מעלתו הידועה.

200. אמר רבי, מצוה לו לאדם להתפלל על הרשעים, כדי שיחזרו למוטב. ולא יכנסו לגיהנם. הכתיב ואני בחלותם לבושי שק וגו'. ואמר רבי, אסור לו לאדם להתפלל על הרשעים שיסתלקו מן העולם, שאלמלא סלקו הקודשא בריך הוא לתרח מן העולם, כשהיה עובד עבודה זרה, לא בא אברהם אבינו לעולם, ושבטי ישראל לא היו, והמלך דוד, ומלך המשיח, והתורה, לא נתנה, וכל אותם הצדיקים, והחסידים, והנביאים, לא היו בעולם. אמר ר' יהודה, ביון שרואה הקודשא בריך הוא, שלא נמצא ברשעים כלום, מכל אותם העניינים, מה כתיב, ויבאו שני המלאכים סדומה וגו'.

14. "I will go down now, and see"

The literal Torah story states that the Creator came down to see the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah before they were destroyed. Kabbalistically, these stories signify the energy of the Creator shifting from the frequency of mercy into one of judgment. The Creator Himself, however, never stands in judgment of us. It is our own actions that determine which frequency of energy we draw down upon ourselves. The analogy of electrical

energy helps convey the Zohar's principle. We can utilize electrical energy to light and power entire cities, or we can place our finger in a wall socket and electrocute ourselves. The nature of the energy has never changed. It was our free will as to how we connected into this energy, that changed.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

We generate an awareness of the consequences attached to all our behavioral actions, along with the understanding that the Creator is not at fault for the hardships we endure in life. By knowing that all our actions influence the amount of Light we receive, we are inspired to seize control over how we interact with the World and, in turn, how the World interacts with us.

201. "I will go down, and see whether they have done (Heb. asu) altogether according to the cry of it, which has come to me... (Beresheet 18:21) HE ASKS: To whom did He, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, say: "YOU SHOULD DESTROY," BECAUSE THE ZOHAR EXPLAINS THIS VERSE AS IF ASU WAS IN THE IMPERATIVE MODE, THEREBY SAYING 'DESTROY!' If you say THAT HE ADDRESSED these angels by saying, 'DESTROY,' who has ever seen the like, that He spoke with AVRAHAM while commanding THE ANGELS? Rather, He addressed Avraham, saying, "DESTROY," because all those places were under his supervision. Another explanation IS THAT HE ADDRESSED those angels SAYING, "DESTROY."

202. AND HE ASKS: If He addressed Avraham, SAYING, "DESTROY (ASU)," why IS IT WRITTEN IN THE PLURAL instead of the singular, namely, "destroy (aseh)." AND HE RESPONDS: HE SAID THIS BECAUSE HE ADDRESSED BOTH Avraham and the Shechinah that had never left him. THIS IS WHY HE SAID: "DESTROY (ASU)." HE THEN SAID THAT WE NEED TO CLARIFY what we said about His address to the angels, SAYING, "DESTROY." FOR IT LOOKS AS IF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, TALKED TO AVRAHAM WHILE COMMANDING THE ANGELS. AND HE EXPLAINED: THIS IS SO, because THE ANGELS stood by waiting to execute Judgment. And this is why HE SAID "destroy" in the plural.

203. Another explanation of "asu" is, translated from the Aramaic, "they have worshipped," WHICH REFERS TO THE PEOPLE OF S'DOM. HE ASKS: But did not the Holy One, blessed be He, know, that He had to go down? Is not everything revealed before Him? AND HE RESPONDS: But "I will go down" MEANS to descend from the grade of Mercy to the grade of Judgment, and the phrase "And see" means to determine suitable punishments.

204. We have learned that there is seeing for good and seeing for evil. Seeing for the good is illustrated in the verse, "And Elohim looked upon the children of Yisrael..." (Shemot 2:25). Seeing for evil is illustrated in the verse, "I will go down now and see," in order to choose their punishments. This is what the Holy One blessed be He, meant by asking "Shall I hide from Avraham?"

201. אֶרְדָּה נָא וְאֶרְאֶה הַפְּעָקָתָהּ הַבָּאָה אֵלַי עָשׂוּ כָּלָה. לְמֵאן קָאָמַר. אִי תִימָא לְאִינוּן מְלָאכִין, מֵאן חָמָא מְלִיל עִם דָּא, וּפְקִיד לְדָא. אֱלָא, לְאַבְרָהָם קָאָמַר, דְּבִרְשׁוּתִיהָ קִיּוּמִין אִינוּן אֶתְרִי. דְּבַר אַחֵר, לְאִינוּן מְלָאכִין.

202. מַה דְּאֶתְמַר לְאַבְרָהָם, מַה טַּעְמָא עָשׂוּ, עָשָׂה מִבְּעֵי לִיה, מֵאִי עָשׂוּ, אֱלָא דָּא אַבְרָהָם, וּשְׂכִינְתָּא לֹא אַעֲרִי מְנִיָּה. מַה דְּאֶתְמַר לְמְלָאכִין, בְּגִין דְּהוּ זְמִינִין תַּמָּן, וְהוּ מְשַׁתְּבָּחִין לְמַעַבְד דִּינָא, וְעַל דָּא עָשׂוּ.

203. דְּבַר אַחֲרָעִשׁוּ, בְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ עֲבָדוּ. וְכִי לֹא הוּה יָדַע קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּאִיהוּ אָמַר אֶרְדָּה נָא וְאֶרְאֶה, וְהָא כָּלָא אֶתְגַּלִּי קְמִיָּה. אֱלָא, אֶרְדָּה נָא מִדְּרָגָא דְּרַחֲמִי, לְדְרָגָא דְּדִינָא, וְהִינְנוּ יִירִידָה. וְאֶרְאֶה: רְאִיָּה דָּא הִיא לְאַשְׁגָּחָא עֲלֵיהוּן, בְּמֵאן דִּינָא יָדִין לוֹן.

204. אֲשַׁבְּחֵן רְאִיָּה לְטֵב, וְאֲשַׁבְּחֵן רְאִיָּה לְבִישׁ. רְאִיָּה לְטֵב: דְּכֶתִיב וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּדַע. רְאִיָּה לְבִישׁ: דְּכֶתִיב אֶרְדָּה נָא וְאֶרְאֶה. לְאַשְׁגָּחָא עֲלֵיהוּ בְּדִינָא, וְעַל דָּא אָמַר קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, הַמְכַסֶּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם.

#### 15. "Avraham shall surely become"

In every generation there is a circle of righteous souls living among us. Through their spiritual actions and presence in this physical existence, they literally uphold and sustain our world. Their positive energy balances out all the negative actions committed by self-centered and unspiritual people among us. This prevents the scales of judgment from tipping too far over to the side of negativity, which would cause great destruction in the world. Interestingly, these great souls often conceal their true identity and appear to us as mirrors of ourselves in the form of difficult people in our lives. They reflect all the negative traits that we ourselves possess but fail to recognize.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Protection from negative influences is bestowed upon us through the merit of righteous people, past and present. We achieve the self-restraint and judgment to consider difficult people in our lives as reflections of our own negative traits. The wisdom and inspiration to change ourselves, instead of always trying to change others, emerges through the letters that form this passage.

205. Of the verse, "Seeing that Avraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation..." (Beresheet 18:18) HE ASKS: Why does this blessing appear here? AND HE RESPONDS: To teach us that even when the Holy One, blessed be He, sits in Judgment on the world, He is unchanging. Because He displays Judgment to one and Mercy to the other. And all this happens simultaneously. SO WHILE HE DISPLAYED JUDGMENT TOWARD S'DOM, HE SHOWED MERCY TOWARDS AVRAHAM AND BLESSED HIM BY SAYING: "AVRAHAM SHALL SURELY BECOME A GREAT AND MIGHTY NATION."

206. Rabbi Yehuda then said: But it is written, "But as for me, my prayer is to You, Hashem, in an acceptable time" (Tehilim 69:14). THIS SHOWS THAT some times are acceptable, while other times are not. So there are times when He listens TO THE PRAYER and times when He does not; there are times when He is present, and times when He is not. This corresponds to what is written: "Seek Hashem while He may be found, call upon Him while he is near" (Yeshayah 55:6). THUS, WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN HE IS NOT PRESENT AND CANNOT BE FOUND, NAMELY, DURING THE TIME OF JUDGMENT. IF THIS IS TRUE, HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT WHILE HE SITS IN JUDGMENT ON ONE, HE SITS IN MERCY ON THE OTHER?

207. Rabbi Elazar said that the verses sometimes refer to individuals and sometimes refer to the entire community. FOR THE INDIVIDUAL IT CHANGES ACCORDING TO THE TIMES. FO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY, HOWEVER, HE ALWAYS DISPLAYS MERCY, EVEN WHEN HE SITS IN JUDGMENT. Here it applies to one place, while there it applies to the whole world, TO WHICH HE ALWAYS SHOWS MERCY AND NEVER CHANGES. This is why He blessed Avraham AT THE TIME WHEN JUDGMENT WAS EXECUTED ON S'DOM. Avraham is considered as the whole world, because it is written: "These are the generations of the heaven and the earth when they were created (Heb. Behibar'am)" (Beresheet 2:4) and we have learned THAT BEHIBAR'AM CONTAINS THE LETTERS OF BeAvraham ('with Avraham'). THEREFORE, HE WAS CONSIDERED AS THE WHOLE WORLD.

208. The numerical value of the letters in yihyeh ('shall...become') is 30. And we have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, arranged for each generation to have thirty righteous men, just as Avraham had for his generation. THIS MEANS, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "THESE ARE THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH WHEN THEY WERE CREATED (BEHIBAR'AM)," WHICH IS THE COMBINATION OF THE LETTERS BEAVRAHAM, FOR WHOSE SAKE THE WORLD WAS CREATED. AND HE SAYS: THERE ARE THIRTY RIGHTEOUS MEN IN EACH AND EVERY GENERATION, FOR WHOSE SAKE THE WORLD WAS CREATED, AS IT WAS CREATED FOR THE SAKE OF AVRAHAM.

209. He opened with the verse: "He was more honorable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three..." (Il Shmuel 23:23). "He was more honorable than the thirty" refers to the thirty righteous men whom the Holy One, blessed be He, had called upon to come into this world in every generation so the world will not remain without them. And of Bnayahu, the son of Yehoyada, it is written: "He was most honorable among the thirty," as he was one of them, "but he attained not to the first three" because he is not of equal importance as the first three, upon whom the world is established.

205. וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ יְהוָה לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְעָצוּם. מֵאִי טַעֲמָא בִּרְכָה דָּא הָכָא. אֱלָא, בְּגִין לְאוּדְעָא דְאַמְלוּלוּ בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יְתִיב בְּדִינָא עַל עֲלָמָא, לֹא אֲשַׁתְּנִי. דְּהָא יְתִיב בְּדִינָא עַל דָּא, וּבִרְחֻמֵּי עַל דָּא, וְכֹלָא בְּרִגְעָא חֲדָא וּבְשַׁעֲתָא חֲדָא.

206. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, וְהָא כְּתִיב וְאֲנִי תַפְלִיתִי לְךָ ה' עַת רְצוֹן. זְמַנִּין דְּאִיהוּ עַת רְצוֹן, וְזְמַנִּין דְּלֹא אִיהוּ עַת רְצוֹן. זְמַנִּין דְּשָׁמַע, וְזְמַנִּין דְּלֹא שָׁמַע. זְמַנִּין דְּאֲשַׁתְּכַח, וְזְמַנִּין דְּלֹא אֲשַׁתְּכַח. דְּכְתִיב דְּרִשׁוּ ה' בְּהִמְצָאוֹ קְרָאוּהוּ בְּהִיּוּתוֹ קְרוּב.

207. אָמַר ר' אֶלְעָזָר, בְּאֵן לִיחִיד, בְּאֵן לְעַבּוּר. בְּאֵן לְאַתְרַּח, וּבְאֵן לְכוּלֵּי עֲלָמָא. בְּגִינֵי כֵךְ בְּרִיךְ לִיה לְאַבְרָהָם דְּאִיהוּ שְׁקִיל בְּכָל עֲלָמָא, דְּכְתִיב אֱלֹה תוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם. וְתַנִּינָן בְּאַבְרָהָם.

208. יְהוָה. בְּגִימַטְרִיא שְׁלָשִׁים. הֵכִי תַנִּינָן, תַּלְתִּין צְדִיקִים, אֲזַמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּכָל דְּרָא וְדָרָא לְעֲלָמָא. בְּמָה דְּאֲזַמִּין לְאַבְרָהָם.

209. פֶּתַח וְאָמַר, מִן הַשְּׁלָשִׁים הֵכִי נִכְבָּד וְאֵל הַשְּׁלָשָׁה לֹא בָּא וְגו'. מִן הַשְּׁלָשִׁים הֵכִי נִכְבָּד, אֱלִין אִינוּן תַּלְתִּין צְדִיקִים, דְּאֲזַמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעֲלָמָא, וְלֹא יִבְטַל לֹון מְנִיָּה. וּבְנִיָּהוּ בֶן יְהוֹדָע, כְּתִיב בִּיה מִן הַשְּׁלָשִׁים הֵכִי נִכְבָּד. אִיהוּ חַד מְנִיָּיָהוּ. וְאֵל הַשְּׁלָשָׁה לֹא בָּא. דְּלֹא שְׁקִיל לְתַלְתָּא אַחֲרֵנִין, דְּעֲלָמָא קָאִים עֲלֵיָּיהוּ.

210. Thus, "but he attained not to the first three" MEANS THAT HE IS NOT EQUAL TO THE THREE UPON WHOM THE WORLD IS ESTABLISHED. He was not counted as one of them. He deserved to be included among the thirty righteous men, but he was not on a level with "the first three," and was not privileged to be associated with them as an equal. "Yihyeh ('shall...become')," as we have learned, is numerically equal to thirty, and for that the Holy One, blessed be He, blessed him so that HE COULD BECOME EQUAL TO ALL the 30 righteous people.

210. וְאֵל הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה לֹא בָּא. לְמַהּוּ בְּמִנְיַנָּא בְּחַד מְנִיָּהּ. בְּאִינוּן תְּלָתִין זַכָּאִין, זָכָה לְמִיעַל בְּחוּשְׁבָּנָא, אֲבָל וְאֵל הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה לֹא בָּא, דְּלֹא זָכָה לְאַתְחַבְּרָא בְּהוּ וּלְמַהּוּ עִמְהוּן בְּחוּלְקָא חֲדָא. יְהִיָּה: כְּמָה דְּתַנִּינוּן, תְּלָתִין הוּא. וּבִגִּין כֵּךְ, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּרַכִּיָּה, בְּאִינוּן תְּלָתִין צְדִיקִים.

16. "Whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it"

The negativity and spiritual darkness that enveloped the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah was so intense that outsiders refused to step foot within the city boundaries. The wisdom being distilled concerns a self-awareness of the dark side of our own nature. When we associate with negative people, we inevitably fall into their negative sphere of influence, because our own negative side ignites and ultimately dominates us, leading us down a path of darkness. We are to avoid negative people out of concern for our own dark side. This kind of inner reflection and self-awareness is a prerequisite for spiritual development.

The Relevance of this Passage

Perhaps the greatest deception the angel Satan ever devised was convincing the rational mind that he doesn't really exist. This artful deception extends to the dark side of our own nature. An awareness of our own negative character traits begins to emerge in our consciousness so that we can uproot them and transform our nature. This self-recognition further helps to protect us from external negative influences.

211. Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Avraham, "the cry of S'dom and Amorah is great," because their conduct towards other people has reached Me. As a result of this conduct, the whole world avoids setting foot in S'dom and Amorah. Thus, it is written: "he breaks open a water course in place far from inhabitants, forgotten by foot travellers; they are dried up, they are gone away from men" (Iyov 28:4). "He breaks open a water course in place far from inhabitants" MEANS THAT "the water course," WHICH ALLUDES TO S'DOM, "break open" for all the inhabitants of the world who entered there. Because if any of them saw somebody give food or drink to a stranger, they cast him into the deep river, along with the person who received the food and drink.

211. תָּא חֲזִי, אָמַר לִיה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַבְרָהָם, זַעֲקַת סְדוֹם וְעִמּוֹרָה כִּי רַבָּה, דְּהָא סְלִיקַת קְדָמִי, מַה דְּאִינוּן עֲבָדִין לְכָל עֲלָמָא, דְּכָל עֲלָמָא מְנַעֵי רַגְלֵיהוּ דְּלֹא לְמִיעַל בְּסְדוֹם וְעִמּוֹרָה. דְּכַתִּיב פֶּרֶץ נַחַל מַעַם גַּר הַנִּשְׁכָּחִים מִנִּי רֶגֶל דְּלוּ מֵאֲנוּשׁ נָעוּ. פֶּרֶץ נַחַל מַעַם גַּר: פֶּרְצָה הוּא פֶּרִיץ נַחַל, לְאִינוּן בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא דְּעָאֻלוּ לְתַמָּן, דְּכֻלְהוּ דְּחֻמָּאן לְמָאן דְּהוּ יְהִיב, לְמִיכַל וּלְמִשְׁתֵּי לְבַר נֶשׁ אַחֲרָא, שְׂדִינָן לִיה בְּעוֹמְקָא דְּנַהֲרָא, וְאִיהוּ דְּנִטּוּל לִיה הִכִּי נָמִי.

212. This is why all people of the world were "forgotten by foot travellers," that is, they avoided setting foot in there. And whoever did enter, "they are dried up, they are gone away," WHICH MEANS THAT they dried the STRENGTH OF THEIR bodies with hunger by not giving them anything to eat nor to drink. As a result, they no longer looked like human beings, as it is written: "they are dried up, they are gone away" (Iyov 28:4). Here, it is written: "they are gone away," and elsewhere it is written: "her paths wander" (Mishlei 5:6). IN BOTH VERSES, IT MEANS THAT "HER PATHS WANDER" AND CANNOT BE FOUND. "THEY ARE GONE" MEANS THAT they avoided the routes of convoys and other paths in order not to enter there. Even the birds in the sky stopped themselves from entering there, as it is written: "There is a path which no bird of prey knows..." (Iyov 28:7). And because of all this, the entire world cried out against S'dom and Amorah and against all the cities, which were considered all the same.

212. וְעַל דָּא כָּלְהוּ בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא, הוּוּ נִשְׁכָּחִים מִנִּי רֶגֶל, דְּמְנַעֵי רַגְלֵיהוּ לֹא לְמִיעַל תַּמָּן, וּמָאן דְּעָאֻל, דְּלוּ מֵאֲנוּשׁ נָעוּ, דְּהוּוּ דְּלִי גּוּפָא בְּכַפְנָא, לֹא הוּוּ יְהִיב לִיה לְמִיכַל וּלְמִשְׁתֵּי, וְאַשְׁתֵּי דִּיּוֹקְנִיה מִשְׁאָר בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא דְּכַתִּיב דְּלוּ מֵאֲנוּשׁ נָעוּ. כְּתִיב הֵכָא נָעוּ. וְכַתִּיב הָתָם נָעוּ מִעֲגֻלוֹתֶיהָ. הִכִּי נָמִי הוּוּ סְטָאן מִעֲגֻלִין וְאוֹרְחִין, דְּלֹא לְמִיעַל תַּמָּן. וְאַפִּילוּ עוֹפֵי שְׁמַיָּא הוּוּ מְנַעֵי לְמִיעַל תַּמָּן, דְּכַתִּיב נָתִיב לֹא יָדְעוּ עֵיט וְגו'. וּבִגִּינֵי כֵךְ, כּוּלִי עֲלָמָא הוּוּ צוּחִין עַל סְדוֹם וְעַל עִמּוֹרָה, וְעַל כָּלְהוּ קְרָתֵי, דְּכֻלְהוּ כְּגוּוֹנָא חֲדָא הוּוּ.

213. "The cry of S'dom and Amorah is great," Avraham asked the Holy One, blessed be He: Why? He answered: "because their sin is very grievous." And this is why "I will go down now, and see whether...according to the cry of it." AND HE SAID: It should have been said, 'according to the cry of them,' because it is written: "the cry of S'dom and Amorah." Thus, there were two cities. If so, why does it say, "the cry of it" IN THE SINGULAR? AND HE ANSWERED: "This has already been clarified."

213. זַעֲקַת סְדוֹם וְעִמּוֹרָה כִּי רַבָּה, אָמַר לוֹ אַבְרָהָם, אֲמַאי. אָמַר לִיה, וְחֻטְאֲתָם כִּי כְבֹּדָה מְאֹד. בִּגִּינֵי כֵךְ, אִרְדָּה נָא וְאֶרְאֶה הַבְּצַעֲקָתָהּ. הַבְּצַעֲקָתָם מִבְּעֵי לִיה, דְּהָא כְּתִיב זַעֲקַת סְדוֹם וְעִמּוֹרָה, וְתִרֵי קְרָתֵי הוּוּ, אֲמַאי הַבְּצַעֲקָתָהּ. אֵלָּא הָא אַקְמוּהָ.

214. Come and behold: from the side underneath the sound of hailstones, all the tangles of the shoulder rise and are gathered into one drop, which then enters the holes of the great abyss, where five become one. When their voices are clear, they unite as one. Then, a voice from below enters among them and becomes one with them.

215. For that voice goes up and down, demanding that Judgment be drawn down. So when this voice rises to demand justice, the Holy One, blessed be He, reveals Himself to ensure justice is done.

216. Rabbi Shimon then said: IT IS WRITTEN, "according to the cry of it." To whom does this cry belong? AND HE REPLIED: This is the decree of Judgment that demands justice every day. SO THE PHRASE, "THE CRY OF IT" REFERS TO IT (judgment). As we have learned, for many years the Decree of Judgment demanded from the Holy One, blessed be He, THE PENALTY FOR what the brothers of Yosef had done when they sold him. The Decree of Judgment cried out aloud for justice TO BE REVEALED. This is why IT IS WRITTEN: "according to the cry of it, which has come to me." IT REFERS TO THE CRY OF THE DECREE OF JUDGMENT.

217. AND HE ASKS: What is MEANT BY THE PHRASE, "which has come to me?" AND HE RESPONDS: There is a secret here. As you may read, "In the evening she would return (lit. 'comes'), and in the morning she would return..." (Ester 2:14). The words "which has come to me" are written in the present tense to indicate a repeated action. Similarly the verse, "The end of all flesh has come before me" (Beresheet 5:13) is also written in the present tense. The phrase "then destroy" has already been explained.

17. "Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

A discussion takes place concerning Avraham, Noah, and Moses, specifically their role in protecting mankind. Three distinct levels of selfless love for others are exemplified through these three great spiritual leaders. Noah built the ark and did all that God had commanded of him, but his efforts and concern ended there, as he did not continue to fight and lobby on behalf of mankind. Avraham took the cause of his fellow man a step further when he argued with the Creator in an effort to save Sodom and Gomorrah. However, once Avraham realized that the argument was lost, he accepted it. Moses, on the other hand, never gave up the fight for his fellow man even when all hope was lost, offering his own life in exchange for saving the entire nation.

The Relevance of this Passage

Spiritual complacency can cause the noblest person to fall to lower levels of being. Therefore, spiritual evolvment may be compared to the endeavor of climbing up a downward moving escalator. One must constantly progress forward against opposing forces. The moment we stand still, anywhere along the journey, we immediately begin to regress. The Light of this passage inspires us to continually grow spiritually so that we evolve a consciousness of true caring, self-sacrifice, and unconditional love for others. Through selfless love we protect all mankind and ourselves.

218. "And Avraham drew near, and said: Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (Beresheet 18:23). Rabbi Yehuda said: Who has met a father as merciful as Avraham? Come and behold. In regard to Noach, it is written: "And Elohim said to Noach: The end of all flesh has come before Me...Make you an ark of gopher wood" (Beresheet 6:13-14). And he remained silent and did not beg for mercy, while as soon as the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Avraham "the cry of S'dom and Amorah is great...I will go down now, and see," it is written: "And Avraham drew near, and said: Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

214. תָּא חֲזִי בְּסִטְרָא דְּתוּתִי קָלָא דְּבִרְדָּא, סְלִקִּין קוּטְרִי, כְּלֵהוּ בְּכִתְמָא. מִתְּבַנְשִׁי בְּחֹד טִיף, וְעָאֲלִין בְּגוּ נֹקְבֵי דְּתֵהוּמָא רַבָּא אֲתַעְבִּידוּ חֲמֵשׁ בְּחֹד. חֲד אִיהוּ בְּד אִיבָא צְלִילִין, קְלִין, דְּכִלְהוּ אֲתַעְבִּידוּ חֲד. קָלָא דְּסִלִּיק מִתְתָּא, עָאֵל בִּינִייהוּ, וְאֲתַמְשְׁכוּ בְּחֹד.

215. וְהָהוּא קָלָא סְלִקָא וְנִחַתָּא, תְּבַעָא דִּינָא לְאֲתַמְשְׁכָא לְתֵתָא. בְּד הָאִי קָלָא סְלִקָא לְמִתְבַּע דִּינָא, בְּדִין אֲתַגְלִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאֲשַׁנְחָא בְּדִינָא.

216. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, הִבְצַעְתָּהּ. מֵאן הִבְצַעְתָּהּ, דָּא גִזְרַת דִּינָא, דְּתַבַּעָא דִּינָא כָּל יוֹמָא. דְּהִכִּי תַנִּין בְּמָה שְׁנִין קִימָא גִזְרַת דִּינָא, וְתַבַּעָא מִקְמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, עַל דְּזַבִּינוּ אַחוּי דְּיוֹסָף לְיוֹסָף. בְּגִין דְּגִזְרַת דִּינָא, צֻוַּחַת עַל דִּינָא, וְעַל דָּא, הִבְצַעְתָּהּ הִבָּאָה אֵלַי.

217. מַה הִבָּאָה אֵלַי, דָּא הוּא רָזָא, בְּדָבָר אַחֲרַבְעָרָב הִיא בָּאָה וּבִבְקָר הִיא שָׁבָה. וְדָא הוּא הִבָּאָה אֵלַי תְּדִיר. כְּגֻוּנָא דָּא, קֶץ כָּל בָּשָׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי. וְהָא אֲתַמַּר. עֲשׂוּ כְּלָה הָא אֲתַמַּר.

218. וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֵף תִּסְפֶּה צְדִיק עִם רָשָׁע. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה מֵאן חָמָא אָבָא דְּרַחֲמֵנוּתָא בְּאַבְרָהָם. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּנַח כְּתִיב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים לְנֹחַ קֶץ כָּל בָּשָׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי וּגו'. עֲשֵׂה לָךְ תֵּבַת עֲצֵי גִפְרִי. וְאַשְׁתִּיק, וְלֹא אָמַר לִיה מִיָּדִי, וְלֹא בַעַל רַחֲמִי. אֲבָל אַבְרָהָם, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּאָמַר לִיה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, זַעֲקַת סְדוּם וְעַמּוֹרָה כִּי רַבָּה וּגו'. אֲרָדָה נָא וְאַרְאָה וּגו'. מִיָּד כְּתִיב וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֵף תִּסְפֶּה צְדִיק עִם רָשָׁע.

219. Rabbi Elazar said: Even Avraham did not act perfectly, as he should have done, but Noach did nothing. HE DID NOT ASK FOR MERCY ON BEHALF OF THE RIGHTEOUS, AS AVRAHAM DID, OR ON BEHALF OF THE SINNERS, AS MOSHE DID. Avraham demanded a proper judgment so that the righteous would not perish with the sinners. He started with fifty righteous people and eventually descended to ten. Then, he stopped. He did not plead for Mercy in any case, WHETHER THERE WERE RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE OR NOT. This is because Avraham said: I do not want to demand any reward for my actions, MEANING THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT HE DESERVED ANY REWARD FOR ASKING TO FREE SINNERS FROM THEIR PUNISHMENT.

220. The one who acted perfectly was Moshe. Because as soon as the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "they have turned aside quickly from the way...they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it," (Shemot 32:8) it is written: "And Moshe besought Hashem his Elohim..." (Ibid. 11) And the verse continues until he said, "Yet now, if You will forgive their sin-and if not, blot me, I pray You, out of Your book which You have written" (Ibid. 32). And even though they had all sinned, he did not budge from there until He told him: "I have pardoned according to your word" (Bemidbar 14:20). THERE IS A SECTION MISSING HERE THAT MUST HAVE BEEN OVERLOOKED AS THIS PASSAGE WAS COPIED. AND THIS IS THE CORRECT VERSION: We have discussed and learned that he did not budge from there until the Holy One, blessed be He, forgave Yisrael, as it is written: "And Hashem reconsidered the evil which he thought to do to his people," (Shemot 32:14) and "I have pardoned according to your word." THIS MUST BE THE CORRECT VERSION FOR IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE ZOHAR NOT TO MENTION THE PARDON FOR THE SIN OF THE CALF AND TO READ, "I HAVE PARDONED ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD" (BEMIDBAR 14:20), WHICH WAS SAID ABOUT THE SPIES.

221. But Avraham considered only whether there might have been any righteous among them. And because there were not ANY RIGHTEOUS AMONG THEM, he did not PRAY FOR ANY OF THEM. This is why there has never been a person in the world who protected his generation as has Moshe, the Faithful Shepherd.

222. "And Avraham drew near, and said..." means that he prepared himself before beseeching, "Perhaps there are fifty righteous..." He started with 50, which is the beginning of Knowledge, until he descended to ten, which is the number of the last of all grades.

223. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Avraham stopped at the number ten, which represents the ten days between between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, DURING WHICH THE TEN SFIROT OF MALCHUT ARE PREPARED TO ASCEND TO BINAH. This is why he started TO PLEAD for the fifty, but stopped at ten. THESE SYMBOLIZE THE TEN SFIROT OF MALCHUT, WHICH ARE CORRECTED DURING THE TEN DAYS OF REPENTANCE. As he reached ten, he said: From here downward, MALCHUT IS NOT SWEETENED BY BINAH, WHICH IS ALSO CALLED 'REPENTANCE'. Therefore, he concluded that this was not a place for repentance, and he he did not CONTINUE IMPLORING AND reducing the number under ten.

219. אָמַר רַבִּיאֵלְעֶזֶר אוֹף אַבְרָהָם, לֹא עָבַד שְׁלִימוֹ בְּדָקָא יְאוּת. נָח לֹא עָבִיד מִיַּדִּי, לֹא הָאִי וְלֹא הָאִי. אַבְרָהָם תָּבַע דִּינָא בְּדָקָא יְאוּת, דְּלֹא יְמוּת זַכָּאָה עִם חַיִּיבָא. וְשָׂאֵרִי מַחְמָשִׁים, עַד עֶשְׂרָה, עָבַד וְלֹא אֲשֵׁלִים, דְּלֹא בָּעָא רַחֲמֵי בִין כֶּךָ וּבִין כֶּךָ, דְּאָמַר אַבְרָהָם לֹא בָּעִינָא לְמַתְּבַע אֲגַר עוֹבְדוּי.

220. אָבֵל מֵאֵן עָבַד שְׁלִימוֹ בְּדָקָא יְאוּת דָּא מִשָּׁה. דְּכִיּוֹן דְּאָמַר קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא סְרוּ מִהֵר מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ וּגו'. עָשׂוּ לָהֶם עֵגֶל מַסֵּכָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לוֹ. מִיַּד מַה בְּתִיב וַיַּחַל מִשָּׁה אֶת פָּנָיו ה' אֱלֹקָיו וּגו'. עַד דְּאָמַר וַעֲתָה אִם תִּשָּׂא חַטָּאתָם וְאִם אֵין מַחְנִי נָא מִסַּפְרֶךָ אֲשֶׁר כְּתִבְתָּ. וְאֵף עַל גַּב דְּכֻלְהוּ חָטֹא, לֹא זָז מִתַּמָּן, עַד דְּאָמַר לִיה סְלַחְתִּי בְּדַבְרֶךָ.

221. אָבֵל אַבְרָהָם לֹא אֲשַׁנַּח אֱלֹא אִי אֲשַׁתְּכַח בְּהוּ זַכָּאִי, וְאִם לֹאוּ לֹא. וְעַל דָּא לֹא הוּא בְּעֵלְמָא בְּרַ נֶשׁ, דְּיִגְיִן עַל דְּרִיָּה, בְּמִשָּׁה, דְּאִיְהוּ רַעֲיָא מְהִימְנָא.

222. וַיִּגֶשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר, אֶתְקִין גְּרַמִּיָּה לְמַתְּבַע דָּא. אוּלִי יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם חַמְשִׁים. שְׂרָא מַחְמָשִׁים, דְּאִיְהוּ שִׁירוּתָא לְמַנְדַּע, עַד עֶשְׂרָה, דְּאִיְהוּ עֲשִׂירָאָה, סוּפָא דְּכָל דְּרָגִין.

223. אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק עַד עֶשְׂרָה, אֲלִין עֶשְׂרָה יוֹמִין, דְּבִין רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְיוֹם הַכְּפּוּרִים. בְּגִין כֶּךָ שְׂרָא מַחְמָשִׁים עַד עֶשְׂרָה. וּכְיִין דְּמֵטָא לְעֶשְׂרָה, אָמַר, מִכָּאֵן וּלְתַתָּא לֹאוּ הוּא אֲתֵר דְּקִיּוּמָא בְּתִשּׁוּבָה, בְּגִינֵי כֶּךָ לֹא נַחַת לְתַתָּא מִעֶשְׂרָה.

18. "And the two angels came to S'dom"

During a discussion concerning the two angels who executed the decree of destruction upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Zohar expounds upon the protective power of the Torah through its study. The Torah is called the Tree of Life. Kabbalistically, the Tree of Life is a realm of pure order and serenity. It is the origin of all human happiness, well-being, and contentment. The Torah becomes the Tree of Life by virtue of our consciousness and certainty in its powers. Our awareness is the mechanism that activates the Tree of Life forces.

The Relevance of this Passage

As a lamp requires electrical current before it can illuminate a darkened room, Kabbalistic tools, such as the Torah, are in need of spiritual current in order to become active. Spiritual current is the stuff of consciousness and certainty. We develop a true sense of appreciation and certitude in the power of the Torah and the Tree of Life energy that radiates through its verses.

224. "And the two angels came to S'dom at evening..." (Beresheet 19:1). Rabbi Yosi said, Come and behold: It is written: "And Hashem went His way, as soon as He had left speaking to Avraham..." (Beresheet 18:33). As the Shechinah had departed from Avraham, and Avraham returned to his place, then "the two angels came to S'dom at evening..." There were only two angels because one had departed with the Shechinah.

225. As Lot saw them, he ran after them. Why? He invited everyone who came to his city into his house and offered them food and drink. If so, then how come the people of his own town did not kill him, as they did his daughter.

226. For what reason was she killed? The daughter of Lot offered a piece of bread to a poor man. As soon as the townspeople found out, they covered her with honey and put her on the roof until she was stung to death by bees.

227. AND HE REPLIES: Because it was at night, Lot thought that the townspeople would not see him. Nevertheless, as soon as they entered his house, the townspeople gathered and surrounded the house.

228. Rabbi Yitzchak asked: Why did Lot run after the angels?, as it is written: "and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them..." Rabbi Chizkiyah or Rabbi Yesa, one responded that he saw the image of Avraham among them; the other said that he saw the Shechinah resting upon them. AND HE DREW AN ANALOGY. It is written here, "and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them," and elsewhere, "and when he saw them he ran to meet them from the tent door..." (Beresheet 18:2). So, just as he saw the Shechinah there, he saw the Shechinah here as well.

229. This is the reason why "Lot seeing them run to meet them...And he said, 'Behold now, my lords (Heb. Adonai),' spelled with Aleph, Dalet, Nun, and Yud, THAT IS, THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH. IN OUR SCRIPTURES IT IS NOT WRITTEN: 'AND HE RAN TO MEET THEM,' BUT RATHER, "ROSE UP TO MEET THEM." ACCORDING TO THE ZOHAR, THE WORDS "ROSE TO MEET THEM" MEAN THAT HE ROSE UP AND RAN TO MEET THEM. OTHERWISE, IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN WRITTEN: 'HE ROSE UP BEFORE THEM.' The verse continues, "turn in, I pray you." HE ASKS: WHY IS IT WRITTEN, "turn in, I pray you," when it should have been written, 'draw near, I pray you.' What is MEANT BY "turn in?" AND HE RESPONDS: He did not want them to enter the house in the regular way, so his townspeople would not see them. This is why HE SAID, "turn in, I pray you."

224. וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סְדוֹמָה בָּעֶרֶב וְגו'. אָמַר ר' יוֹסִי, תָּא חֲזִי, מָה כְּתִיב לְעִילָא, וַיֵּלֶךְ ה' בְּאֶשֶׁר כָּלָה לְדַבֵּר אֶל אַבְרָהָם. דְּהָא בֵּינון דְּאַתְפָּרֶשׁ שְׂכִינְתָא מְאַבְרָהָם, וְאַבְרָהָם תָּב לְאַתְרֵיהּ, כְּדִין וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סְדוֹמָה בָּעֶרֶב, דְּהָא חַד אֶסְתַּלַּק בְּשְׂכִינְתָא, וְאַשְׁתָּאֲרוּ אֵינוֹן תְּרִין.

225. בֵּינוֹן דְּחֻמָּא לוֹט לֹון, רַהֵט בְּתַרְיִיהוּ. מָאִי טַעְמָא, וְכִי כָל אֵינוֹן דְּהוּוּ אֲתִיִּין, אִיהוּ אָעִיל לֹון לְבֵיתֵיהּ, וַיְהִיב לֹון לְמִיכַל וּלְמִשְׁתֵּי, וּבְנֵי מִתָּא הֵיךְ לֹא קִטְלִין לִיהּ, דְּהָא לְבֵרְתֵיהּ עֲבְדוּ דִּינָא.

226. וּמָאִי הוּא, דְּבֵרְתֵיהּ דְּלוֹט, יְהִבַת פֶּתָא דִּנְהָמָא לְחַד עֲנִיָא, וַדְעוּ בַּהּ, שְׁמוּה דּוּבָשָׁא, וְאוֹתְבוּהּ בְּרִישׁ אִיגְרָא, עַד דְּאֶכְלוּהּ צִרְעִי.

227. אֵלָא בְּגִין דְּהוּהּ בְּלִילִיָא, חָשִׁיב דְּלֹא יִסְתַּכְּלוּן לִיהּ בְּנֵי מִתָּא, וְעַם כָּל דָּא, בֵּינוֹן דְּאָעִלוּ לְבֵיתָא, אֲתַכְנָשׁוּ כָּלְהוּ, וְאַסְחָרוּ לְבֵיתָא.

228. אָמַר רַבִּינְצָחֵק, אָמָאִי רַהֵט לוֹט אֲבַתְרִיִּיהוּ, דְּכְתִיב וַיֵּרָא לוֹט וַיֵּרֶץ לְקִרְאָתָם. ר' חֲזַקִּיָּה וּר' יִיסָא. חַד אָמַר, דְּיוֹקְנָא דְּאַבְרָהָם חֻמָּא עֲמַהוּן. וְחַד אָמַר שְׂכִינְתָא אֲתִיָא עֲלִיִּיהוּ. כְּתִיב הֵכָא וַיֵּרָא לוֹט וַיֵּרֶץ לְקִרְאָתָם, וְכְתִיב הָתָם וַיֵּרֶץ לְקִרְאָתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֵהָל. מָה לְהֵלֶן חֻמָּא שְׂכִינְתָא, אוּף הֵכָא חֻמָּא שְׂכִינְתָא.

229. וְעַל דָּא, וַיֵּרָא לוֹט וַיֵּרֶץ לְקִרְאָתָם, וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה נָא אֲדִנִּי בְּאֶלְפִי דְּלִ"ת נו"ן יו"ד. סוּרוּ נָא, גָּשׁוּ נָא מִבְּעֵי לִיהּ, מָאִי סוּרוּ נָא. אֵלָא לְאַהֲדָרָא לֹון סַחְרָנִיָּה דְּבֵיתָא, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יַחְמוּן לֹון בְּנֵי מִתָּא, וְלֹא יַעֲלוּן בְּאוּרַח מִיִּשָׁר לְבֵיתָא, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, סוּרוּ נָא.

230. Rabbi Chizkiyah began the discussion by saying: IT IS WRITTEN, "For He looks to the ends of the earth, and sees under the whole heaven" (Iyov 28:24). How important it is for all human beings to observe the works of the Holy One, blessed be He, and to study Torah day and night. He who studies the Torah is glorified by the Holy One, blessed be He, on high and down below, because the Torah is the Tree of Life for all those who occupy themselves in it. It grants them life in this world and offers them life in the world to come.

231. Come and behold: IT IS WRITTEN, "For He looks to the end of the earth" in order to supply them with food and provide for their needs. THE "EARTH" IS MALCHUT; "ENDS OF THE EARTH" REFERS TO ALL THAT ISSUES FROM HER, because it is He who takes care of Her always. As it is written: "The eyes of Hashem your Elohim are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year" (Devarim 11:12).

232. It is written of this earth, NAMELY MALCHUT: "she brings her food from afar" (Mishlei 31:14). And then, "She" provides the beasts of the fields, WHICH ARE THE ANGELS OF THE WORLDS BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH, with food and sustenance, as it is written: "She rises also while it is yet night, and gives meat to her household and a portion to her maidens" (Ibid. 15).

233. This is why IT IS WRITTEN: "for He looks to the ends of the earth, and sees under the whole heaven," ALLUDING to all the people in the world, in order to supply them with food and provisions, each and every one according to his needs, as it is written: "You open your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing" (Tehilim 145:16).

234. There is another explanation OF THE VERSE: "for He looks to the ends of the earth," which IS THAT He observes the makings of man and watches closely over what people are doing in the world. He "sees under the whole heaven," which means that He watches and keeps an eye on each and every person.

235. Come and behold: as a result of the Holy One, blessed be He seeing the actions of S'dom and Amarah, He sent forth those angels to destroy S'dom. It is written: "and Lot seeing..." WHICH MEANS THAT he was "seeing" the Shechinah. AND HE ASKS: "But who can possibly see the Shechinah?" AND HE REPLIES: He saw a light shining and rising high above their heads. And then he said: "Behold now, Adonai (Eng. 'my master')," spelled with Aleph and Dalet WHICH IS THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH. Thus, for the sake of the Shechinah, NAMELY that certain illumination that shone UPON THEIR HEADS, he said, "turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house..."

230. ר' חזקיה פתח כי הוא לקצות הארץ יביט תחת כל השמים וראה. במה אית לון לבני נשא, לאסתכלא בעובדיו הקודשא בריך הוא, ולאשתדל באורייתא יממא ולילי, דכל מאן דאשתדל באורייתא, קודשא בריך הוא אשתבח ביה לעילא, ואשתבח ביה לתתא, בגין דאורייתא, אילנא דחיי איהו, לכל אינון דעסקין בה, למיהב לון חיון בעלמא דין, ולמיהב לון חיון בעלמא דאתי.

231. תא חזי כי הוא לקצות הארץ יביט. למיהב לון מזונא, ולספקא לון מכל מה דאצטריכו, בגין דאיהו אשגח בה תדיר, דכתיב תמיד עיני ה' אלקיך בה מרשית השנה ועד אחרית שנה.

232. בגין דארץ דא, מה כתיב בה, ממרחק תביא לחמה. ולבתר איהו יהבת מזונא וטרפא, לכל אינון חיון ברא, דכתיב ותקם בעוד לילה ותתן טרף לביתה וחק לנערותיה.

233. ועל דאמי הוא לקצות הארץ יביט תחת כל השמים וראה. לכלהו בני עלמא, למיהב לון מזונא וספוקא, לכל מה דאצטריך כל חד וחד, דכתיב, פותח את ידך ומשביע לכל חי רצון.

234. דבר אחרכי הוא לקצות הארץ יביט. לאסתכלא עובדיו דבר נש, ולאשגחא בכל מה דעבדי בני נשא בעלמא. תחת כל השמים וראה. מסתכל וחמי לכל חד וחד.

235. תא חזי ביון דחמא קודשא בריך הוא, עובדין דסדום ועמורה, שדר לון לאינון מלאכין, לחבלא לסדום. מה כתיב, וירא לוט, חמא לשכינתא, וכי מאן יכיל למחמי שכינתא, אלא, חמא זהרא חד דנהיר, דקא סלקא על רישויהו. וכדין ויאמר הנה נא אדני באל"ף דל"ת, במה דאתמר. ובגין שכינתא, ההוא נהירו דנהיר, קאמר סורו נא אל בית עבדכם.

236. The verse continues, "and sleep and wash your feet..." but Avraham did not do so. Rather, he said at first, "wash your feet," and only later, "And I will fetch a morsel of bread." Lot, however, said, "turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night," and then, "and wash your feet, and you may rise up early, and go your ways." And this was to prevent other people from knowing about them. IF OTHER PEOPLE HAPPENED TO KNOW ABOUT THEM AND APPROACHED THEM, THEY COULD CLAIM THAT THEY HAD JUST ARRIVED A SHORT WHILE AGO, AS THEY HAD NOT EVEN WASHED THEIR FEET FROM THE DUST OF THE JOURNEY.

237. "And they said, 'No, but we will abide in the street all night,' because that was the practice in these cities--GUESTS SLEPT IN THE STREET BECAUSE no person invited them to his house. This is why they said, "we will abide in the street." And then it is written: "and he pressed upon them greatly" (Bereshheet 19:3).

238. Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, executes Judgment on the world, one messenger performs it. But now, DURING THE OVERTHROW OF S'DOM, we see two messengers, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND TWO ANGELS CAME TO S'DOM." Is not one angel sufficient? AND HE REPLIES: "There indeed was only one; the scriptures mentions two because one came to save Lot, while the other came to overthrow the city and destroy the land. Therefore, there was only one assigned TO OVERTHROW S'DOM.

#### 19. The Garden of Eden and Gehenom

Man is constantly tested by his own negative inclination in order to provide him with the opportunity to exercise free will. Man activates free will the moment he resists his natural selfish tendencies. The righteous people of this world are those who have conquered their negative natures and subjugated all Evil Inclinations. It is upon their merit that our physical world is sustained. A man who conquers his own negative nature and ego is far stronger and far greater than the man who conquers armies or builds empires.

The Zohar explains that the Garden of Eden and Hell exist both in our physical realm and in the Supernal Worlds. The true righteous dwell in the Garden of Eden above, while the most wicked of men dwell in the lower realm of Hell. There is a story in the Talmud that Hell on Earth was discovered and visited by a great sage some 2000 years ago. This sage stormed the gates of Hell and stole away the knife from the Angel of Death. The Creator explained to the sage that the system of Hell is a necessary process in order to help cleanse the souls of the wicked so that they, too, may be able to partake in the world-to-come. The Creator, therefore, called for the sage to return the knife.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The Garden of Eden is not only a long sought-after paradise located in some remote island in the world-to-come, but it is also a state-of-mind that we experience in the here and now. We connect ourselves to the Garden of Eden on Earth, arousing tranquillity, happiness, and inner peace in our soul. We begin to sense and grasp the significance of the hardships that strike in our personal life. During difficult times, when life feels like Hell on Earth, afflictions have a cleansing effect on our soul. Awareness and acceptance of this spiritual truth accelerates the process, and trying times pass more quickly.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

239. Rabbi opened the discussion by quoting the verse: "Now these are the nations which Hashem left, to test Yisrael by them..." (Shoftim 3:1). Rabbi said: I have been looking into that world, NAMELY THE ETERNAL WORLD, and saw that the world can exist only because of righteous people who have control over the desire of their hearts. As it is written: "this he ordained in Yehosef for a testimony..." (Tehilim 81:6). Rabbi Yehuda then said: Why did Yosef merit that high grade and kingdom? The answer is because he overcame his lust. As we have learned, the heavenly Kingdom awaits he who overcomes his lustful desires.

236. וְלִינוּ וּרְחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם. לֹא עָבַד הָכִי אֲבִרָהֶם, אֲלֵא בְקִדְמִיתָא אָמַר וּרְחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם, וּלְבַתֵּר וְאִקְחָה פֶת לָחֶם וְגו'. אֲבָל לוֹט אָמַר, סוּרוּ נָא אֶל בֵּית עֲבָדְכֶם וְלִינוּ. וּלְבַתֵּר וּרְחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁכַּמְתֶּם וְהִלַּכְתֶּם לְדֶרֶכְכֶם. בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִשְׁתַּמְדְּעוּן בְּהוּ בְּנֵי נֶשָׂא.

237. וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא כִי בְּרָחוּב נָלִין. בְּגִין דְּכָךְ הוּוּ עֲבָדֵי אוּרְחִין דְּעֵאלִין תַּמָּן, לֹא הוּוּ בַר נֶשׁ דִּיכְנוּשׁ לוֹן לְבֵיתָא, וְעַל דָּא, אָמְרוּ לֹא כִי בְּרָחוּב נָלִין, מַה כְּתִיב וַיִּפְצֹר בָּם מְאֹד וְגו'.

238. תָּא חַזִּי, כִּד קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲבִיד דִּינָא בְּעֵלְמָא, שְׁלִיחָא חָדָא עֲבִיד לֵיה, וְהִשְׁתָּא חֲמִינָן תְּרֵי שְׁלוּחֵי, אֲמָאִי, וְכִי לֹא סָגִי בַּחַד. אֲלֵא חַד הוּוּ, וּמַה דְּאָמַר תְּרֵי, חַד הוּוּ לְאַפְקָא לֵיה לְלוֹט, וּלְשֹׁבָא לֵיה, וְחַד לְמִיּהֲפֹךְ לְקִרְתָּא, וּלְחַבְלָא אֶרְעָא, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ אִשְׁתָּאֵר חַד.

#### מִדְרַשׁ הַנֶּעֱלָם

239. רַבִּי פָתַח, בְּהַאי קְרָא, וְאֵלֶּה הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִנִּיחַ ה' לְנִסּוֹת בָּם אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל. אָמַר רַבִּי, חַזִּי הָיִית בְּהֵוָה עֵלְמָא, וְלִית עֵלְמָא קָאִים, אֲלֵא בְּאִינוּן דְּשְׁלִיטִין עַל רְעוּתָא דְּלְבָהוֹן. שְׁנַאֲמַר עֲדוּת בִּיהוֹסֶף שָׁמוּ וְגו'. אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה, לְמַה זָכָה יוֹסֵף לְאוֹתָהּ הַמַּעֲלָה וְהַמְּלָכוּת, בְּשִׁבְלִי שְׁכַבֵּשׁ יִצְרוּ. דִּתְגִּינָן כָּל הַכּוֹבֵשׁ אֶת יִצְרוֹ, מְלָכוּתָא דְּשָׁמַיָא אֲחִיל עֲלֵיהּ.

240. As Rabbi Acha has said: The Holy One, blessed be He, has created the Evil Inclination solely for the purpose of trying humanity. And does the Holy One, blessed be He, intend on trying humanity? Yes. How do we know this? From the verse: "If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams...And the sign or the wonder came to pass...For Hashem your Elohim tests you..." (Devarim 13:1-3)

241. And why does He intend on trying it, as all the deeds of humankind are well known to Him? So as that humankind should have no excuse to complain. See what is written: "and Lot sat in the gate of S'dom," WHICH MEANS that he was sitting and reproving the people. Rabbi Yitzchak asked: What is the verse: "But the wicked are like the troubled sea..." (Yeshayah 57:20)? Even when the wicked is on trial, he shows insolence and confirms his guilt. As it is written: "But before they lay down..." (Beresheet 19:4).

242. Rabbi Yitzchak continued: Just as the Holy One, blessed be He, created the Garden of Eden upon earth, so did He create Gehenom as well. And just as He created the Garden of Eden above, so did He create Gehenom there. The earthly Garden of Eden is referred to in the verse: "And Hashem Elohim planted a garden eastward in Eden..." (Beresheet 2:8) and earthly Gehanom is referred to in the verse: "A land of gloom, as darkness itself..." (Iyov 10:22)

243. There is a Garden of Eden above, as is written: "but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with Hashem your Elohim..." (I Shmuel 25:29) and, "and the spirit shall return to Elohim who gave it" (Kohelet 12:7). And there is a Gehenom above, as it is written: "and the souls of your enemies, these shall he sling out, as out of the hollow of a sling" (I Shmuel 25:29).

244. The Garden of Eden below is as we have said. The Garden of Eden above is for the souls of the completely righteous, so that they may be replenished by the Great Light of above. Gehenom down below is for those wicked who refused to perform circumcision, did not believe in the Holy One, blessed be He, nor in His religion, and did not keep the Shabbat. And these are those who worship the stars and constellations, and who are condemned with fire. As it is written: "and they came out from fire, and fire shall devour them..." (Yechezkel 15:7) and, "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men..." (Yeshayah 66:24)

245. The Gehenom above is for those sinners of Yisrael who have transgressed the precepts of Torah, and have not repented. They are rejected and stay outside until they are punished. And they wander around the whole world, as it is written: "The wicked walk on every side..." (Tehilim 12:9)

240. דָּאָמַר ר' אַחָא, לֹא בָרָא הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לִנְסוּת בּוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם. וּמִי בְּעֵי קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לִנְסוּתָא בְּבְנֵי נָשָׁא. אִין. דָּאָמַר ר' אַחָא, מִנֵּ"ל, מִדְּכִתִּיב כִּי יָקוּם בְּקֶרְבְּךָ נָבִיא וּגו'. וְבֹא הָאוֹת וְהַמוֹפֶת וּגו'. כִּי מִנְסָה ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם וּגו'.

241. וּלְמָה בְּעֵי נְסוּתָא, דְּהָא כָּל עוֹבְדֵי דְבֵר נֶשׁ אֲתַגְלִי קִמְיָה, אֲלֹא שְׁלֹא לָתֵת פְּתָחוֹן פֶּה לְבְנֵי אָדָם, רְאֵה מַה כְּתִיב וְלוֹט יוֹשֵׁב בַּשַּׁעַר סְדוֹם דִּהְוָה יִתִּיב לִנְסוּתָא לְבְרִייתָא. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מֵאִי דְכְתִיב וְהִרְשָׁעִים כִּים נִגְרֹשׁ וּגו'. אֲפִילוּ בַשַּׁעַת דִּינוּ שָׁל רָשָׁע הוּא מַעֲזִי פָנָיו, וְאִזִּי הוּא בִּרְשָׁעֲתוֹ קִיָּם, רְאֵה מַה כְּתִיב טָרַם יִשְׁכְּבוּ וּגו'.

242. אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק, כְּשֶׁם שְׁבָרָא קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא גֵן עֵדֶן בְּאַרְץ, כֵּךְ בְּרָא גֵיהֶנֶם בְּאַרְץ. וְכֵשֶׁם שְׁבָרָא גֵן עֵדֶן לְמַעְלָה, כֵּךְ בְּרָא גֵיהֶנֶם לְמַעְלָה. גֵּן עֵדֶן בְּאַרְץ, דְּכְתִיב וַיֵּטֶע ה' אֱלֹקִים גֵּן עֵדֶן וּגו'. גֵּיהֶנֶם בְּאַרְץ, דְּכְתִיב אֶרֶץ עֲפָתָה כְּמוֹ אֶמֶל וּגו'.

243. גֵּן עֵדֶן לְמַעְלָה, דְּכְתִיב וְהִיתָה נֶפֶשׁ אֲדוֹנִי צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ. וְכְתִיב וְהִרוּחַ תָּשׁוּב אֶל הָאֱלֹקִים אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנָה. גֵּיהֶנֶם לְמַעְלָה דְּכְתִיב וְאֵת נֶפֶשׁ אֵיבֶיךָ יִקְלַעְנָה בְּתוֹךְ כַּף הַקֶּלֶעַ.

244. גֵּן עֵדֶן לְמַטָּה בְּדִקְאֻמְרָן. גֵּן עֵדֶן לְמַעְלָה, לְנִשְׁמָתָן שֶׁל צְדִיקִים גְּמוּרִים, לְהִיּוֹת נְזוּנִין מֵאוֹר הַגְּדוֹל שֶׁל מַעְלָה. גֵּיהֶנֶם לְמַטָּה, לְאוֹתָם הִרְשָׁעִים שְׁלֹא קִבְּלוּ בְרִית מִילָה, וְלֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּהַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְאוֹדְתּוֹ, וְלֹא שָׁמְרוּ שַׁבָּת, וְאֵלוּ הֵם עֲכוּ"ם, שְׁנֵדוּנִים בָּאֵשׁ, שְׁנֵאֲמַר מֵהָאֵשׁ יֵצְאוּ וְהָאֵשׁ תֹּאכֹלֶם וּגו'. וְכְתִיב וַיֵּצְאוּ וַראוּ בְּפִגְרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וּגו'.

245. גֵּיהֶנֶם לְמַעְלָה, לְאוֹתָם פּוֹשְׁעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁעֲבְרוּ עַל מִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, וְלֹא חָזְרוּ בְּתַשׁוּבָה, שְׁדוּחִים אוֹתָם לַחוּץ, עַד שִׁיקְבְּלוּ עוֹנָשָׁם. וְהוֹלְכִים וְסוֹבְבִים כָּל הָעוֹלָם, שְׁנֵאֲמַר סָבִיב רָשָׁעִים יִתְהַלְכוּ.

246. And they are sentenced to stay there for twelve months. Later, they reside with those who received their punishment at their death, each to a place according to what he deserves. The sinners who worship the stars and the constellations are constantly punished by fire and water, and they never emerge again, as it is written: "neither shall their fire be quenched" (Yeshayah 66:24).

247. The sinners are sentenced in Gehenom according to what is written: "Then Hashem rained upon S'dom and upon Amorah brimstone and fire..." (Beresheet 19:24). And they never emerged from there and shall not rise for the Day of Judgment, as it is written: "which Hashem overthrew in His anger, and in His wrath" (Devarim 29:22). "In His anger" refers to this world; "and in His wrath" refers to the world to come.

248. Rabbi Yitzchak said: In keeping with what I have explained, there is a Garden of Eden above and another below; there is a Gehenom below and another above. Rabbi Ya'akov said: The wicked who have defiled their circumcision, desecrated the Shabbat in public, desecrated the festivals, and have rejected the Torah, the resurrection of the dead, and so on, all shall enter Gehenom below. They shall be punished there and shall never rise up again.

249. But they shall rise on the Day of Judgment and for the resurrection of the dead. They are described by the words: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). And they are also described by the words, "and they shall be abhorrent to all flesh" (Heb. dera'on) (Yeshayah 66:24). What is dera'on? Dai-Ra'on, WHICH MEANS that all shall say, Dai ('enough') - Ra'on ('of seeing them')--THEY SHALL HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF SEEING THEM. But of the righteous in Yisrael, it is said: "Your people shall also be all righteous..." (Yeshayah 60:21). End of Midrash Hane'elam

246. וְשֵׁם נְדוּנִים שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ לְאַחֵר בֶּן, מְדוּרָם  
עִם אוֹתָם שֶׁקָּבְלוּ עָנָשׁ בְּמוֹתָם כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד בְּפִי  
הַמָּקוֹם הָרְאוּ לוֹ. וְהַרְשָׁעִים שֶׁל עֲכוּ"ם, נְדוּנִים  
תָּמִיד בָּאֵשׁ וּבַמַּיִם, וְשׁוֹב אֵינָם עוֹלָיִם, שְׁנֵאמַר  
וְאִשָּׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה.

247. מִשְׁפָּט הַרְשָׁעִים בְּגֵיהֶנֶם, כְּמָה דִּכְתִּיב, וְה'  
הַמִּטִּיר עַל סֹדֶם וְעַל עֲמֹרָה גִּפְרִית וְאֵשׁ וּגּו'. וְשׁוֹב  
אֵינָם עוֹלָיִם, וְלֹא יִקְוּמוּ לְיוֹם הַדִּין, שְׁנֵאמַר אֲשֶׁר  
הִפִּךְ ה' בָּאֶפֶס וּבִחְמָתוֹ, בָּאֶפֶס: בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. וּבִחְמָתוֹ:  
בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

248. אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק לְהָאֵי גִּוּנָא אֵית גֵּן עֵדֶן לְמַעְלָה,  
וְאֵית גֵּן עֵדֶן לְמַטָּה. אֵית גִּיהֶנֶם לְמַטָּה, וְאֵית גִּיהֶנֶם  
לְמַעְלָה. אָמַר ר' יַעֲקֹב, הַרְשָׁעִים שֶׁקָּלְקְלוּ בְּרִית  
מִלָּה שְׁבָהֶם, וְחָלְלוּ שַׁבַּת בְּפִרְהֻסָּא, וְחָלְלוּ אֶת  
הַמוֹעֲדוֹת, וְשִׁכְּפְרוּ בַּתּוֹרָה, וְשִׁכְּפְרוּ בַּתְּחִיית הַמֵּתִים,  
וְכִדּוּמָה לָהֶם, יוֹרְדִים לְגִיהֶנֶם שְׁלֵמָה, וְנְדוּנִים שָׁם  
וְשׁוֹב אֵינָם עוֹלָיִם.

249. אָבֵל יִקְוּמוּ לְיוֹם הַדִּין, וְיִקְוּמוּ לַתְּחִיית הַמֵּתִים,  
וְעֲלִיהֶם נֶאֱמַר וּרְבִים מִיִּשְׁנֵי אֲדָמַת עֶפֶר יִקְיִצּוּ אֵלֶּה  
לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם וּגּו'. וְעֲלִיהֶם נֶאֱמַר וְהָיוּ דִּרְאוֹן לְכָל  
בָּשָׂר. מֶה דִּרְאוֹן, הֵיוּ רְאוֹן, שֶׁהִכָּל יֹאמְרוּ הֵיוּ  
בְּרֵאֵיָתָם, וְעַל הַצְּדִיקִים שְׁבִישְׂרָאֵל נֶאֱמַר, וְעִמָּךְ  
כָּל־עַדִּיקִים וּגּו'. (ע"כ מדרה"נ).

## 20. "And Hashem rained upon S'dom"

The various levels of judgment that occur in Hell are expounded upon by the sages of the Zohar. These judgments were expressed in our physical world during the time of Sodom and Gomorrah and the time of Noah and the flood. The implements of water, fire, and brimstone were used to bring about judgment during these times of intense negativity. The Zohar reveals that the 72 Names of G-d, along with the angels who are connected to each particular sequence of Hebrew Letters that form the 72 Names, were the conduits by which the force of judgment expressed itself in our physical realm.

### The Relevance of this Passage

The 72 Names of God is an ancient formula encoded in the Torah passage that tells the story of the parting of the Red Sea. This instrument emits both merciful and judgmental forces into our world. Through this passage of Zohar we arouse the protection and positive aspects from the 72 Names and the corresponding angels, thereby removing negative elements and judgments from our life.

250. Next is the verse: "And Hashem rained upon S'dom and upon Amorah..." Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "Behold, the day of Hashem comes, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger..." (Yeshayah 13:9) "Behold, the day of Hashem comes" alludes to the earthly Courthouse, WHICH REFERS TO THE JUDGMENTS THAT ISSUE FROM MALCHUT, DURING THE TIME WHEN SHE IS AT THE STAGE OF ILLUMINATION FROM THE LEFT, BEFORE BEING COMBINED WITH THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS CALLED THE DECREE OF JUDGMENT. "Comes" is as explained IN REFERENCE TO THE PHRASE, "WHICH HAS COME TO ME," WHICH MEANS THAT SHE ALWAYS COMES AT THE BEGINNING OF EVERY UNION. "Which has come to me" is so because it does not execute Judgment before it enters and receives permission. The same is explained by the verse, "The end of all flesh has come before ?Me," WHICH MEANS THAT IT CAME TO ASK FOR PERMISSION.

251. Another explanation of "Behold, the day of Hashem comes" is that it refers to the Saboteur of Below, NAMELY THE ANGEL OF DEATH, when he takes the soul away. This is why THE VERSE CALLS HIM "cruel both with wrath...to lay the land desolate," ALLUDING TO S'dom and Amorah, WHICH WERE THROWN OVER AND DESERTED. The phrase, "and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it," REFERS TO those who inhabited that land.

252. After this, it is written: "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof..." (Yeshayah 13:10) because it was from the heavens that He rained fire down on them and wiped them out of the world. Then, it is written: "I will make men more rare than fine gold..." (Ibid. 12). This is Avraham, whom the Holy One, blessed be He, raised up and cherished more than any other person in the world.

253. Rabbi Yehuda related these verses to the day when the Temple was destroyed. On that day, both the celestial and earthly beings darkened, along with the stars and heavens. Rabbi Elazar explained these verses as follows: The day on which the Holy One, blessed be He, shall raise the Congregation of Yisrael up from the dust, NAMELY AT THE TIME OF REDEMPTION, shall be known on high and down below. As it is written: "But it shall be one day which shall be known to Hashem..." (Zecharyah 14: 7) And on that day, the Holy One, blessed be He, shall take revenge on the idol worshippers.

254. So when the Holy One, blessed be He, takes revenge on the worshipers of the planets and constellations, it shall be said: "I will make men more rare than fine gold." This is King Mashiach, who shall rise up over all peoples of the world and be so honored that all of humanity will bow before him and obey him. This is as it is written: "They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him...the kings of Tarshish...shall bring presents..." (Tehilim 72:9-10).

250. וְהָ הַמָּטִיר עַל סֹדֶם וְעַל עֲמֹרָה וּגְו', ר' חִיָּיא פִתַּח, הִנֵּה יוֹם ה' בָּא אֲכֹזְרֵי וּגְו'. הִנֵּה יוֹם ה' בָּא, דָּא בִי דִינָא לְתַתָּא. בָּא: כְּמָה דְאַתְמָר הַבָּאָה אֵלַי, בְּגִין דְּלֹא עֲבִיד דִּינָא, עַד דְּעָאֵל, וְנָטִיל רִשׁוֹ, כְּגֻוּנָא דָּא, קִץ כָּל בֶּשָׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי.

251. דְּבַר אַחֵר הִנֵּה יוֹם ה' בָּא. דָּא הוּא מַחְבֵּלָא לְתַתָּא, כִּד נָטִיל נִשְׁמָתָא. בְּגִינֵי כֶךְ אֲכֹזְרֵי, וְעִבְרָה, לְשׁוּם הָאָרֶץ לְשִׁמָּה. דָּא סֹדֶם וְעֲמֹרָה, וְחֻטְאֵיהֶּ וְשְׁמִיד מִמֶּנָּה. אֵלִין יִתְבִּי אֶרְעָא.

252. מַה כְּתִיב בְּתַרְיָה, כִּי כִכְבֵּי הַשָּׁמַיִם וּכְסִילֵיהֶם וּגְו'. דְּהָא מִן שְׁמִיָּא אֲמַטֵּר עֲלֵיהוֹן אִשָּׁא, וְאַעֲבֵר לֹון מִן עֲלָמָא. לְבַתֵּר מַה כְּתִיב, אוֹקִיר אֲנוֹשׁ מִפּוֹ וּגְו'. דָּא אֲבִרְהָם, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא סָלִיק לֵיהּ, עַל כָּל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא.

253. ר' יְהוּדָה אוֹקִים לֹון לְהַנִּי קְרָאִי בְיוֹמָא דְאַתְחַרְבַּ בִּי מְקֻדְשָׁא, דְּבַהּ הוּא יוֹמָא, אֲתַחְשְׁכוּ עֲלָי וְתַתָּאי, וְאַתְחַשְׁכוּן שְׁמִיָּא וְכִכְבֵּיא. ר' אֶלְעָזָר, מוֹקִים לְהַנִּי קְרָאִי, בְּיוֹמֵי דִיּוֹקִים קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְכַנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִעַפְרָא, וְהָהוּא יוֹמָא, יִתִּידַע לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא, דְּכְתִיב וְהָיָה יוֹם אַחֵר הוּא יוֹדַע לָהּ. וְהָהוּא יוֹמָא, יוֹמָא דְנוֹקְמָא אִיהוּ, דְּזִמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְנוֹקְמָא מִשְׁאָר עַמִּין עוֹבְדֵי עֲבוֹ"ם.

254. וְכִד קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יַעֲבִיד נוֹקְמִין בְּשָׂאָר עַמִּין עֲבוֹ"ם, כְּדִין אוֹקִיר אֲנוֹשׁ מִפּוֹ. דָּא מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא, דִּיִּסְתַּלַּק וְיִתְיַקֵּר עַל כָּל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא, וְכָל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא יִפְלַחוּן וְיִסְגְּדוּן קַמֵּיהּ, דְּכְתִיב לִפְנֵיו יִכְרְעוּ צִיּוֹם וּגְו', מַלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וּגְו'.

255. Come and behold: even though this prophecy--REFERRING TO THE VERSES THAT READ "BEHOLD, THE DAY OF HASHEM..." AND "I WILL MAKE MAN..."--was said specifically about Babylon AS WRITTEN, 'THE BURDEN OF BAVEL' (YESHAYAH 13:1), it is said NEVERTHELESS about everything. It is also written in this same passage: "For Hashem will have mercy on Ya'akov...And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place..." (Yeshayah 14:1-2). IT SEEMS THAT THE SAGES OF THE ZOHAR HAD A DIFFERENT SECTIONING OF THE BIBLE, BECAUSE IN OUR BOOKS, THESE VERSES APPEAR IN THE FOLLOWING CHAPTER.

256. The phrase, "Then Hashem rained upon S'dom," refers to the level of the earthly Courthouse, which is granted permission from above. Rabbi Yitzchak said that the Judgment was executed with Mercy, as it is written: "from Hashem out of heaven," FOR THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI IMPLIES MERCY. This is so that Judgment will be mixed with Mercy. You might ask: What Mercy is there here? HE REPLIES: As it is written: "And it came to pass, when Elohim destroyed the cities of the plain, that Elohim remembered Avraham..." (Beresheet 19:29) And after this, two whole nations issued from LOT. And he had the honor of being the great ancestor of David and King Solomon.

257. See what is written: "And it came to pass, when they had brought them outside abroad, that he said: ESCAPE FOR YOUR LIFE" (Beresheet 19:17). Come and behold: we have learned that when Judgment hangs over the world, people should not be at the marketplace. This is because when Judgment comes, it does not distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. Therefore, one should not be there. And it has been explained that this is why Noach hid in the ark and did not look upon the world as judgment was executed. And so it is written: "and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning," (Shemot 12:22) THAT IS, until judgment is executed. And this is why it is written: "Escape for your life, look not behind you..."

258. As they were walking, Rabbi Yehuda said to Rabbi Yitzchak: The Judgment that the Holy One, blessed be He, executed at the Great Flood and the Judgment of S'dom were both Judgments of Gehenom, because the sinners in Gehenom are punished by water and fire.

259. Rabbi Yitzchak responded that S'dom was sentenced by the Judgment of Gehenom, as it is written: "Then Hashem rained upon S'dom and upon Amorah brimstone and fire from Hashem out of heaven." One was punished with the aspect of water; the other with the aspect of fire; and both are the punishments of Gehenom. The sinners in Gehenom are punished with both these aspects of Judgment BECAUSE THERE IS THE 'GEHENOM OF SNOW,' WHICH IS WATER, AND THERE IS THE 'GEHENOM OF FIRE.'

255. תָּא חֲזִי, אֵף עַל גַּב דְּנִבּוּאָה דָּא, אֲתָמֵר עַל בָּבֶל, בְּכֹלָא אֲתָמֵר. דִּהּא חֲמִינֵן בִּהְיָי פִּרְשָׁתָא, דְּכִתְיִב כִּי יִרְחַם ה' אֶת יַעֲקֹב. וְכִתְיִב וּלְקָחוּם עִמָּיִם וְהִבְיָאוּם אֶל מְקוֹמָם.

256. וְה' הִמָּטִיר עַל סְדוֹם. דָּא דִּרְגָא דְּבֵי דִינָא לְתַתָּא, דְּנִטִּיל רְשׁוּ מַעֲלָא. ר' יִצְחָק אָמַר דְּעֵבִיד דִּינָא בִּרְחֵמִי. דְּכִתְיִב, מֵאֵת ה' מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם. בְּגִין לְאַשְׁתַּבַּח, דִּינָא בִּרְחֵמִי, וְאִי תִימָא מֵאִי רְחֵמִי הָכָא, דְּכִתְיִב, וַיְהִי בִשְׁחַת אֱלֹקִים אֶת עָרֵי הַכְּפֹר וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹקִים אֶת אַבְרָהָם וְגו', וּלְבַתֵּר נִפְקוּ מִנִּיהָ תְּרִין אוֹמִינִין שְׁלָמִין, וְזָכָה דְּנִפְיָק מִנִּיהָ דְּדוֹר וּשְׁלָמָה מִלְכָּא.

257. חֲמִי מַה כְּתִיב וַיְהִי כִּהְוִיָּא אֹתָם הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר וְגו'. תָּא חֲזִי בִשְׁעָתָא דִּינָא שְׂרִי בְּעֵלְמָא, הָא אֲתָמֵר דְּלֹא לִיבְעִי לְפֻר נִשְׁלֹאשְׁתַּבַּח בְּשׁוּקָא, בְּגִין דְּכִיּוֹן דְּשְׂרִיָּא דִינָא, לֹא אֲשַׁגַּח בֵּין זִכָּא וְחֵיבָא, וְלֹא בְּעִי לְאַשְׁתַּבַּח תַּמָּן. וְהָא אֲתָמֵר דְּבְּגִין כְּרֹאסְתִּים נַח בְּתִיבָה, וְלֹא יִשְׁגַּח בְּעֵלְמָא בִּשְׁעָתָא דִּינָא יִתְעַבִּיד. וְכִתְיִב וְאַתֶּם לֹא תֵצְאוּ אִישׁ מִפֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ עַד בֹּקֶר. עַד דִּיתְעַבִּיד דִּינָא. וּבְגִין כְּרִינְאֵמֵר הַמֵּלֵט עַל נַפְשָׁךְ אֶל תִּבְטֵ אַחֲרֶיךָ וְגו'.

258. ר' יִצְחָק ור' יְהוּדָה הוּוּ אֲזִלִּי בִּאֲרַחָא. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה לר' יִצְחָק, דִּינָא דְּעֵבִיד קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּמַבּוּל, וְדִינָא דְּסְדוֹם, תְּרוּוּיָהּ דִּינִין דְּגִיְהֵנָם הוּוּ. בְּגִין דְּחֵיבֵי גִיְהֵנָם, אֲתַדְּנוּ בְּמֵיָא וּבִאֲשָׁא.

259. אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק, סְדוֹם בְּדִינָא דְּגִיְהֵנָם אֲתַדְּן, דְּכִתְיִב, וְה' הִמָּטִיר עַל סְדוֹם וְעַל עַמְרָה גְּפְרִית וְאִשׁ מֵאֵת ה' מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם. דָּא מַסְטָרָא דְּמֵיָא וְדָא מַסְטָרָא דְּאֲשָׁא. דָּא וְדָא הוּא דִּינָא דְּגִיְהֵנָם, וְחֵיבִין דְּגִיְהֵנָם בְּתִרִין דִּינִין אֲלִין אֲתַדְּנוּ.

260. He said to him: The sinners are sentenced to twelve months in Gehenom, WHERE THEY ARE CLEANSED, THAT IS PURIFIED. LATER, the Holy One, blessed be He, raises them from Gehenom and makes them sit at its gates watching other sinners enter and receive punishment. And they ask for Mercy for them. And after this, the Holy One, blessed be He, is merciful to them. HE RAISES THEM UP AND AWAY FROM THE GATES OF GEHENOM, bringing them to the place required for them. From that day onward, the body rests in the dust while the soul inherits its appropriate place.

261. Come and behold: we have learned that even the generation of the Great Flood was punished with fire and water only. Cold water came down from above and boiling water from below, FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE EARTH, as fire. So they were punished by the two Judgments, because the Judgment of above is executed WITH TWO KINDS OF JUDGMENT: WATER AND FIIRE. And this is why there was brimstone and fire in S'dom--BECAUSE THE BRIMSTONE COMES FROM WATER, AS IS KNOWN.

262. He asked him: Will THE PEOPLE OF S'DOM rise IN THE FUTURE for the Day of Judgment? He responded: We have already learned this. Those PEOPLE of S'dom and Amorah will not rise FOR JUDGMENT IN THE FUTURE DURING THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. This is proven by the verse: "And that the whole land there is of brimstone, and salt, and burning...which Hashem overthrew in His anger, and in His wrath" (Devarim 29:22). "Which Hashem overthrew" means in the present world; "in His anger" means in the world to come; and "in His wrath" means at the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, shall resurrect the dead.

263. He said to him: "Come and behold. Just as their land was destroyed forever, so were they destroyed forever. Behold, the Judgment of the Holy One, blessed be He, is Judgment for Judgment, NAMELY, A JUST RETRIBUTION. Just as they did not revive the soul of the poor with food or with drink, so in the same way, the Holy One, blessed be He, does not give their soul back to them in the world to come.

264. Come and behold: they refrained from giving charity, which is called life. Thus, the Holy One, blessed be He, withheld life from them in this world and in the world to come. And just as they blocked the pathways and routes for other people, so did the Holy One, blessed be He, block the pathways and routes of mercy from them, so that they could not receive Mercy in this world or in the world to come.

260. אָמַר לוֹ, דִּינָא דְחַיִּיבֵי דְגִיּהֲנָם, תְּרִיסַר יָרְחֵי, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא סְלִיק לֹון מְגִיּהֲנָם, וְתַמָּן מִתְּלַבְּנִין, וְיִתְבִּין לְתַרְעָא דְגִיּהֲנָם וְחֻמָּאן אֵינוֹן חַיִּיבִין דְּעָאֲלִין, וְדִנִּין לֹון תַּמָּן, וְאֵינוֹן תְּבַעֵי רַחֲמֵי עֲלֵיהוֹ. וְלִבְתָּר, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא חַיִּיבֵי עֲלֵיהוֹ, וְאֵעִיל לֹון לְדוּכְתָא דְאַצְטְרִיךְ לֹון. מִהֵּהוּא יוֹמָא וְלֵהֲלָאָה, גּוּפָא אֲשֶׁתְּכָךְ בְּעַפְרָא, וְנִשְׁמָתָא יִרְתָּא אַתְרָה בְּרַחוּיָהּ לָהּ.

261. תָּא חַזִּי, דִּהָא אַתְמָר, דְּאִפִּילוּ אֵינוֹן בְּנֵי טוּפְנָא, לֹא אַתְדָּנוּ, אֲלֵא בְּאִשָּׁא וּמֵיָא. מֵיָא קְרִירָן נַחְתִּי מְלַעֲיֵלָא, וּמֵיָא רְתִיחָן סְלָקִי מִתְתָּא בְּאִשָּׁא. וְאַתְדָּנוּ בְּתַרֵּי דִינִין, בְּגִין דְּדִינָא דְלַעֲיֵלָא, הֵכִי הוּא, בְּגִין כְּרַבְסְדוּם גְּפָרִית וְאִשׁ.

262. אָמַר לוֹ, אִי יְקוּמוֹן לְיוֹם דִּינָא, אָמַר לוֹ הָא אַתְמָר. אֲבָל אֲלִין דְּסְדוּם וְעַמּוּרָה, לֹא יְקוּמוֹן, וְקָרָא אוּכַח, דְּכְתִיב גְּפָרִית וּמִלַּח שְׂרָפָה כָּל אֶרֶצָה לֹא תִזְרַע וְלֹא תִצְמִיחַ וּגו'. אֲשֶׁר הֶפֶךְ ה' בָּאֲפֹ וּבְחֻמָּתוֹ. אֲשֶׁר הֶפֶךְ ה': בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין. בָּאֲפֹ: בְּעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי. וּבְחֻמָּתוֹ: בְּזִמְנָא דְזִמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַחֲוִיָּא מִתִּיָּא.

263. אָמַר לוֹ תָא חַזִּי, כַּמָּה דְאַרְעָא דְלַהוֹן אַתְאָבִיד לְעֵלָם וְלַעֲלָמֵי עֲלְמֵיָא, הֵכִי נָמִי אַתְאָבִידוּ אֵינוֹן, לְעֵלָם וְלַעֲלָמֵי עֲלְמֵיָא. וְתָא חַזִּי, דִּינָא דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דִּינָא לְקַבֵּל דִּינָא, אֵינוֹן לֹא הוּא תִיַּיבִין נַפְשָׁא דְמִסְכְּנָא, בְּמִיכְלָא וּבְמִשְׁתֵּיָא, אוּף הֵכִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לֹא אַתִּיב לֹון נַפְשֵׁיהוּ לְעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי.

264. וְתָא חַזִּי, אֵינוֹן אַתְמַנְעוּ מִצְדָּקָה, דְּאִקְרִי חַיִּים, אוּף קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מִנֵּעַ מִנִּיּוּהוּ חַיִּים, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין, וּבְעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי. וְכַמָּה דְאֵינוֹן מִנְעוּ אוּרְחִין וּשְׂבִילִין מִבְּנֵי עֲלְמָא, ה"נ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מִנֵּעַ מִנִּיּוּהוּ אוּרְחִין וּשְׂבִילִין דְּרַחֲמֵי, לְרַחֲמָא עֲלֵיהוּ בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין, וּבְעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי.

265. Rabbi Aba then said: All the people of the world will rise AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD and be judged. But of THE PEOPLE OF S'DOM, it is said: "and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). Yet the Holy One, blessed be He, is merciful. Because He punished them in this world and they accepted His punishment, they shall not be punished in the future with all Judgments, BUT ONLY WITH A FEW OF THEM.

266. Rabbi Chiya said that it is written: "and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow..." AND HE ASKS: What is MEANT BY "when He overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt," SINCE HE DWELT ONLY IN ONE OF THEM? AND HE REPLIES: Lot did dwell in all of them. As it is written: "and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent toward S'dom" (Beresheet 13:12). But nobody accepted him in S'dom, except for the King of S'dom, for the sake of Avraham, WHO RETURNED HIS PEOPLE AND THE GOODS THAT HE HAD LOST DURING THE WAR OF THE FOUR KINGS.

Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

267. Tosefta (Addendum). Sublime Connections, NAMELY THOSE RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE WHOSE NEFESH, RUACH, AND NESHAMAH, ARE CONNECTED AND ATTACHED TO THE GREATNESS OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE: Governors who shatter THE POWERS OF THE OTHER SIDE, the Wise in understanding, look to know. The White Head, NAMELY ARICH ANPIN WHOSE HAIR IS LIKE PURE SHEAF, prepares for the Throne, WHICH IS AN ALLUSION TO BINAH, and sets it upon pillars of precious stones and gems--WHICH IS A REFERENCE TO CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA, WHICH ARE THE FOUR 'LEGS' OF THE THRONE, WHICH IS BINAH.

268. Among these stones, there is a particular gem. THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THE NUKVA OF ZEIR-ANPIN, which is beautiful and glamorous; it is the place where the smoke and fire gather and glow through seventy aspects. THIS REFERS TO THE DECREE OF JUDGMENT, WHICH IS THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT SIDE IN THE NUKVA, BEFORE IT IS INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT. THEN SHE IS A PLACE OF JUDGMENT ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF A 'BURNING FIRE AND HOT STEAM OF THE FURNACE.' These seventy aspects glow in all directions, THAT IS, TO ALL 'FOUR WINDS' (DIRECTIONS) OF THE WORLD, WHICH ARE NAMED CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT.

269. These seventy ASPECTS issue from the three colors, WHICH ARE WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, WHILE THE COLOR OF MALCHUT, WHICH IS BLACK, DOES NOT APPEAR THERE. These sparks ARE INCLUDED within the sparks that sparkle in the four directions of the world. A strong spark lies to the left side, which clings to the heavens, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN. The Judgments that are in these seventy aspects are modified, and the books are open, AS IF TO SAY THAT EVEN THOUGH THE BOOKS IN WHICH THE JUDGMENTS (OR 'SENTENCES') ARE WRITTEN ARE OPEN AND SEEN BY ALL, THE JUDGMENT IS NEVERTHELESS MODIFIED AND DOES NOT EXECUTE ANY PUNISHMENT.

270. From here the Arrows, Swords, Spears, and the Fire of the Tower go forth. And a strong Fire comes out of the heavens, ZEIR ANPIN clinging to it, NAMELY, TO THE NUKVA. Thus, when the upper Fire, NAMELY THE JUDGMENTS OF ZEIR ANPIN, clings to the lower Fire, NAMELY THE SEVENTY JUDGMENTS OF THE NUKVA, no one can cancel the wrath and Judgment THAT BELONG TO THE JUDGMENTS OF THE NUKVA.

265. ר' אבא אמר, בלהו בני עלמא יקומון, ויקומון לדינא. ועלייהו כתיב ואלה לחרפות ולדראון עולם. וקודשא בריך הוא מארי דרחמין איהו, בין דין להו בהאי עלמא, וקבילו דינא, לא אתדנו בכלהו דינן.

266. אמר רביחיא כתיב וישלח את לוט מתוך ההפכה וגו'. מהו בהפך את הערים אשר ישב בהן לוט. אלא, בכלהו עבד דיוריה לוט, דכתיב ולוט ישב בערי הכפר ויאהל עד סדום. ולא קבילו ליה, בר דמלך סדום קביל ליה בסדום, בגיניה דאברהם.

סתרי תורה

267. תוספתא. קטורי רמאי, הורמני דברורי, חבימין, בסכלתנו יסתכלון למנדע, בשעתא דרישא חורא אתקין ברסיא, על גבסמכין דאבנין דמרגליטן טבן.

268. בין אינון אבנין, אית חד מרגליטא, שפירא בחיזו, יאה בריוא, קומטרא דקיטרא, דמלהטא בע' גוונין, אינון ע' גוונין מלהטן לכל סטר.

269. אליון ע', מתפרשאן מגו ג' גוונין. אליון זיקין, בזיקין הנציצין לר' סטרי עלמא, הכא איתא זיקא תקיפא, דסטר שמאלא, דאתאחיד בשמיא. אינון גוונין שבעין, דינא יתיב וספרין פתיחו.

270. מהכא נפקי גירין, וסייפין, ורומחין, ואשא דקוסטרא. ואתאחיד אשא תקיפא, דנפקא משמים ביה, וכד אתאחד אשא עלאה, באליון דלתתא, לית מאן דיכול לאתבר רוגזא ודינא.

271. ZEIR ANPIN comes down to the world with the eyes glowing like the fiery flames of fire, THAT IS, WITH EYES GLOWING WITH FIRE, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "I WILL GO DOWN NOW, AND SEE..." Woe to he who shall run into Him when He is armed with Swords. THIS REFERS TO THE JUDGMENTS, WHICH ARE CALLED 'SWORDS.' He has a sharp Sword in His hand and has pity on neither the good nor the bad. The verdict of those seventy COLORS comes down by the left hand, with permission granted by the Unison to which that 'Side of the Heavens' is attached.

272. He changes into many kinds of Judgment. Every day He changes into many colors. THIS MEANS THAT THEY RECEIVE A DIFFERENT SHAPE EACH TIME. It happens when offensive speech is exalted and collected cheaply among the rulers of men. All sorts of Judgments appear in the 'Vessel of Wrath' of the Holy One, blessed be He. And THESE JUDGMENTS remain at the top of the world, while human beings, because of their ignorance, are not aware of them.

273. "Brimstone and fire" REFERS TO the waste of water and fire that have been drawn from the heavens, combined together, and released upon S'dom. Woe to the wicked, who do not pay attention for the glory of their Master.

274. Ten Names are engraved by the King's authority. THE TEN NAMES REFER TO THE TEN SFIROT; there are ten SFIROT, AS EXPLAINED IN SEFER YETZIRAH (THE BOOK OF FORMATION); TEN EXACTLY, NOT NINE OR ELEVEN. NEVERTHELESS, THEY ALSO add up to a greater number, WHICH IS A REFERENCE TO THE 72 NAMES. THIS CAN BE EXPLAINED FURTHER. These seventy colors that glow in all directions derive from these Names, THAT IS, FROM THE 72 NAMES. AND THESE SEVENTY COLORS WERE ENGRAVED and formed into the secret of the seventy Names of the angels, which are the secret of the heavens.

275. And they are Michael, Gavriel, Refael, Nuriel. Kamatz (a vowel): Kedumiel, Malkiel, Tzadkiel. Patach (a vowel): Pedael, Tumiel, Chasdiel. Tzere (a vowel): Tzuriel, Raziell, Yofiel. Segol (a vowel): Stuteriyah, Gazriel, Vatriel, Lamael. Chirik (a vowel): Chazkiel, Rehatiell, Kadshiell. Sheva (a vowel): Shemaell, Barchiell, Ahieell. Cholem (a vowel): Chaniell, Lahadiell, Machniell. Shuruk (a vowel): Shamshiell, Rehaviell, Kamshiell. Shuruk (a vowel) called melafum. Shemar'el, Rehatiell, Karshiell.

276. Ahaniell, Barkiell, Gadiell, Dumieell, Hadriell, Vadergaziyah, Zahariell, Chaniell, Tahariell, Ya'azriell, Kariell, Lamdiell, Malkiell, Nehariell, Saniyah, Anael, Patchiell, Tzuriell, Kanaell, Remiell, Sha'ariell, Tavkiell.

271. עֵינָיו לְהִטִּין בְּטִיסִין דְּנוּרָא, נְחִית בְּהוּ לְעֵלְמָא. וְוִי מֵאֵן דְּאֶעְרַע בֵּיהּ, חָגִיר חֲרָבִין, אִיהוּ חֲרָבָא שֹׁנָא בִּידֵיהּ, לֹא חָיוּס עַל טַב וְעַל בִּישׁ, דְּהָא פְּסָקָא דְּאִינוּן שְׁבַעִין, בְּרִשׁוֹ דְּאֶתְאַחִיד הֵהוּא סְטָרָא דְּשִׁמְיָא, נְחִית בִּידָא שְׁמַלְא.

272. בְּכִמְה דִּינִין אֶתְהַפֵּךְ, בְּכִמְה גּוּוּנִין הַפּוֹךְ בְּכָל יוֹמָא, אִיהוּ אֶקְרִי כְּרָם זֹלַת, דְּמִתְקַנָּא לְגַבֵּי בְּנֵי אָדָם. כָּל גּוּוּנִין דְּכָלִי זַעֲמוֹ דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בֵּיהּ אֶתְחַזִּיין. וְאִינוּן יִתְבִּין בְּרוּמֵי דְּעֵלְמָא, וּבְנֵי נָשָׂא בְּסִכְלוּתָא דְּלֵהוּן, לֹא מִשְׁגָּחֵי בְּהוּן.

273. גַּפְרִית וָאֵשׁ, הִתּוּכָא דְּמִיָּא וָאֵשׁא, דְּמִתְהַתְּבִי מִן שְׁמִיָּא אֶתְאַחֲדוּ דָּא בְּדָא, וְנִחַת עַל סְדוּם. וְוִי לְחִיבֵינָא דְּלֹא מִשְׁגִּיחִין עַל יְקָרָא דְּמֵאֲרִיהוּן.

274. עֶשְׂרָה שְׁמֵהוּן, גְּלִיפִן בְּהוּרְמָנוּתָא דְּמִלְכָּא, עֶשֶׂר אִינוּן, וְסִלְקִין לְחוּשְׁבֵּן סְגִי. שְׁבַעִין גּוּוּנִין, מְלֵהִטִי לְכָל סְטָר. נִפְקֵי מִגּוֹ שְׁמֵהוּן דְּאִגְלִיף רְזָא דְּעַ' שְׁמֵהוּן דְּמִלְאכֵינָא. דְּאִינוּן בְּרָזָא דְּשִׁמְיָא.

275. וְאִינוּן: מִיכָאֵל, גַּבְרִיאֵל, רַפָּאֵל, נוּרִיאֵל. קָמֶץ: קְדוּמִיאֵל, מִלְכִּיאֵל, צְדִקִיאֵל. פָּתַח: פְּדָאֵל, תּוּמִיאֵל. חֶסֶדִיאֵל. צִירֵי: צוּרִיאֵל, רִזִּיאֵל, יוֹפִיאֵל. סֵגוֹל: סְטוּטְרִיָּה, גּוּזִרִיאֵל, וְתִרִיאֵל, לִמְאֵל. חֶרֶק: חֲזִקִיאֵל, רְהִטִיאֵל, קְדֻשִּׁיאֵל. שְׁבָא: שְׁמַעֲאֵל, בְּרִכִּיאֵל, אֱהִיאֵל. חֶלֶם: חֲנִיאֵל, לְהִדִּיאֵל, מַחְנִיאֵל. שֶׁרֶק: שְׁמֻשִּׁיאֵל, רְהִבִּיאֵל, קְמֻשִּׁיאֵל. שֶׁרֶק: שְׁמֵרָאֵל, רְהִטִיאֵל, קְרֻשִּׁיאֵל.

276. אֱהִנִיאֵל. בְּרִקִיאֵל. גְּדִיאֵל. דּוּמִיאֵל. הִדְרִיאֵל. וּדְרָגִזִּיָּה. זְהִרִיאֵל. חֲנִיאֵל. טְהִרִיאֵל. יַעֲזִרִיאֵל. כְּרַעִיאֵל. לְמִדִּיאֵל. מִלְכִּיאֵל. נְהִרִיאֵל. סְנִיָּה. עֲנָאֵל. פְּתַחִיאֵל. צוּרִיאֵל. קְנָאֵל. רְמִיאֵל. שְׁעִרִיאֵל. תְּבִכִיאֵל.

277. Tefuriya, Shachniel, Renael, Kamriyah, Tzuriyah, Psisiyah, Iriel, Samchiel, Neriell, Madoniyah, Lasniyah, Kamsariyah, Yeriel, Tasmasiyah, Chaniel, Zachriel, Vadriel, Hinael, Denabael, Gadiel, Bedael, Adiriron. Adonai is above them all.

278. When they are all joined together as one, in one secret, by the power of the Almighty, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, then He is called Vav-Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHICH MEANS THAT all are united as one. THIS REFERS TO ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA TOGETHER WITH THE SEVENTY ANGELS BELOW HER. The phrase, "from Hashem out of heaven" REFERS TO the Holy Name that is engraved with the other seventy Names of the secret of the heavens--WHICH ALLUDE TO ZEIR-ANPIN, WHICH IS THE NAME OF 72 THAT ARE IN THE MOCHIN OF ZEIR-ANPIN, WHILE IN ESSENCE IT INCLUDES SEVENTY. So these are the seventy OF ZEIR ANPIN that control the seventy Judgments OF THE NUKVA THAT GLOW IN ALL DIRECTIONS. They are the secret of Vav-Yud-Vav-Hei-Hei. And these seventy names of holiness, NAMELY THE MOCHIN OF ZEIR ANPIN, ARE THE SECRET OF Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei WITHOUT THE LETTER VAV, CALLED the "heavens."

279. These SEVENTY JUDGMENTS WITHIN THE NUKVA receive from those SEVENTY NAMES OF ZEIR ANPIN. Vav-Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHICH INCLUDES SEVENTY JUDGMENTS, receives from Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE SEVENTY NAMES WITHIN ZEIR ANPIN, the one from the other. So these are dependent on those, WHICH MEANS THAT the lower ones, WHICH ARE THE SEVENTY JUDGMENTS, ARE DEPENDENT on the upper ones, WHICH ARE THE SEVENTY NAMES OF ZEIR ANPIN. They are all connected together AND THEY ALL SHINE SIMULTANEOUSLY. And thus, the Holy One, blessed be He, appears in His glory. AS WE HAVE STATED the heavens have a numerical value of seventy and the secret of Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei WITHOUT THE LETTER VAV is the secret of the 72 names derived from the three verses, "and he went... and he came...and he stretched out," (Shemot 14:19-21) WHICH APPEAR IN THE PORTION OF THE PARTING OF THE RED SEA.

280. Vav-Hei-Vav, Yud-Lamed-Yud, Samech-Yud-Tet, Ayin-Lamed-Mem, Mem-Hei-Shin, Lamed-Lamed-Hei, Aleph-Kaf-Aleph, Kaf-Hei-Tav, Hei-Zayin-Yud, Aleph-Lamed-Dalet, Lamed-Aleph-Vav, Hei-Hei-Ayin.

First part: Yud-Zayin-Lamed, Mem-Bet-Hei, Hei-Resh-Yud, Hei-Kuf-Mem, Lamed-Aleph-Vav, Kaf-Lamed-Yud, Lamed-Vav-Vav, Pei-Hei-Lamed, Nun-Lamed-Kaf, Yud-Yud-Yud, Mem-Lamed-Hei, Chet-Hei-Vav.

Second part: Nun-Tav-Hei, Hei-Aleph-Aleph, Yud-Resh-Tav, Shin-Aleph-Hei, Resh-Yud-Yud, Aleph-Vav-Mem, Lamed-Kaf-Bet, Vav-Shin-Resh, Yud-Chet-Vav, Lamed-Hei-Chet, Kaf-Vav-Kuf, Mem-Nun-Dalet.

Third part: Aleph-Nun-Yud, Chet-Ayin-Mem, Resh-Hei-Ayin, Yud-Yud-Zayin, Hei-Hei-Hei, Mem-Yud-Kaf, Vav-Vav-Lamed, Yud-Lamed-Hei, Samech-Aleph-Lamed, Ayin-Resh-Yud, Ayin-Shin-Lamed, Mem-Yud-Hei.

Fourth part: Vav-Hei-Vav, Dalet-Nun-Yud, Hei-Chet-Shin, Ayin-Mem-Mem, Nun-Nun-Aleph, Nun-Yud-Tav, Mem-Bet-Hei, Pei-Vav-Yud, Nun-Mem-Mem, Yud-Yud-Lamed, Hei-Resh-Chet, Mem-Tzadi-Resh.

Fifth part: Vav-Mem-Bet, Yud-Hei-Hei, Ayin-Nun-Vav, Mem-Chet-Yud, Dalet-Mem-Bet, Mem-Nun-Kuf, Aleph-Yud-Ayin, Chet-Bet-Vav, Resh-Aleph-Hei, Yud-Bet-Mem, Hei-Yud-Yud, Mem-Vav-Mem.

The sixth part 'Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom Forever and ever.

277. תפוריא. שכניאל. רנאל. קמריה. צוריה. פסיסיה. עיריאל. סמכיאל. נריאל. מדוניה. לסניה. כמסריה. יריאל. טסמסיה. חניאל. זכריאל. ודריאל. הינאל. דנבאל. גדיאל. בדאל. אדירירון. אדני על בלהו.

278. בַּד מִתְחַבְּרִין בְּלֵהוּ בַּחֲדָא, בְּרָזָא חֲדָא, בַּחֲלֵילָא עֲלָאָה, בְּרִין אֶקְרִי וִידוּד, כֹּלָא בְּכֻלָּא חֲדָא. מֵאֵת יו" מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, שְׁמָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּאֶתְגַּלֵּף בְּע' שְׁמֵהּ אַחֲרָנִין, רָזָא דְשָׁמַיִם. וְאֵלִין אִינוּן שְׁבַעִין, דְּשִׁלְטִין עַל אֵילִין ע' דִּינוּן, רָזָא דְיוֹהוּ"ה, וְאֵלִין שְׁבַעִין שְׁמֵהּ בְּקְדוּשָׁה יְהוּ"ה שְׁמַיִם.

279. אֵלִין נְטִלִין מֵאֵלִין, וִידוּד נְטִיל מֵאֵת יוּדוּד, דָּא מִן דָּא. וְאֵלִין תְּלִין מֵאֵלִין, תַּתְּאִין בְּעֲלָאִין, וְכֻלָּא קְשׁוּרָא חֲדָא. וְבֵהֵא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּאֵא שְׁתַּמּוּדַע בִּיקְרִיָּה. שְׁמַיִם דְּאִינוּן ע', רָזָא יוּדוּד, דָּא אִיְהוּ, בְּרָזָא דְשְׁבַעִין וְתִרִין שְׁמֵהּ, וְאֵלִין אִינוּן דְּנִמְקִי מִן יוֹסַע, וַיָּבֵא, וַיֵּט.

280. וְה'ו, יל"י, סו"ט, על"ם, מה"ש, לל"ה, אכ"א, כה"ת, הז"י, אל"ד, לא"ו, הה"ע. חֶלֶק רָאשׁוֹן יו"ל, מַבְּה, הַר"י, הַק"ם, לא"ו, כל"י, לו"ו, מַה"ל, גַּל"ך, יו"י, מַל"ה, חַה"ו. חֶלֶק שְׁנִי נַת"ה, הַא"א, יר"ת, שַׁא"ה, רי"י, או"ם לכ"ב, ושר"י, יח"ו, לה"ח, כו"ק, מנ"ד. חֶלֶק שְׁלִישִׁי אַנ"י, חַע"ם, רַה"ע, יו"ז, הַה"ה, מו"ך, וו"ל, יל"ה, סַא"ל, ער"י, עַש"ל, מו"ה. חֶלֶק רְבִיעִי וְה'ו, דנ"י, הַח"ש, עַמ"ם, נג"א, נִי"ת, מַב"ה, כו"י, נמ"מ, יו"ל, הַר"ח, מַצ"ר. חֶלֶק חֲמִישִׁי וּמ"ב, יְה"ה, ענ"ו, מח"י, דמ"ב, מנ"ק, אי"ע, חב"ו, רַא"ה, יב"מ, הו"י, מו"ם. חֶלֶק שְׁשִׁי: בַּשְׁכַּמְל"ו

281. And these are the seventy names that control the seventy lower grades, WHICH ARE the secret of Vav-Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, TOGETHER WITH THE LETTER VAV. And these are the seventy names, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei WITHOUT THE LETTER VAV, ACCORDING TO the secret of the "heavens," NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN. There are seven firmaments, WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE SEVEN SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN THAT ARE CALLED THE "HEAVENS." EACH INCLUDES TEN, THEREBY adding up to the seventy names of the Holy Name YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI.

And this IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSES, "And Hashem (Vav-Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei) rained,"--WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE SEVENTY JUDGMENTS OF THE NUKVA, AND "from Hashem out of heaven"--WHICH IS THE SECRET THAT IS CALLED SEVENTY NAMES INCLUDED WITHIN THE HOLY NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI.

282. A very deep secret was passed on to the wise in relation to this name that is called 'the heavens.' From this secret, the sublime mystery that is called man was created, and the number of a person's body parts is 248.

283. The number of letters IN THE 72 NAMES adds up to 216. EACH NAME HAS THREE LETTERS; THREE TIMES 72 EQUALS 216. This Name OF THE 72 NAMES is the secret and most sublime mystery; it is the essence of the Torah. And IT IS INCLUDED in the 22 letters and the ten 'Sayings,' THEIR NUMERICAL VALUE IS 32, WHICH IS ALSO THE SECRET OF THE 32 PATHS OF WISDOM. Therefore, this name is composed of 216 letters and 32 pathways, which total 248 together. And these are the 248 parts of the body.

284. This is the secret OF WHY ZEIR ANPIN IS called 'Man', who rules over the Throne, WHICH IS the secret of the lower seventy, WHICH REFERS TO THE SEVENTY KINDS OF JUDGMENT AND THE SEVENTY ANGELS THAT ISSUE FROM THEM. THESE ARE CALLED THE 'THRONE.' And this is the secret of what is written: "and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it" (Yechezkel 1:26). THIS IS ZEIR ANPIN, WHO IS CALLED 'MAN'. HE IS ABOVE ON THE THRONE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA AND HER SEVENTY KINDS OF JUDGMENT. And this is the secret of what is written: "Then (And) Hashem rained upon S'dom," WHICH ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA AND HER SEVENTY KINDS OF JUDGMENT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE THRONE. The phrase, "from Hashem out of heaven" REFERS TO THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHO IS ABOVE UPON THE THRONE. And everything belongs to the same issue and the same secret. This has been passed on to those wise men at heart. Happy are they in this world and in the world to come.

285. As for S'dom, its people were punished because they refrained from giving charity. As it is written: "neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Yechezkel 16:49). And this is why the Judgment upon them came solely from heaven--because "charity" and "heaven" are one. As it is written: "For your kindness is great above the heavens," (Tehilim 108:5) INDICATING THAT "CHARITY" AND "KINDNESS" ARE BOTH DRAWN FROM THE HEAVENS ABOVE. Because charity depends on the heavens, their Judgment is also drawn down from the heavens, as it is written: "from Hashem out of heaven."

281. וְאֵלֶּיךָ אֵינּוֹן שְׁבַעִין שְׁמָהּ, דְּשִׁלְטִין עַל שְׁבַעִין דְּרָגִין תַּתָּאִין, רְזָא וִידוּד. אֵלֶּיךָ שְׁבַעִין שְׁמָהּ יְדוּד, רְזָא דְאֶקְרִי שְׁמַיִם, שְׁבַעֲא רְקִיעִין אֵינּוֹן, דְּסִלְקִין לְשְׁבַעִין שְׁמָהּ, שְׁמָא קְדִישָׁא, וְדָא אִיהוּ וִידוּד הַמְטִיר, מֵאֵת יְדוּד מִן הַשְּׁמַיִם.

282. סִתְרָא דְסִתְרִין לַחֲכִימִין אֲתַמְסֹר, שְׁמָא דָא דְאֶקְרִי שְׁמַיִם, מְנִיָּה אֲתַבְרִי סִתְרָא, דְאֶקְרִי אֲדָם. חֲשַׁבֵּן שְׁיִיפֵי גּוֹפָא, דְאֵינּוֹן חוּשְׁבָן מֵאֵתָן וְאַרְבַּעִין וַתִּמְנִיָּא שְׁיִיפִין.

283. חֲשַׁבֵּן אֲתוּוְהִי מֵאֵתָן וְשִׁית סְרִי, שְׁמָא דָא דְאִיהוּ רְזָא וְסִתְרָא כָּלְלָא דְכָל אֲוִרִיתָא, בְּכ"ב אֲתוּוֹן וְעֶשֶׂר אֲמִירָן, בְּגִין דְּהָא שְׁמָא דָא, מֵאֵתָן וְשִׁית סְרִי אֲתוּוֹן, וַתִּלְתִּין וַתִּרִין שְׁבִילִין דְאֲתַכְּלִילֵן בֵּיהּ, הָא מֵאֵתָן וְאַרְבַּעִין וַתִּמְנִיָּא שְׁיִיפִין דְּגּוֹפָא.

284. רְזָא דְאֶקְרִי אֲדָם, דְּשִׁלְטִין עַל כְּרִסְיָא, רְזָא דְשְׁבַעִין דִּלְתַּתָּא, וְסִתְרָא דָא, דְכֶתִיב וְעַל דְמוֹת הַכֶּסֶּא דְמוֹת כְּמִרְאָה אֲדָם עָלָיו מְלַמְעֵלָה, וְדָא הוּא סִתְרָא דְכֶתִיב וַיִּי הַמְטִיר עַל סְדוֹם וְגו'. מֵאֵת יו' מִן הַשְּׁמַיִם. וְכָלֵא חַד, וְנִמְלָה חַדָּא, וְסִתְרָא חַדָּא, לַחֲכִימִי לְבָא אֲתַמְסֹר זְכָאָה חוּלְקָהוֹן בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין וּבְעֵלְמָא דְאֲתִי.

285. סְדוֹם גְּזַר דִּינָא דְלֵהוֹן, עַל דְּמִנְעוּ צְדָקָה מִנִּיהוּ, בְּדַבְרֵי אַחֲרוּיָד עֲנִי וְאִבּוּן לֹא הִחֲזִיקָה. וּבְגִין כֵּן, דִּינָא לֹא הוּא, אֶלָּא מִן שְׁמַיִם, צְדָקָה וְשְׁמַיִם כָּלֵא חַד, וְכֶתִיב כִּי גְדוֹל מַעַל שְׁמַיִם חֲסֶדְךָ, וּבְגִין דִּתְלִיא צְדָקָה בְּשְׁמַיִם, דִּינָא הוּא מִשְׁמַיִם, דְכֶתִיב מֵאֵת יו' מִן הַשְּׁמַיִם.

286. The Judgment upon Yisrael comes from that place as well, REFERRING TO THE HEAVENS, as it is written: "For the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of S'dom," (Eichah 4:6) where Jerusalem is called the 'Sister of S'dom'. As it is written: "Behold, this was the iniquity of your sister S'dom" (Yechezkel 16:49). And THIS IS WHY their Judgment came upon them from the heavens--the same Judgment as fell on S'dom--because they refused to give charity. The only difference is that one was overthrown, NAMELY S'DOM, while the other, JERUSALEM, was destroyed. The second shall be reconstructed, REFERRING TO JERUSALEM, while the other, S'DOM, shall not.  
End of Sitrei Torah

286. דִּינָא דְיִשְׂרָאֵל מֵהָאֵי אֶתֶר, דְּכָתִיב וַיִּגְדֵּל עוֹן בֵּת עַמִּי מִחֲטָאת סְדוֹם. וְאֶקְרִי יְרוּשָׁלַם, אֲחוֹת לְסְדוֹם, בְּדַבָּר אַחֲרֵיהֶּנּוּ זֶה הָיָה עוֹן סְדוֹם אֲחוֹתִי, וְדִינָהּוֹן הָיָה מִן שְׁמִיָּא, דִּינָא חָדָא בְּסְדוֹם, עַל דְּמִנְעוּ צְדָקָה מִנִּיְהוּ. בְּרִדָּא אֶתְהַפֵּךְ, וְדָא אֶתְחַרֵּב, דָּא אֵית לָהּ תְּקוּמָה, וְדָא לֵית לָהּ תְּקוּמָה (ע"כ ס"ת).

## 21. "But his wife looked back"

The Zohar divulges the spiritual significance of a Biblical story about Lot and his wife. In the literal story, Lot's wife is turned into a pillar of salt when she turns to look behind her husband. In reality, she looked into the face of the Angel of Destruction. The Angel of Destruction can only wreak havoc and devastation when we look him in the face.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our five senses restrict us to a narrow, limited view of reality. We journey through life wearing blinders. Consequently, we stumble into negative circumstances that create upheaval and turmoil. We receive assistance from the Creator, enlightening our consciousness to His spiritual direction. This assistance guides and protects us so that we never come face-to-face with destructive entities at anytime in our life.

287. Of the verse, "But his wife looked back from behind him," (Beresheet 19:26) he ASKED: Why is it written "from behind him" rather than 'From behind her,' namely, behind the Shechinah. AND Rabbi Yosi replied: "from behind him" MEANS from behind Lot, as the Angel of Destruction went behind him. AND HE ASKS: How could THE ANGEL OF DESTRUCTION have followed behind him after sending him away? AND HE REPLIES: The Angel of Destruction refrained from destroying any place where Lot went. But the Angel of Destruction overthrew the place from which he had departed.

287. וַתִּבֹּט אִשְׁתּוֹ מֵאַחֲרָיו, מֵאַחֲרֶיהָ מִבְּעֵי לִיָּהּ, אֲלֵא מִבְּתֵר שְׂכִינָתָא, ר' יוֹסִי אָמַר, מִבְּתֵרִיהָ דְלוֹט, דְּמִחְבֵּלָא אָזִיל אֲבִתְרִיהָ, וְכִי אֲבִתְרִיהָ אָזִיל, וְהָא הוּא שֹׁדֵר לִיָּהּ, אֲלֵא בְּכָל אֶתֶר דְּהוּא אָזִיל לוֹט, אֶתְעַבֵּב מִחְבֵּלָא לְחִבְלָא, וְכָל אֶתֶר דְּאָזִיל בְּבֵר, וְשִׁבִּיק לְאַחוּרִיהָ, הָיָה מֵהַפֵּךְ לִיָּהּ מִחְבֵּלָא.

288. This is why THE ANGEL OF DESTRUCTION said to him, "Look not behind you," because everything behind you I will destroy. Therefore, it is written: "But his wife looked from behind him," and saw the Angel of Destruction. As a result, "she became a pillar of salt." As long as the Angel of Destruction does not see a person's face, he does not destroy them. But as Lot's wife did turn her face back to look "from behind him," she immediately "became a pillar of salt."

288. וּבִגִּין כֵּן, אָמַר לִיָּהּ, אַל תִּבֹּט אַחֲרֶיךָ, דְּהָא אֲנָא אֲחִבֵּל בְּתֵרְךָ, וְעַל דָּא כָתִיב, וַתִּבֹּט אִשְׁתּוֹ מֵאַחֲרָיו. וְחִמַּת מִחְבֵּלָא, בְּדִין וַתְּהִי נְצִיב מֶלֶח. דְּהָא בְּכָל זְמָנָא דְּמִחְבֵּלָא, לֹא חָמִי אֲנַפּוּי דְּבֵר נֶשׁ, לֹא מִחְבִּיל לִיָּהּ, בִּיּוֹן דְּאֶתְרִיהָ אֶהְדֵּרֵת אֲנַפְהָא, לְאַסְתַּבֵּלָא אֲבִתְרִיהָ, מִיָּד וַתְּהִי נְצִיב מֶלֶח.

## 22. "A land in which you shall eat bread without scarceness"

The power emanating from the Land of Israel is the source of all spiritual energy for the entire world. Whenever we pray, our thoughts and consciousness should be directed towards the Land of Israel so that we connect ourselves to this fountainhead of spiritual nourishment.

The Relevance of this Passage

There are many regions on the planet that emit powerful spiritual forces. These geographical locations are the portals through which the Light of the Upper Worlds enters into the physical dimension. The Land of Israel is the energy centre and source for the entire world and for this reason, it has remained front and center on the world stage for millennia. This passage creates a powerful conduit, connecting our souls to the Land of Israel and ultimately, the Creator, the source of all spiritual nourishment.

289. Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Yosi were standing one day and discussing this passage. Rabbi Elazar said: It is written, "A land in which (Lit. 'which in it') you shall eat bread without scarceness; you shall not lack anything in it..." (Devarim 8:9). Why are the words "in it" repeated twice? It has already been stated that the Holy One, blessed be He, divided all the peoples and the lands according to appointed Messengers. But the land of Yisrael has no angel or Governor controlling it, only THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE alone. This is why He brought the people over whom no one rules, EXCEPT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, to the land over which no one rules, EXCEPT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE.

290. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, supplied THE LAND OF YISRAEL with provisions and food first, and then to the rest of the world. So all the other nations that worship planets and constellations "eat in scarceness," while in the land of Yisrael it is not so--because the land of Yisrael is nourished first and only then the rest of the world, WHICH FEEDS ON THE LEFTOVERS.

291. This is why IT IS WRITTEN: "A land which in it you shall eat bread without scarceness," in which you shall eat in abundance. Thus, "in it you shall eat," but only "in it," and not in any other place. Thus, "in it" ALLUDES TO the holiness of the land; "in it" the supernal Faith resides, "in it" rests the blessing from above, but only "in it" and in no other place. HENCE, THE VERSE MENTIONS "IN IT" TWICE, ALLUDING TO ALL THAT IS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

292. Come and behold: it is written, "as the garden of Hashem, like the land of Egypt, AS YOU COME TO TZOAR" (Bereshheet 13:10). AND HE ASKS: It is still not clear FROM THE VERSE if Egypt or S'dom is "as the garden of Hashem," or if the "garden of Hashem" is the garden that is called the Garden of Eden? AND HE REPLIES: Actually, THE PHRASE "as the garden of Hashem," WHICH IS THE GARDEN OF EDEN AND which is full of abundance and pleasure for all, refers to S'dom and Egypt. Just as the garden of Hashem did not require irrigation, neither did Egypt, which was irrigated by the river Nile.

293. Come and behold: it is written, "And whosoever does not come up of all the families of the earth to Jerusalem..." (Zecharyah 14:17)--would be punished by having rain withheld. But "if the family of Egypt does not go up, and does not come Jerusalem," (Ibid. 18) it is not written that "upon them shall be no rain," because it usually does not rain in Egypt, and the people there are in no need of it. So what is their punishment? It is as the verse continues, "this shall be the plague, with which Hashem will smite the nations..." (Ibid.), since the Egyptians don't need rain. S'dom, as well, was "well watered everywhere..." (Bereshheet 13:10) WHICH MEANS THAT it had all the worldly pleasures and delights. For they did not want any other person to share these delights or receive these pleasures there, THE PEOPLE DID NOT RECEIVE ANY GUESTS.

289. רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָיוּ קִיּוּמֵי יוֹמָא חַד, וְעִסְקֵי בְּהַאי קָרָא, אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, כְּתִיב אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְּמִסְכָּנוֹת תֹּאכַל בָּהּ לֶחֶם לֹא תִחָסֵר כָּל בָּהּ. הָאִי בָּהּ בָּהּ, תְּרֵי זְמַנִּי, אֲמַאי. אֵלֹא הָאֵתְמַר, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, פְּלִיג כָּל עַמִּין וְאַרְעָאן לְמַמְנָן שְׁלִיחִין, וְאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל, לֹא שְׁלִיט בָּהּ מְלָאכָא, וְלֹא מְמַנָּא אַחֲרָא, אֵלֹא אִיהוּ בְּלַחְדוּי, בְּגִין כִּךְ אַעִיל לַעֲמָא דְלֹא שְׁלִיט בְּהוּ אַחֲרָא, לְאַרְעָא דְלֹא שְׁלִיט בָּהּ אַחֲרָא.

290. תָּא חֲזִי, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, יְהִיב מְזוֹנָא תַּמָּן בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וּלְבָתַר לְכָל עֲלְמָא. כָּל שָׂאָר עַמִּין עִבּוּם בְּמִסְכָּנוֹת, וְאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל לֹא הָכִי, אֵלֹא אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲתוֹן בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וּלְבָתַר כָּל עֲלְמָא.

291. וּבְגִין כְּדָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְּמִסְכָּנוֹת תֹּאכַל בָּהּ לֶחֶם. אֵלֹא בְּעִתִּירוּ, בְּסַפּוּקָא דְכָלֵּא. תֹּאכַל בָּהּ, וְלֹא בְּאַתֵּר אַחֲרָא. בָּהּ בְּקִדְשׁוּ דְאַרְעָא. בָּהּ שְׂרִיא מִהִימְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה. בָּהּ שְׂרִיא בְּרִכְתָּא דְלַעִילָא, וְלֹא בְּאַתֵּר אַחֲרָא.

292. תָּא חֲזִי כְּתִיב כְּגֵן יִי' בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. עַד הָכָא לֹא אֲתִידַע, גֵּן יִי' אִי הוּא אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וְאִי אִיהוּ אֶרֶץ סְדוֹם, וְאִי אִיהוּ גֵן יִי', דְּאֶקְרִי גֵן עֵדֶן. אֵלֹא, כְּגֵן יִי' דְּאִית בֵּיהּ סַפּוּקָא, וְעִדּוּנָא דְכָלֵּא, הָכִי נָמִי הוּא סְדוֹם, וְהָכִי נָמִי מִצְרַיִם. מַה גֵּן יִי', לֹא אֲצִטְרִיךְ בְּרִי נֶשׁ לְאַשְׁקָאָה לִיהּ, אוֹף מִצְרַיִם לֹא אֲצִטְרִיךְ אַחֲרָא לְאַשְׁקָאָה לִיהּ, בְּגִין דְּנִילוּס אִיהוּ אִסּוּק, וְאַשְׁקִי לְכָל אֶרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם.

293. תָּא חֲזִי מַה כְּתִיב וְהָיָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲלֶה מֵאֵת מְשַׁפְּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ אֶל יְרוּשָׁלַם וּגו'. דָּא הוּא עוֹנָשָׁא דְלַהוֹן, דְּאֲתַמְנַע מְנַהוֹן מִטְרָא, מַה כְּתִיב, וְאִם מְשַׁפְּחַת מִצְרַיִם לֹא תַעֲלֶה וְלֹא בָּאָה וּגו'. חֲמִי דְלֹא כְּתִיב, וְלֹא עֲלִיהֶם וְהָיָה הַגֶּשֶׁם, בְּגִין דְּלֹא נַחִית מִטְרָא לְמִצְרַיִם, וְלֹא אֲצִטְרִיכֵן לִיהּ, אֵלֹא עוֹנָשָׁא דְלַהוֹן מַה הוּא, דְּכְתִיב וְזֹאת תִּהְיֶה הַמַּגָּפָה אֲשֶׁר יִגּוֹף ה' אֶת כָּל הַגּוֹיִם וּגו'. בְּגִין דְּמִצְרַיִם לֹא צְרִיכִין לְמִטְרָא, אוֹף סְדוֹם, מַה כְּתִיב בֵּיהּ, כִּי כָלָה מִשְׁקָהּ, כָּל עִדּוּנִין דְּעֲלְמָא הוּא בָּהּ, וְעַל דָּא לֹא בְּעָאן דְּבִנֵּי נִשָּׂא אַחֲרֵנִין יַתְעִידֵנּוּן בָּהּ.

294. Rabbi Chiya said: THE PEOPLE OF S'DOM were wicked because of themselves and their possessions AND NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR FERTILE LAND. THIS IS TRUE, BECAUSE THEY REFUSED TO GIVE CHARITY. A person who is stingy with the poor is not worthy of continued existence in the world. In addition, he has no life in the world to come. But whoever is goodhearted towards the needy is worthy of existence in the world, and the world exists because of his merit. He shall have life and longevity in the world to come.

294. רַבִּי חִיָּיא אָמַר, אֵינֻן הָיוּ חַיִּיבִין מִגִּרְמָיָהוּ, וּמִמּוֹנָהוּן, דְּכָל בַּר נָשׁ דְּאִיהוּ צָר עֵינָא לְגַבִּי מִסְכָּנָא, יָאוּת הוּא דְלֹא יִתְקַיֵּים בְּעֵלְמָא. וְלֹא עוֹד, אֶלֶּא דְלִית לֵיה חַיִּים לְעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי. וְכָל מֶאֶן דְּאִיהוּ וּוְתָרֵן לְגַבִּי מִסְכָּנָא יָאוּת הוּא דְיִתְקַיֵּים בְּעֵלְמָא, וְיִתְקַיֵּים עֲלֵמָא בְּגִינֵיהּ, וְאִית לֵיה חַיִּים וְאוֹרְבָא דְחַיִּי לְעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי.

### 23. "And Lot went up out of Tzoar"

There are no coincidences in life. No matter how accidental or random an event may appear to be, there is always an existing and underlying order and root cause. For example, Lot is taken advantage of by his daughters. He gets drunk with wine and his daughters engage in an incestuous relationship with their father. The Zohar explains that the wine corresponds to negative Left Column energy in this specific situation because it was used for immoral purposes. Remarkably, King David's ancestry is rooted in this incestuous relationship, and from the House of King David, will emerge the Messiah. A profound lesson of life is distilled through this controversial chain of events. Kabbalistically, the spiritual and physical worlds are perfectly balanced-the greater the force of negativity, the greater potential for revelation of a positive force. The Messiah is destined to generate the greatest possible spiritual Light in this world and therefore, the Messiah must emerge from the lowest and darkest realm. A union between Lot and his wife cannot be considered darkness, so this relationship could not plant the seed of the Messiah. Incest is considered the lowest and darkest form of union and therefore, it can also be transformed into the highest and brightest form of spiritual Light.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The flaming light of a candle holds no genuine value or worth when measured against the brilliant radiance of the sun. Though, in a darkened room, a single flame assumes great importance and significance. We are born into a world of darkness so that our spiritual efforts achieve significance and illumination. Constant striving against our dark side bestows value and worth upon our positive attributes. Awareness and recognition of the importance of confronting our dark side and transforming our negative characteristics into positive attributes, arise through the words and wisdom of these verses.

295. "And Lot went up out of Tzoar, and dwelt in the mountain and his two daughters with him..." (Beresheet 19:30). HE ASKS: Why DID HE GO UP OUT OF TZOAR? AND HE REPLIES: Because he noticed that Tzoar was close to S'dom. That is why he left there.

295. וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹעַר וַיָּשֶׁב בְּהָר הוּא וּשְׁתֵּי בָנוֹתָיו עִמּוֹ וְגו'. מֵאִי טַעְמָא. בְּגִין דְּחָמָא דִּהְוָה קְרִיב לְסָדוֹם, וְאַסְתַּלַּק מִתַּמָּן.

296. Rabbi Yitzchak then began the discussion by quoting: "And it is turned around and about by His counsels, that they may do whatsoever He commands them..." (Iyov 37:12). THIS MEANS THAT the Holy One, blessed be He, arranges events in the world and creates destructive lights to accomplish His actions. And afterward, He turns them around again and again in different ways.

296. רַבִּי יִצְחָק פָּתַח וְהוּא מְסַבּוֹת מִתְהַפֵּךְ בְּתַחבּוּלָתוֹ לַפְעָלָם וְגו'. קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מְסַבֵּב סְבִיבִין דְּעֵלְמָא, וְאִינִי קוּמְרִין טְהִירִין, לְמַעַבְדַּ עוֹבְדֵי וּלְבִתֵּר מִהֶפֶךְ לוֹן, וְעֵבִיר לוֹן בְּגוֹנָא אַחֲרָא.

297. HE ASKS: And with what DOES HE TURN THEM AROUND? AND HE REPLIES: THIS IS DONE by His counsels, THAT IS, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, plans schemes and invents reasons to turn things around, so that they are completely changed and are not similar to what they seemed to be previously. "...that they may do..." refers to the doings of people and the ways in which they accomplish their deeds. This is how He turns things around AND CHANGES THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DESTRUCTIVE LIGHTS. And "whatsoever He commands them upon the face of the world in the earth" MEANS THAT events change because the activities of people change, thereby turning around those same activities that THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, commands them to accomplish upon earth. AND THEY ARE CHANGED INTO MANY DIFFERENT FORMS IN THE WORLD, ALL ACCORDING TO THE QUALITY OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PEOPLE. WITH THESE WORDS, RABBI YITZCHAK BEGAN THE DISCUSSION TO UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE OF AMON AND MOAV, AND HOW THEY WERE FORMED AS A RESULT OF A CORRUPT ACTION, AND HOW ALL THE KINGS OF YEHUDA ISSUED FROM THEM, EVEN KING MASHIACH.

297. וּבִמָּה בְּתַחבּוּלָתוֹ, עֵבִיר תַּחבּוּלִין, וּמְסַבֵּב סְבִיבִין, לְאַפְכָּא לוֹן, וְלֹא בְּאֵינוֹן קְדָמָי. לַפְעָלָם, בְּגִין פְּעָלָם דְּבִנֵּי נֶשָׂא, כְּמָה דְּאֵינוֹן עֹבְדִין עוֹבְדִין, הָכִי מִהֶפֶךְ לוֹן. כָּל אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא עַל פְּנֵי תֵּבֵל אֶרְצָה. בְּגִין דְּעוֹבְדִין דְּבִנֵּי נֶשָׂא, מִהֶפֶךְ לְאֵינוֹן מְסַבּוֹת, בְּכָל מָה דְּאִיהוּ פְּקִיר לוֹן עַל פְּנֵי תֵּבֵל וְגו'.

298. Rabbi Elazar said: "And it is turned around and about by His schemes..." This means that the Holy One, blessed be He, guides the course of events and causes certain actions to be performed in the world. As soon as the people are convinced that events are stable, the Holy One, blessed be He, turns them "around and about" and completely changes them again. HERE, RABBI ELAZAR DISAGREES WITH RABBI YITZCHAK'S EXPLANATION THAT IN THE BEGINNING THE ACTIVITIES WERE DISRUPTED BY DESTRUCTIVE LIGHTS, BUT LATER WERE TURNED "AROUND AND ABOUT" AND AMENDED BY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. RABBI ELAZAR EXPLAINS THAT IN THE BEGINNING THEY WERE GOOD AND WORTHY OF EXISTING IN THE WORLD, BUT WERE EVENTUALLY CORRUPTED BY THE DOINGS OF THE PEOPLE. AS A RESULT, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, TURNED THEM "AROUND AND ABOUT" FOR THE BETTER, IF THE PEOPLE REPENT AND ATONE FOR THEIR MISDOINGS.

299. The word, "by His counsels" is spelled without a Yud, WHICH INDICATES THE SINGULAR FORM, and could be compared to a potter who shapes vessels from clay. As long as the stone wheel is still revolving, he can fashion the pot according to his taste and even change its shape. This is possible only while the pots are still turning.

300. Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, turns His actions "around and about by His counsel(s)," minus the Yud, WHICH IS THE SINGULAR FORM. But what is "HIS COUNSEL?" His counsel is the lower court of Judgment, THAT IS, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, which corresponds to the pots of clay turning in front of the potter. And he changes them from one vessels to another.

301. And all is done to reflect people's actions. THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, CHANGES THE FORM OF THE VESSELS in accordance with the actions of people. If the people perform good deeds, the clay pots revolve to the right, WHICH IS CHESED. If their actions benefit humanity, CHASSADIM AND ALL GOODNESS WILL BE DRAWN DOWN INTO THE WORLD. As long as the stone wheel turns to the right, events will be positive. The world will revolve with it AND RECEIVE THE DOINGS AND ACTIONS FROM THE RIGHT COLUMN, WHICH IS CHESED.

302. But, if people intend to sin, then the Holy One, blessed be He will direct "His counsel," WHICH IS THE NUKVA that constantly moves and which was revolving to the right, to turn around and revolve to the left. And He turn the objects and the vessels, which were to the right, to the left.

303. As a result, the stone wheels change direction and become actions that will hurt humankind. And these stone wheels keep turning in that direction--TO THE LEFT--until people perform good deeds again. So the direction in which the stone wheels turn depends on the actions of humankind. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN: "AND IT IS TURNED AROUND AND ABOUT BY HIS COUNSELS THAT THEY MAY DO WHATSOEVER HE COMMANDS THEM," because the "counsel," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE STONE WHEELS, depends upon the actions OF HUMANKIND. And it never stands still; IT CONSTANTLY REVOLVES EITHER TO THE RIGHT OR TO THE LEFT.

298. רבי אלעזר אמר, והוא מסבוב מתהפך. הקודשא בריך הוא מסבב סבובין, ואייתי, עובדין בעלמא לאתקיימא, ולבתר דחשיבו בני נשא דיתקיימון אינון עובדין, קודשא בריך הוא מהפך לון לאינון עובדין, מכמה דהו בקרמיתא.

299. בתחבולותיו. בתחבולתו כתיב, כהאי אומנא דעביר מאנין דחרסא, בעור דההיא טיקלא, אסתחרת קמיה, חשיב למעבר בגוונא דא, עביר. חשיב למעבר בגוונא אחרא, עביר. מהפך מאנא דא למאנא דא, בגין דההוא טיקלא אסתחרת קמיה.

300. כך קודשא בריך הוא, מהפך עובדיו, דאיהו עביר. בתחבולתו חסר יו"ד, ומאן איהו, דא בי דינא לתתא, דאיהו טקלא, דאסתחרת קמיה, ועל דא, מהפך מאנין, ממאנא דא, למאנא אחרא.

301. וכל דא כפי פעלם דבני נשא, אי מטיבין בני נשא עובדיהון, ההוא טקלא דסחרא, אסחרת לון לימינא, וכדין אתעבירו עובדין בעלמא, לאוטבא לון בדקא ואות. וטיקלא אסחרת תדיר, ולא שכיר, בההוא סטרא דימינא, ועלמא מתגלגלא ביה.

302. אתו בני נשא לאבאשא תחבולתו, דאסחר תדיר, והוה קיימא באסחרותא דימינא, קודשא בריך הוא אסחר ליה בסטרא דשמאלא, ומהפך מסבוב ומאנין, דהו בקרמיתא, לההוא סטרא שמאלא.

303. וכדין טקלא אסחרא, ואתעבירו עובדין בעלמא, לאבאשא לון לבני נשא. וטיקלא אסחר לההוא סטרא, עד דבני נשא תיביבין לאוטבא עובדיהון. וטיקלא קיימא בעובדין דבני נשא. ועל דא בתחבולתו לפעלם ולא קיימא תדיר.

304. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, has created all the events and actions necessary to accomplish everything properly. And everything comes down AND IS DRAWN INTO THE WORLD from the main source and root above. THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, brought Avraham to be close to Him. He then begot Yishmael, who was born before Avraham was circumcised. Thus, Yishmael was born down below and was not perfected by the sign of the Covenant.

305. Later on, the Holy One, blessed be He, guided the course of events by His counsel, and Avraham was circumcised and joined the Covenant. His name was completed, and he was called Avraham, WITH THE ADDITION OF THE HEI. So the first Hei OF THE HOLY NAME, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS BINAH, became his crown, according to the secret of deriving water from air.

306. As soon as this secret was perfected and Avraham was circumcised, Yitzchak was born to him. He was a "Holy Seed" and was attached up above according to the secret of deriving fire from water. And so it is written: "Yet I had planted you a noble vine, wholly a right seed..." (Yirmeyah 2:21). Hence, he was not related to the Other Side, WHICH REFERS TO THE LEFT SIDE ALONE. INSTEAD, HE WAS INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT SIDE.

307. Come and behold: two separate nations came forth from Lot and his daughters, which were attached to the side that was appropriate for them, NAMELY THE OTHER SIDE. This is why the Holy One, blessed be He, manipulates events and turns things around in the world; He wants everything to be well arranged and related to its place IN HOLINESS. THIS MEANS THAT EVERYTHING SHOULD BE CAREFULLY ARRANGED AND PROPERLY PLANNED TO ENSURE THE PROPER ISSUING OF THE KINGS OF YEHUDA AND KING MASHIACH. THIS IS THE MEANING OF THE VERSE, "AND IT IS TURNED AROUND AND ABOUT BY HIS COUNSEL(S) THAT THEY MAY DO WHATSOEVER HE COMMANDS THEM."

308. Come and behold: Lot was worthy of having the Holy One, blessed be He, produce these two nations from his union with his wife. But in order to attach them to their predestined place, HE PRODUCED THEM FROM HIS DAUGHTERS. AND THIS was achieved with the help of wine, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND THEY MADE THEIR FATHER DRINK WINE" (BERESHEET 19:33). This wine, which is the secret explanation of their actions, was prepared ESPECIALLY for them and was found on that specific night in the cave. IF THERE HAD BEEN NO WINE, THESE TWO NATIONS WOULD NOT HAVE COME INTO THE WORLD. Therefore, it is written: "And he drank of the wine, and was drunk," (Beresheet 9:21) and this has already been explained.

309. Come and behold: they called their sons Moav and Amon. SHE CALLED HIM Moav, BECAUSE HE WAS Me-av (lit. 'from father'). Rabbi Yosi said: The elder daughter cried out boldly--Mo-av, he is born from my father! "And the younger daughter also bore a son, whom she called Ben-Ami (lit. 'the son of my people')," in a cryptic way (Beresheet 19:38) but she did not declare who fathered him.

304. תא חזי, קודשא בריך הוא גרם סבובין ועובדין בעלמא, בגין למעבד כלא בדקא יאות. וכלא נפקא מעקרא ושרשא דלעילא. אקריב אברהם לגביה, נפק מניה ישמעאל, דלא הוה אברהם גזיר, כד נפק מניה, בגין דאיהו לתתא, ולא אשתלים באת קיימא קדישא.

305. לבתר קודשא בריך הוא סבב סבובין בתחבולותיו, ואתגזר אברהם, ועאל בברית, ואשתלים בשמיה, ואקרי אברהם, וה' עלאה אעטרת ליה, ברזא דמים מרוח.

306. כיון דרזא אשתלים, ואתגזר, נפק מניה יצחק, והוה זרעא קדישא, ואתקשר לעילא, ברזא דאש ממים, ועל דא כתיב, ואנכי נטעתיו שורק כלה זרע אמת. ולא אתקשר בהווא סטרא אחרא.

307. תא חזי, לוט נפקו מניה, ומבנתיה תרין אומין, מתפרשן, ואתקשרו בהווא סטרא, דאתחזי לון, ועל דא קודשא בריך הוא מסבב סבובין, ומגלגל גלגולין בעלמא, דיתעביד כלא בדקא יאות, ויתקשר כלא באתריה.

308. תא חזי, יאות הוה ללוט, דקודשא בריך הוא יפיק מניה ומאתתיה, תרין אומין אליו, אלא בגין לאתקשרא באתריהו, דאתחזי להו. ואתעבידו מגו יינא, והווא יינא, אזדמן להון במערתא, ההיא ליליא, ודא הוא רזא דאתעבידו, כמה דאת אמר וישת מן היין וישכר. והא אתמר ואוקמוה.

309. תא חזי, מואב ועמון, אינון קראן לון שמיהן, מואב מאב. ר' יוסי אמר, בכירה בחצימו אמרה, מואב מאבא הוא. והצעירה גם היא ילדה בן ותקרא שמו בן עמי. בצניעו, אמרה בן עמי, בר עמי, ולא אמרה ממאן הוה.

310. Come and behold. Of the elder daughter, it is written: "and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose" (Ibid. 33). The phrase, "when she arose" is spelled with a Vav with a dot above it. This indicates that there was help from above in performing that action, which was to ultimately result in the birth of Mashiach. Of the younger daughter, however, it is written: "nor when she arose," (Ibid. 35) without a Vav, because her issue was not for the sake of the Holy One, blessed be He. This is why when writing "when she arose," about the elder sister, there is a dot over the Vav. EVEN THOUGH THE YOUNGER DAUGHTER ALSO PRODUCED KINGS--NAAMAH THE AMMONITE WAS KING SOLOMON'S WIFE AND THE MOTHER OF REHAV'AM--NEVERTHELESS KING DAVID, CERTAINLY, IS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, AS HE IS MASHIACH.

311. Rabbi Shimon then said: THE MEANING OF THE VERSE, "HE PERCEIVED NOT WHEN SHE LAY DOWN, NOR WHEN SHE AROSE" IS THAT he did not know that the Holy One, blessed be He, intended to raise from her King David and KING Solomon, and all the other kings, along with Mashiach. Furthermore, THE PHRASE, "when she arose" is ANALOGOUS TO what was said of Rut: "and she rose up before one could discern another" (Rut 3:14). And on that day, she certainly had an issue, because Boaz mated with her to preserve the name of the dead and his lineage. Thus, all these kings and all the noble men in Yisrael were raised through her. ACCORDING TO ANOTHER EXPLANATION, "and he perceived not when she lay down" RESEMBLES THE WORDS, "And she lay at his feet until the morning." It is written: "when she arose" and, "she rose up before one could discern another..." This is WHY "when she arose" IS SPELLED with a Vav with a dot above it. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS EXPLANATION AND THE FIRST ONE IS THAT HERE HE EXPLAINED THE VERSE, "AND HE PERCEIVED NOT WHEN SHE LAY DOWN" AS WELL. IN THE FIRST EXPLANATION HE DID NOT EXPLAIN THIS VERSE.

312. Come and behold: see how modest Avraham was. From the beginning, when the Holy One, blessed be He, determined to execute His Judgment on S'dom, AVRAHAM PLEADED FOR MERCY, BUT he did not plead for Mercy for Lot. Later, when it is written: "and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace," (Bereshheet 19:28) Avraham still did not intercede for Lot and said nothing to the Holy One, blessed be He, in Lot's favor. And the Holy One, blessed be he, did not mention anything to him, so that Avraham would not think that the Holy One, blessed be He, had drawn on Avraham's merits BECAUSE OF THAT.

313. We know that Avraham cared about Lot because Avraham risked his life for Lot by waging war against four powerful kings. As it is written: "And when Avram heard that his brother was taken captive...And he divided himself against them...by night...And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot, and his possessions" (Bereshheet 14:14-16). However, because of AVRAHAM'S love for the Holy One, blessed be He, and because he knew of Lot's misconduct, he did not ask that the Holy One, blessed be He, overlook Lot's actions. Thus, he did not plead for Mercy on Lot's account--neither in the beginning, nor in the end. Beginning with paragraph 314 and onward, we find what is known as midrash hane'elam--"hidden explanations." These hidden explanations of the Zohar appear primarily in the first few sections of Genesis. This particular section explains that the story of Lot and his daughters is a parable referring to man and his Evil Inclination. The Zohar explains how the Evil Inclination always catches us and how we can protect ourselves from it.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

310. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּקִדְמִיתָא כְּתִיב, וְלֹא יָדַע בְּשִׁכְבָּהּ וּבְקוּמָהּ. בּוֹא וְנִקְדֹּר עַל וֹא"ו, בְּגִין דְּסִיּוּעָא דְּעִילָא הָוָה אֲשֵׁתִּיכָּה בְּהָוָה עוֹבְדָא, דְּזִמִּין מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא לְנַפְקָא מִנִּיהּ, וּבְגִין כֵּן, אֲשֵׁתִּילִים הָבָא בּוֹא"ו. וּבְאַחְרָא, כְּתִיב וּבְקוּמָה חֶסֶר וִי"ו בְּגִין דְּלֹא נִפְקָ מִנִּיהּ חוֹלְקָא לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, כִּהְיָ אַחְרָא, וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב בְּהָי אַחְרָא קְשִׁישָׁא, וּבְקוּמָה בּוֹא"ו מְלֵא, וְנִקְדֹּר עָלֶיהָ.

311. ר' שִׁמְעוֹן אָמַר לֹא יָדַע, דְּזִמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא לְאוּקְמָא מִנִּיהּ, דְּוֹד מַלְכָּא וּשְׁלָמָה, וְכָל שְׂאָר מַלְכִין, וּמַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא. תָּו וּבְקוּמָה דְּכְתִיב בְּרוּתָּה, וְתָקַם בְּטָרָם יִבִּיר אִישׁ אֶת רֵעֵהוּ וְגו'. וּבְהָוָה יוֹמָא הָוָה לָהּ קִימָה וְדָאי אֶתְחַבֵּר עִמָּה בְּעִזָּה, לְהַקִּים שָׁם הֵמָּה עַל נַחֲלָתָהּ, וְאֶתְקַם מִנֶּה כָּל הַנִּי מַלְכִין וְכָל עַלְוֵי דְיִשְׂרָאֵל. וְלֹא יָדַע בְּשִׁכְבָּהּ, דְּכְתִיב וְתִשְׁכַּב מִרְגְּלוֹתָיו עַד הַבֶּקֶר. וּבְקוּמָה, דְּכְתִיב וְתָקַם בְּטָרָם (בְּטָרָם) יִבִּיר אִישׁ אֶת רֵעֵהוּ וְגו'. בְּגִין כֵּן וּבְקוּמָה נִקְדֹּר וֹא"ו.

312. תָּא חֲזִי, עֲגוּתָנוּתָא דְּאַבְרָהָם, דְּהָא אֲמִילוּ בְּקִדְמִיתָא, כִּד בְּעָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא לְמַעַבְדִּי דִּינָא בְּסִדּוּם, לֹא בְּעָא מִנִּיהּ רַחֲמֵי עַל לוֹט, לְבַתֵּר דְּכְתִיב, וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה עָלֶיהָ קִיטֵר הָאָרֶץ כְּקִיטֵר הַכְּבֶשֶׂן. לֹא תִבַּע עָלֶיהָ דְּלוֹט, וְלֹא אָמַר עָלֶיהָ לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא כְּלוּם, אֹחַף הֵכִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, לֹא אָמַר לִיהּ מְדִי, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יַחֲשַׁב אַבְרָהָם דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא גְרַע מְזֻכּוּתִיהּ כְּלוּם.

313. וְאִי תִימָא, דְּאַבְרָהָם לֹא הָוָה חָשִׁיב לִיהּ לְלוֹט בְּלִפְיָהּ כְּלוּם, הָא מָסַר נַפְשִׁיהּ, לְמִיּוּחָא לְאַחָא קְרָבָא, בְּחֻמְשָׁה מַלְכִין תְּקִיפִין, כִּד"א וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו וְגו'. וְכְתִיב וַיַּחֲלֵק עֲלֵיהֶם לִילָהּ. וְכְתִיב וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶת כָּל הָרֶכֶשׁ וְגַם אֶת לוֹט אָחִיו וּרְכָשׁוֹ הָשִׁיב וְגו'. אֲבָל בְּרַחֲמֵימוּתָא דְּרַחֲמִים לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, וְחָמָא עוֹבְדוֹי דְּלוֹט, דְּלֹא כְּשֶׁרֶן כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, לֹא בְּעָא אַבְרָהָם, דְּבִגְיָנִיהּ יִשְׁבּוּק קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא כְּלוּם מְדִילִיהּ, וּבִגְיָנִי כֵּן, לֹא תִבַּע עָלֶיהָ רַחֲמֵי, לֹא בְּקִדְמִיתָא וְלֹא בְּסוּפָא.

314. "And Lot went up out of Tzoar." Rabbi Avahu said: Behold what is written about the Evil Inclination. You should know that it will always exist in human beings until that time, of which it is written: "and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh" (Yechezkel 36:26). And even though it sees human beings punished in Gehenom, it returns again in people. This is as it is written: "And Lot went up out of Tzoar," that is, out of the agony (Heb. tza'ar) of Gehenom. From there, he goes up to seduce people.

315. Rabbi Yehuda said: There are three directing powers in people. One is the directing power of the mind and wisdom, which is the power of the Holy Neshamah. Next is the directing power of lust, which craves all kinds of evil desires. And finally, the directing power that controls human beings in their behavior and strengthens the body. This is called the Nefesh of the body, of which Rabbi Dimi said: This is the Maintaining Power.

316. Rabbi Yehuda said: Come and behold. The Evil Inclination has control over the last two powers. The lusting Nefesh always follows the Evil Inclination. We learn this from what is written: "And the firstborn said to the younger, Our father is old..." (Beresheet 19:31) The lusting Nefesh arouses the other and seduces it through the body to cleave to the Evil Inclination. And it says: "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him." What is for us in the world to come? Let us pursue the Evil Inclination and the lustful pleasures of this world. So what did they do? They agreed to cling to it. Thus, it is written: "And they made their father drink wine." They feed ravenously in order to arouse themselves and reach the Evil Inclination through food and drink.

317. "...and the first born went in, and lay with her father" (Ibid. 33). When a person lies in bed at night, the lusting Nefesh arouses the Evil Inclination. It clings to it until he cling to every evil thought, and it conceives a little, which brings that evil thought into the heart of man. And it clings to it and remains in the heart without being fulfilled, until that lustful desire arouses the power of the body, as it did at first, to cling to the Evil Inclination. And then evil is achieved, as it is written: "Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father" (Ibid. 36).

מִדְרַשׁ הַנֶּעְלָם

314. וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹר וְגו'. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבְהוּ, בֹּא וּרְאֵה מֵה כְּתִיב בְּיֶצֶר הָרַע, תִּדְעַ לָךְ, שְׂאִינוּ מִתְבַּטֵּל לְעוֹלָם מִבְּנֵי אָדָם, עַד אוֹתוֹ זְמַן, דְּכְתִיב וְהִסְרֵתִי אֶת לֵב הָאָבֶן וְגו'. שָׁאף עַל פִּי שְׂרוּאָה בְּנֵי אָדָם נִדְוָנִין בְּגִיהֶנֶם, הוּא בֹא וְחוֹזֵר לוֹ אֵצֶל בְּנֵי אָדָם, הִדָּא הוּא דְכְתִיב וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹר. מִצְעָרָה שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם, מִשָּׁם עוֹלָה לְפִתּוֹת בְּנֵי אָדָם.

315. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, שְׁלֹשׁ הִנְהָגוֹת, יֵשׁ בָּאָדָם: הִנְהָגַת הַשִּׁכֹּל וְהַחֲכָמָה, וְזוֹ הִיא כֹחַ הַנִּשְׁמָה הַקְּדוּשָׁה. וְהִנְהָגַת הַתְּאוּהָ, שֶׁהִיא מִתְאוּהָ בְּכָל תְּאוֹת רָעוֹת, וְזֶהוּ כֹחַ הַתְּאוּהָ. וְהִנְהָגַת הַמִּנְהָגָה, לְבְנֵי אָדָם, וּמַחֲזִקַת הַגּוּף, וְהִיא נִקְרָאת נַפֶּשׁ הַגּוּף. אָמַר רַב דִּימִי, זֶהוּ כֹחַ הַמַּחֲזִיק.

316. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, בֹּא וּרְאֵה, לְעוֹלָם אֵין יֵצֶר הָרַע שׁוֹלֵט, אֲלֵא בְּאֵלוֹ ב' כְּחוֹת אֵלִין דְּאַמְרִין: נַפֶּשׁ הַמִּתְאוּהָ, הִיא הַרּוֹדֶפֶת אַחֲרֵי יֵצֶר הָרַע לְעוֹלָם, מִשְׁמַע, דְּכְתִיב וְתֹאמַר הַבְּכִירָה אֶל הַצְעִירָה אָבִינוּ זְקֵן. נַפֶּשׁ הַמִּתְאוּהָ, הִיא מַעֲוֶרֶת אֶת הָאַחֲרִית, וּמַפְתָּה אוֹתָהּ, עִם הַגּוּף, לְהִדְבֵּק בְּיֵצֶר הָרַע, וְהִיא אוֹמֶרֶת, לָכֵה נִשְׁקָה אֶת אָבִינוּ יִין וְנִשְׁכְּבָה עִמּוֹ. מֵה יֵשׁ לָנוּ בְּעוֹלָם הַבֹּא, גֵּלַךְ וְנִרְדּוּף אַחֲרֵי יֵצֶר הָרַע, וְאַחֲרֵי תְּשׁוּקַת חֲמַדַּת הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וּמֵה עוֹשׂוֹת, שְׂתִיחָן מִסְכִּימוֹת לְהִדְבֵּק בּוֹ, מֵה כְּתִיב וְתִשְׁקִין אֶת אָבִיהֶן יִין. מִתְפַּטְמוֹת, לְהִתְעוֹרֵר לִיצֵר הָרַע, בְּאֲכִילָה וּבִשְׂתִיָּה.

317. וְתִקֵּם הַבְּכִירָה וְתִשְׁכַּב אֶת אָבִיהָ. כְּשֶׁאָדָם שׁוֹכֵב עַל מִטָּתוֹ בַּלַּיְלָה, נַפֶּשׁ הַמִּתְאוּהָ הִיא הַמַּעֲוֶרֶת לִיצֵר הָרַע, וּמַהֲרֶהֱרֵת בּוֹ, וְהוּא דֹבֵק בְּכָל הַרְהוּרֵי רַע, עַד שֶׁמִּתְעַבְּרַת מֵעַט שְׂמִיבִיא בְּלֵב הָאָדָם, אוֹתָהּ הַמִּחְשְׁבָה הָרָעָה, וְדִבְקָה בּוֹ, וְעֵרִיץ יֵשׁ בְּלִבּוֹ, וְלֹא נִגְמַר לַעֲשׂוֹתָהּ, עַד שֶׁזֹּאת הַתְּאוּהָ, מַעֲוֶרֶת לָכֵחַ הַגּוּף כְּמִתְחַלָּה, לְהִדְבֵּק בְּיֵצֶר הָרַע, וְאִזּוֹ הוּא תִשְׁלוֹם הָרָעָה, הַה"ד וְתִהְיֶין שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת לוֹט מֵאֲבִיהֶן.

318. Rabbi Yitzchak said: The Evil Inclination can be seduced only by eating and drinking, and by the merriment of wine. Then it controls humankind. As for the righteous, what is written of him? It is written: "The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul," (Mishlei 13:25) and never becomes drunk. As Rabbi Yehuda said: A Torah scholar who gets drunk is described as "A jewel of gold in a swine's snout" (Mishlei 11:22). And as well as that, he desecrates the Celestial Name. How do sinners behave? It is written: "And behold joy and gladness..." (Yeshayah 22:13). At this stage, wine takes over a person, "slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine" (Ibid.). Of them the Scriptures say: "Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink..." (Yeshayah 5:11) to arouse the Evil Inclination, as this inclination is not aroused without wine. Therefore, it is written: "And they made their father drink wine."

319. Rabbi Avahu then said: It is written that, "he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose." This means that the Evil Inclination is not aware of its lying down in this world, nor of its rising up to the world to come. It is aroused through the power of the body to accomplish its lustful desires in this world. As Rabbi Avahu said: When the sinners enter into Gehenom, the Evil Inclination is brought there to see them. As it is written: "when Lot entered into Tzoar (Heb. tza'ar, 'agony')," (Bereshheet 19:23) that is, into the agony of Gehenom. And from there it rises to seduce people. Therefore, it is written: "And Lot went up out of Tzoar," out of the agony of Gehenom.

320. "...and dwelt in the mountain..." (Ibid. 30) Rabbi Yitzchak said: What we learn from the words, "in the mountain" is that this is the dwelling place of Lot and his two daughters, who are the two forces mentioned before. In the mountain means in the body, which is as wasted as a mountain that has no goodness in it. Because "he feared to dwell in Tzoar," (Ibid. 30) fear and anxiety overtook him, as he saw the agony of Gehenom and the misery of the wicked. And it thinks it will be punished there. However, as soon as it realizes that it shall not be punished there, the Evil Inclination goes out and seeks to seduce human beings to follow it.

321. Rabbi Huna discussed this subject in an effort to warn people. He would say to them: My children, beware of the 'messenger from Gehenom'. And who is this messenger? It is the Evil Inclination, which is the 'messenger from Gehenom'.

318. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מַעֲוֹלִים אֵין יֵצֵר הָרַע מִתַּפְתָּה, אֶלָּא בְּאִכִּילָהּ וּשְׁתִּיָּהּ, וּמִתּוֹךְ שְׂמִיחַת הַיַּיִן, אִזּוּ שׁוֹלֵט בְּאָדָם. בְּצִדִּיק, מֶה כְּתִיב בֵּיהּ, צִדִּיק אָכַל לְשֹׁבַע נִמְשָׁו. וְאִינוּ מִשְׁתַּכֵּר לְעוֹלָם, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, הָאִי צוֹרְבָא מִרְבָּנָן, דְּמִרְוֵי קָרִינָא עֲלֵיהּ, נֶזֶם זָהָב בְּאַף חֲזִיר. וְלֹא עוֹד, אֶלָּא שְׂמִיחָלָל שָׁם שָׁמַיִם. מִנְהֵג הָרָשָׁעִים מֵהֵן, וְהֵנָּה שָׁשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה. הַיַּיִן אִזּוּ שׁוֹלֵט בְּאָדָם, הָרַג בְּקָר וּשְׁחַט צֶאֱן וְגו'. עֲלֵיהֶם אָמַר הַכְּתוּב הוּא מִשְׁכִּימִי בִּבְקָר שְׁכָר יִרְדְּפוּ וְגו'. כְּדִי לְעוֹרֵר לֵיצֵר הָרַע, שְׂאִין יֵצֵר הָרַע מִתְּעוֹרֵר אֶלָּא מִתּוֹךְ הַיַּיִן, הֲדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב וַתִּשְׁקֵן אֶת אֲבִיהֶן יַיִן.

319. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבְהוּ, מֶה כְּתִיב וְלֹא יָדַע בְּשִׁכְבָּהּ וּבִקְוָמָהּ. כְּלוּמַר, יֵצֵר הָרַע אִינוּ מִשְׁגִּיחַ בָּהּ, בְּשִׁכְבָּהּ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וּבִקְוָמָהּ לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא, אֶלָּא מִתְּעוֹרֵר עִם כַּח הַגּוֹף, לְעִבּוֹד תַּאֲוָתוֹ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. דְּאָמַר ר' אַבְהוּ, בְּשַׁעָה שׁוֹכְנִסִין הָרָשָׁעִים בְּגִיהֶנֶם, מְכַנִּיסִים לֵיצֵר הָרַע, לְרֹאוֹת בָּהֶן, הֲדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב, וְלוֹט בֶּאֱצֶרָה, לְצַעֲרָהּ שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם, וְנִפְקָ לִיהּ מִתַּמָּן, לְנִסּוֹתָא לְבְרִייתָא, כְּדִקְאֻמְרָן. הֲדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב, וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹעֵר, מִצַּעֲרָהּ שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם.

320. וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּהָר, אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק, מִשְׁמַע דְּכְּתִיב בְּהָר, מְלַמֵּד שֶׁהוּא שָׁם מוֹשְׁבּוֹ, בְּמָקוֹם הָר, גּוֹף שֶׁהוּא חָרִב בְּהָר, דְּלִית בֵּיהּ טִיבוּתָא, וּב' בְּנוֹתָיו עִמּוֹ. אֵלוֹ הֵב' כַּחוֹת, דְּאֻמְרָן. כִּי יֵרָא לְשִׁבְתָּ בְּצוֹעֵר, יִרְאֶה וְחִרְדָּה נּוֹפֶלֶת עָלָיו בְּשַׁעָה שְׂרׁוּאָה צַעֲרָה גִּיהֶנֶם, שְׂמִצְעֵרִין לְרָשָׁעִים, וְחוֹשֵׁב שְׁשָׁם יִדּוֹן, כִּינּוֹן שְׂרׁוּאָה שְׂאִינוּ נִדּוֹן שָׁם, יוֹצֵא וְהוֹלֵךְ לְפָתוֹת בְּנֵי אָדָם אַחֲרָיו.

321. רַב הוּנָא כִּד הוּא דְרִישׁ, לְאַזְדַּהֲרָא לְבְנֵי אָדָם, הוּא אָמַר לְהוֹ, בְּנֵי, אֶסְתַּמְרוּ מִשְׁלִיחָא שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם, וּמֵאֵן הוּא, זֶהוּ יֵצֵר הָרַע, שֶׁהוּא שְׁלִיחַ שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם.

322. Rabbi Aba then asked: Why is it written, "The leech has two daughters, crying: Give, give" (Mishlei 30:15)? These refer to the two daughters of Lot, who correspond to the lusting Nefesh and the Nefesh that takes part in the body and constantly pursues the Evil Inclination. Rabbi Yehoshua said: About Lot, it is written, "he feared to dwell in Tzoar." It is also written there that "the leech has two daughters, crying: Give, give." The numerical value of 'feared' equals that of 'leech.' Rabbi Yitzchak said: If he was afraid, why then does the Evil Inclination come to misguide people? But, this is indeed the way of the wicked. When he sees evil, his fear lasts only a moment. He then immediately returns to his wicked ways and fears nothing. Similarly, when the Evil Inclination sees the wicked being punished, it is afraid. But as soon as it leaves, it fears nothing."

323. Rabbi Aba said: In reference to the verse, "And the firstborn said to the younger, Our father is old..." what is "our father is old"? This alludes to the Evil Inclination, that is called 'old', as it is written: "an old and foolish king" (Kohelet 4:13). It is old because it is born together with person. As we have learned, Rabbi Yehuda said: Rabbi Yosi said that the lusting Nefesh says to the other one--Our father is old, so let us follow him and cling to him, like all the other wicked people in the world. "...and there is not a man in the earth to come to us" means that there is no righteous person upon earth, and there is no one who has control over his lustful desires. So there are many sinners in the world and we therefore will not be the only guilty ones. Let us do as all the people on earth do--let us sin, since until now this is the way all people on earth conduct themselves. "Let us make our father drink wine," let us be happy in this world by eating and drinking and getting drunk. We will then cling to our "father," namely the Evil Inclination, and "we will lie with him." And the Holy Spirit cries out loud and says: "But they also have erred through wine and through strong drink are out of the way..." (Yeshayah 28:7)

324. Rabbi Yehuda then said: Come and behold. It is written: "And they made their father drink wine" (Beresheet 19:33). The way of the wicked is to go astray by drinking wine, to indulge the Evil Inclination with pleasures and arouse it until it rejoices in drunkenness and lies in its bed. Immediately then, "the firstborn went in and lay with her father"; she joins him and begins to imagine all kinds of bad thoughts. The Evil Inclination joins her and clings to her, and ceases to be aware of her or of what it does to her "when she lay down" in this world or, "when she arose" to the world to come. "...when she lay down..." in the world to come, she will account for her deeds and be judged for them. And "When she arose" for the Day of Judgment, it is written: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Daniel 12:2). Here the Evil Inclination has no perception at all, so it clings to her, and she clings to it. Later, she arouses the other. Thus, after the great thought is attached to the Evil Inclination, the other one comes and clings to it.

322. רבי אבא אמר, מאי דכתיב לעלוקה שתי בנות הב. אלו שתי בנות לוט דאמרן, שהיא נפש המתאוה, ונפש המשתתפת בגוף, הרודפת אחר יצר הרע לעולם. אמר ר' יהושע, כתיב הכא בלוט, כי ירא לשבת בצוער, וכתיב התם לעלוקה שתי בנות הב. יר"א בגימטריא הוא עלוק"ה. אמר ר' יצחק, אי ירא הוא, למאי אתי למטעי ברייתא, אלא כך דרך כל עושה עולה, כשרואה הרע, מתירא לפי שעה, מיד חוזר לרשעתו, ואינו חושש כלום, כך יצר הרע, בשעה שרואה דין ברשעים, ירא, כיון שיוצא לחוץ, אינו חושש כלום.

323. רבי אבא אמר, מ"ד ותאמר הבכירה אל הצעירה אבינו זקן. מאי אבינו זקן. זהו יצר הרע, שנקרא זקן, שנאמר מלך זקן וכסיל. שהוא זקן, שנולד עם האדם, דתנינן, אמר רבי יהודה אמר רבי יוסי, אותה נפש המתאוה, אומרת לאחרת, אבינו זקן, נרדוף אחריו, ונדבק בו, כשאר כל הרשעים שבעולם. ואיש אין בארץ לבא עלינו, אין איש צדיק בארץ, ואין איש שליט על יצרו, הרבה רשעים בארץ, לית אנן בלחודנא חייבין, נעשה בדרך כל הארץ, שהם חייבים, שער היום דרך כל הארץ הוא. לכה נשקה את אבינו יין, נשמח בעולם הזה, נאכל ונשתה, ונרוה חמרא, ונדבק באבינו, ביצה"ר, ונשכבה עמו. ורוח הקודש צוחת ואומרת, גם אלה ביין שגו ובשכר תעו.

324. אמר רבי יהודה, תא חזי, מה כתיב, ותשקין את אביהן יין. דרך הרשעים לטעות אחרי היין, לפנק ליצה"ר ולעוררו, ועד שהוא שמח בשכרותו, שוכב על מטתו, מיד ותקם הבכירה, ותשכב את אביה. היא מזומנת עמו, ומתאוה ומהרהרת בכל הרהורים רעים, ויצר הרע מתחבר עמה ונדבק בה, ואינו משגיח בה מה הוא ממנה. בשכבה ובקומה. בשכבה בעולם הזה. ובקומה לעתיד לבא. בשכבה בעולם הבא, כשתתן דין וחשבון. ובקומה, ליום הדין, דכתיב ורבים מישיני אדמת עפר יקיצו וגו'. בשום ענין מאלו אין משגיח בה יצר הרע, אלא דבק בה, והיא נדבקת בו, ולאחר כן, מעוררת לאחרא, לאחר שהרהור גדול, נדבק ביצר הרע, באה האחרת, ונדבקת בו.

325. "And they made their father drink wine," (Beresheet 19:35) to arouse the Evil Inclination and cling to it. And then they fulfilled their evil thoughts through action, and they both became pregnant to the Evil Inclination. As it is written: "Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father" (Idib. 36). Now that their deeds are done, each one "bears its evil." This is the way of the wicked. They interact with the Evil Inclination until it kills them, and then drags them down into Gehenom, where it leaves them. Afterward, it goes out to seduce more people, as has been explained. So he who recognizes its ways is saved from it and never joins it.

326. Rabbi Yitzchak said: This is similar to the example of a group of bandits that prepares ambushes along the roads to rob and kill people. They choose one person from among them, who knows how to deceive other men with soft words. What does he do? He first goes among the intended victims to welcome and serve them until the foolish among them trust him--his affection and his way of speech--and rejoice with him. He leads them on with his soothing words, so that they follow the route along which the other bandits are hiding. And as soon as they reach the hiding place, he is the first to kill them. The other bandits come, kill them, and take their money. While the victims shout and cry: Woe to us for listening to him, NAMELY TO THE EVIL INCLINATION, and to his soothing words. After they are killed, he emerges and goes to deceive other people, as before. What do those who are clever do? When they see him coming to seduce them, they recognize him as the one who ambushes their souls. So they kill him and travel a different route. This is the way of the Evil Inclination. It emerges from among the group of bandits, that is, it leaves Gehenom to welcome people and seduces them with its sweet tongue. As it is written: "And Lot went up out of Tzoar, and dwelt in the mountain," just like the bandits did, to prey on people. What does it do? It walks in front of them. And the fools have faith in it and in its love, through which it deceives them. It serves them as a slave who supplies them with beautiful, forbidden women. It allows people to be bad, and frees them from the commitments of Torah and the yoke of the Heavenly Kingdom. The fools see all this and trust in its love, accept its guidance, and follow it along the same path where the bandits are hidden, the path to Gehenom, along which there is no way of turning to the right or to the left. And as soon as it arrives with them at that place, it is the first to kill them and become the Angel of Death for them. Then it makes them enter Gehenom and brings them down to the Angels of Destruction. And they cry out, saying: Woe to us for listening to it--NAMELY, TO THE EVIL INCLINATION--but their cries serve no purpose. REPENTANCE AND REMORSE ARE ONLY EFFECTIVE DURING ONE'S LIFETIME, NOT AFTER DEATH. Afterward, the Evil Inclination leaves Gehenom and goes to seduce other people. The clever, who immediately recognize it, will overcome it until they have full control over it. Then they choose a different route to save themselves.

325. וַתִּשְׁקִין אֶת אֲבִיהֶן יַיִן. כִּמוֹ כֵּן, לַעֲוֹר לַיָּצֵר הָרַע, וְנִדְבַקַת בּוֹ, וְאִזִּי תִשְׁלֹם הָרָעוֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת, וּמִתְעַבְרוֹת שְׂתִיהֶן, מֵיֵצֵר הָרַע, הִדָּא הוּא דְכָתִיב, וַתְּהָרִין שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת לוֹט מֵאֲבִיהֶן. עַד שֶׁיֵּצֵא לַפֹּעַל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶן, זֶה יוֹלְדֵת רָשָׁעָתָהּ, וְזֶה יוֹלְדֵת רָשָׁעָתָהּ, וְכֵן דְּרָכָם שֶׁל רָשָׁעִים, בְּעֵנִין זֶה, עִם יָצֵר הָרַע, עַד שֶׁהוֹרֵג לְאָדָם וּמוֹלִיכּוֹ לְגִיהֶנּוֹם וּמַכְנִיסוֹ שָׁם, וְאַחֲכַי עוֹלָה מִשָּׁם לַפְתּוֹת לְבָנֵי אָדָם, כִּמוֹ כֵּן. וְמִי שֶׁמִּכִּיר בּוֹ, נִצּוֹל מִמֶּנּוּ, וְאִינוֹ מִתְחַבֵּר עִמּוֹ.

326. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מִשָּׁל לְמַה הִדְבֵּר דּוֹמָה, לְכַת לְסֻטִּים, שֶׁהֵיוּ אוֹרְבִים בְּדִרְכֵּים, לְגַזּוֹל וּלְהָרוֹג לְבָנֵי אָדָם, וּמַפְרִישִׁים מֵהֶם אֶחָד, שִׂידֵעַ לְהִסִּית לְבָנֵי אָדָם וּלְשׁוֹנוֹ רַךְ, מִה עֲבִיר, מְקַדִּים וְהוֹלֵךְ לְקַבֵּלָם, וְנִעֲשֶׂה בְּעֵבֶר לַפְנֵיהֶם, עַד שֶׁמֵּאֲמִינִים הַטֶּפְשִׁים בּוֹ, וּבּוֹטְחִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ וּבְשִׁיחָתוֹ, וְשֹׁמְחִים עִמּוֹ, וּמוֹלִיכִם בַּחֲלָק דְּבָרָיו, בְּאוֹתוֹ הַדֶּרֶךְ שֶׁהִלָּסְטִים שָׁם, כִּיּוֹן שֶׁמִּגִּיעַ עִמָּהֶם לָשֵׁם הוּא הָרָאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוֹרֵג בָּם, לְאַחַר שְׁנוֹתָנָם בִּיד הַלָּסְטִים לְהָרֵגָם, וּלְקַחַת מִמוֹנָם וְאִינוֹן צוֹוֹחִין וְאִמְרִין, וְוִי דְאַצִּיתָנָא לְדִין וּלְרַבִּיכָא דְלִישְׁנִיָּה, לְאַחַר שֶׁהָרַגוּ אֵלָּה, עוֹלָה מִשָּׁם וְיוֹצֵא לַפְתּוֹת לְבָנֵי אָדָם, כְּמִתְחַלָּה. הַפְקָחִים מִהֶם עוֹשִׂים, בְּשִׁרְוֹאִים לָזֶה, יוֹצֵא לְקִרְאָתָם וּמַפְתָּה לָהֶם, מְכִירִין בּוֹ, שֶׁהוּא צוֹדֶה אֶת נַפְשָׁם וְהוֹרֵגִים אוֹתוֹ, וְהוֹלְכִים בְּדֶרֶךְ אַחֶרֶת. כֵּן הוּא יָצֵר הָרַע, יוֹצֵא מִכַּת הַלָּסְטִים, עוֹלָה מִגִּיהֶנּוֹם לְקַבֵּלֵי דְבָנֵי נָשָׂא, וּלְפְתּוֹת לָהֶם בַּחֲלָק מִתַּק דְּבָרָיו, הִדָּא הוּא דְכָתִיב, וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹעַר וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּהָר וְגו'. כִּמוֹ לְסֻטִּים, לְאַרְוֵב לְבָנֵי אָדָם, מִה עוֹשֶׂה, עוֹבֵר לַפְנֵיהֶם, וְהַטֶּפְשִׁים מֵאֲמִינִים בּוֹ וּבְאַהֲבָתוֹ, שֶׁהוּא הוֹלֵךְ לַפְתּוֹתָם, וְעוֹבֵר לָהֶם בְּעֵבֶר, שְׁנוֹתָן לָהֶם נָשִׁים וְכּוֹת אֲסוּרוֹת, נוֹתֵן לָהֶם בְּנֵי אָדָם לְהָרַע, מְפָרֵק מֵהֶם עוֹל תּוֹרָה, וְעוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם. הַטֶּפְשִׁים רוֹאִים כֵּן, בּוֹטְחִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ, עַד שֶׁהוֹלֵךְ עִמָּהֶם, וּמוֹלִיכִם בְּאוֹתוֹ דֶּרֶךְ שֶׁהִלָּסְטִים שָׁם, בְּדֶרֶךְ גִּיהֶנּוֹם, אֲשֶׁר אֵין דֶּרֶךְ לְנֻטּוֹת יָמִין וּשְׂמָאל, כִּיּוֹן שֶׁמִּגִּיעַ עִמָּהֶם לָשֵׁם, הוּא הָרָאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוֹרֵג לָהֶם, וְנִעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם מִה"מ, וּמַכְנִיסֵן לְגִיהֶנּוֹם, וּמוֹרִידִין לְהוֹן מִלֵּאכֵי חֲבָלָה, וְאִינוֹן צוֹוֹחִין וְאִמְרִין, וְוִי דְאַצִּיתָנָא לְדִין, וְלֹא מֵהֵנָּא לוֹן. לְאַחַר כֵּן עוֹלָה מִשָּׁם, וְיוֹצֵא לַפְתּוֹת לְבָנֵי אָדָם. הַפְקָחִין בְּשִׁרְוֹאִין אוֹתוֹ, מְכִירִים אוֹתוֹ, וּמִתְגַּבְּרִים עָלָיו, עַד שֶׁשׁוֹלְטִין עָלָיו, וְסָאטִין מִזֶּה הַדֶּרֶךְ, וְלֹקַחִין דֶּרֶךְ אַחֶרֶת לְהִנָּצֵל מִמֶּנּוּ.

327. Rabbi Yosef traveled to Babylon where he saw young lads WHO WERE NOT YET MARRIED. They walked freely among beautiful women and did not commit any sin. He asked them: Are you not afraid of the Evil Inclination? They answered: We do not come from a mixture of good and bad, but were hewn out of the Holy of the Holies. THIS MEANS THAT THEIR PARENTS HAD NO EVIL THOUGHTS AT THE TIME OF THEIR MATING, WHEN THE YOUNG LADS WERE 'HEWN OUT' OF THEM. BECAUSE THEY HAD ONLY HOLY THOUGHTS, THE YOUNG LADS WERE NOT AFRAID OF THE EVIL INCLINATION. As Rabbi Yehuda said that Rav said: A person should sanctify himself during sexual intercourse in order to produce holy children, sons with holy attributes who have no fear of the Evil Inclination. This is according to the verse: "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy" (Vayikra 20:7).

328. Rabbi Aba asked: What is MEANT BY THE VERSE: "And hallow My Shabbatot...(Heb. plural)" (Yechezkel 20:20)? THIS MEANS that the 'mating period' of the sages are timed every Shabbat. And he warns them that because sexual intercourse is a precept, 'hallow' means that you should sanctify yourselves during 'My Shabbatot (Heb. plural)' through the precept of mating. Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: Whoever arrives at a city and sees nice women should lower his eyes and say--Look how I have been 'hewn' from highly important parents. You dangerous obstacle--WHICH IS A REFERENCE TO THE KLIPAH THAT CAUSES THE THOUGHT OF WOMEN--get out, get out OF ME. As he is a 'holy fruit' of Shabbat, WHICH MEANS THAT HE WAS BORN FROM A MATING DURING SHABBAT, THE KLIPAH HAS NO CONTROL OVER HIM. SO HE ASKS: Why then SHOULD HE WHISPER THESE PHRASES AS HE ENTERS THE CITY? AND HE ANSWERS: BECAUSE the heat OF THE HARDSHIP of traveling overcomes him. So the Evil Inclination might also overcome him.

End of Midrash Hane'elam

327. רב יוסף בדר הוה נחית לבבל, חמא אינון רוקיא, דהוו עיילי ונפקי בני נשי שפירין, ולא חטאן, אמר לון לא מסתמו אלון מיעה"ר, אמרו ליה, לא מקונדיטון בישא קאתינא, מקדושתא דקדישא אתגזרנא, דאמר רב יהודה אמר רב, צריך אדם לקדש עצמו בשעת תשמיש, ונפקי מניה בני קדישי, בני מעלי, דלא מסתמו מיעה"ר. שנאמר והתקדשתם והייתם קדושים.

328. ר' אבא אמר, מאי דכתיב ואת שבתותי קדשו, אלא אין עונתן של תא חזי, אלא משבת לשבת, ומזהר להו, דהואיל דתשמיש המטה דמצוה הוא, קדשו. כלומר, קדשו עצמכם בשבתותי, בההוא תשמיש דמצוה אמר רב יהודה אמר רב, האי מאן דעייל לקרתא, וחמי נשי שפירין ורבין עינוי, ויימא הכי סך ספאן, איגזר איגזרנא קרדינא תקיל פוק פוק, דאבוי קדישא דשבתא הוא. מ"ט דחמימות דארחא שלט ביה, ויכול יצה"ר לשלטא עלוי. (ער כאן מדרש הנעלם).

#### 24. Amon and Moav

The original Serpent in the Garden of Eden ate fruits from the tree, which is also interpreted as drinking wine. Through this action, two negative energy forces came into existence--[do not pronounce] malcon, and peor. The Zohar expounds upon these two negative forces and how they manifest into our world to influence man. The two children born from an incestuous relationship between Lot and his two daughters were the physical manifestation of these two forces. King David, who is a descendant of these offspring, used this tremendous negativity as a tool to take control over the two negative forces. According to the laws of spirituality, in order to attain genuine control over any situation or force, one must have some connection to it. It was destined that King David be seeded with this negativity because he was ingrained with the spiritual strength necessary to take control over it. The moment man seizes control over any negative aspect of his nature, for example, the trait of jealousy, he immediately influences and minimizes the force of jealousy in the entire world. The envy that lurks within in the hearts of all men is rooted in one source. This principle holds true for all negative qualities.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Mankind's natural instinct is to treat multiple symptoms, as opposed to curing the one underlying and unseen cause. All of our negative traits are rooted in one source. We gain control over our own negativity and reactive impulses and their source and origin by virtue of this passage. Moreover, we connect ourselves to any negativity that we came into contact with at prior times in our life and take control over and diminish the root of these forces as well.

Sitrei Torah (Concealed Torah)

329. "And Lot went up out of Tzoar..." Because of the desire of the King, a bit of refuse, which bears an engraved image, is separated from the right side and clings to the refuse of the gold that comes from the left side. And it resides within the 'unholiness,' which was shaped into the image of the tree.

סְתְרֵי תוֹרָה  
329. וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹעַר וְגו', מִגּוֹ הַיִּרְמְנוּתָא דְּמִלְכָּא, אֲתַפְרָשָׁא מִסְטָרָא דִּימִינָא, חֵד הַתּוֹכָא דְּקִטּוֹרָא דִּיגּוֹלָמָא, מִתְדַבֵּקָא בְּגוֹ הַתּוֹכָא דְּדִהֲבָא, מִסְטָרָא דְּשִׁמְאָלָא, בְּגוֹ מִסָּאבּוֹ, דִּיּוֹרִיָּה. וְאֲתַעֲבִיד קִטּוֹרָא חֲדָא דְּאִילָנָא.

330. When Yitzchak, WHO IS THE LEFT COLUMN OF HOLINESS, wanted to rise up in the world, by the might of the harsh Judgment, he overcame the grades OF THE LEFT AND severed them from their sustenance. THIS IS HOW THE RIGHT COLUMN, CALLED Avraham, became strong. He therefore separated that figure from the Unholiness.

331. The primordial Serpent penetrated the fruits of that Tree, this being the wine that it drank. And it begot two grades that are interrelated and surround the side of Unholiness. One is called Malcom, and the other Peor.

332. One is a hidden advice. The other is an open advice. AND HE EXPLAINED THAT Peor is revealed, and all its actions, ITS DEEDS, are performed in the open. Malcom, in contrast, is hidden, and all its actions, ITS DEEDS, are secretive. These kinds of Unholy elements were separated and went forth, surrounding the Great Sea, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and each and every aspect of impurity turns towards its place.

333. In the same manner, WHAT OCCURS IN THE UPPER WORLDS HAPPENS WITH THE SOULS down below. Lot, WHO IS THE REFUSE OF THE RIGHT, separated himself from Avraham and dwelt among the people of S'dom, WHO ARE THE REFUSE OF THE GOLD THAT COMES FROM THE LEFT. AND HE ACHIEVED COMPLETION FROM THEM, AS IS EXPLAINED IN THE UPPER WORLDS. When the Judgment was aroused and they were overthrown, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, remembered Avraham, and saved LOT. Thus, Lot was separated from THE UNHOLINESS OF S'DOM AND RETURNED TO THE HOLY SIDE.

334. His daughters made him drink wine, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE PRIMORDIAL SERPENT, and they bore him two nations. One was named Amon, which is hidden, and the other Moav, which is revealed. The grade of Amon is THE IDOL Malcom, the adviser of concealment. The grade of Moav is Peor, which is completely revealed.

335. His daughters behaved similarly. One said, "Ben-Ami (lit. 'son of my people') I have a son from my nation," but she did not name the father. This is why he is related to the concealed aspect. The other daughter said, "Moav he came from my father (Me'av). I have borne a son from my father." Thus, this son's grade is Peor, the unconcealed aspect.

336. King David was attached to both AMON AND MOAV, because Rut issued from Moav and King David from her. And David was enthroned by the crown of Amon, which was a testimony to the seed of David. As it is written: "And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony" (II Melachim 11:12). This crown came from Malcom, which is the grade of the children of Amon, as it is written: "And he took their king's (Heb. malcam) crown" (II Shmuel 12:30).

330. כִּד בָּעָא יִצְחָק לְאַתְעָרָא בְּעֵלְמָא, בְּתוֹקְמִיָּה דְּיִנְיָא קְשִׁיָּא, אֲתַתְקַף, וּפְרִישׁ דְּרִגּוֹן מְקוּמִיָּיהוּ, וְאַתְתְּקַף אַבְרָהָם, וּפְרִישׁ הוּא דְקִטּוּרָא חָדָא דְאִילָנָא, מִגּוּ הוּא מְסַאבּוּ.

331. הוּא נָחַשׁ קְדָמָאָה, עָל בְּאַנְבִּיָּה דְּהוּא אִילָנָא, וְאִיהוּ חֲמָרָא דְשִׁתָּא, וְאוּלִיד תְּרִין דְּרִגּוֹן, קִטּוּרִין דָּא בְּדָא. וְאִינּוֹן דְּרִגּוֹן דְּסַחְרָן בְּסִטְר מְסַאבּוּ, חָד אַקְרִי מְלָכּוּ"ם, וְחָד אַקְרִי פְעוּ"ר.

332. דָּא עֵיטָא דְאַתְבְּסִיָּא, וְדָא עֵיטָא דְאַתְגַּלִּיָּא. פְּעוּר דְאַתְגַּלִּיָּא אִיהוּ, וְכָל עוֹבְדוֹ בְּאַתְגַּלִּיָּא, מְלָכּוּ"ם דְאַתְבְּסִיָּא אִיהוּ, וְכָל עוֹבְדוֹ בְּאַתְבְּסִיָּא. מֵאֲלִין תְּרִין אֲתַפְרֶשֶׁן זִינִין סְגִיָּאִין לְזַנִּיָּהוּ, וְסַחְרָן יִמָּא רַבָּא, וְלָכָל אֲלִין סִטְרִי מְסַאבּוּ, וְכָל חָד וְחָד שָׁף לְדוֹכְתִּיָּה.

333. בְּגוּוֹנָא דָּא אִיהוּ לְתַתָּא, לוֹט אֲתַפְרֶשׁ מֵאַבְרָהָם, וְשׁוּי דִּינּוּרִיָּה בְּאַנְשֵׁי סְדוֹם, כִּד אֲתַעַר דִּינָא בָּהּ, אֲדַכֵּר לְאַבְרָהָם, וְשִׁלַּח לִיָּה מִתְמָן, וְאַתְפְּרִישׁ מִנִּיָּהוּ.

334. יִין אֲשָׁקִיאוּ לִיָּה בְּנִתִּיָּה, וְאוּלִידוּ בָּהּ תְּרִין אוּמִין, חָד אַקְרִי עֲמוֹן, וְחָד אַקְרִי מוֹאָב, חָד בְּאַתְגַּלִּיָּא, וְחָד בְּאַתְבְּסִיָּא. עֲמוֹן דְּרִגָּא דִּילִיָּה מְלָכּוּ"ם, עֵיטָא דְאַתְבְּסִיָּא, מוֹאָב דְּרִגָּא דִּילִיָּה פְעוּ"ר, כָּלָא בְּאַתְגַּלִּיָּא.

335. בְּגוּוֹנָא דָּא בְּנִתִּיָּה, דָּא אָמַרְת בֶּן עַמִּי, בְּרָא אֵית לִי מַעֲמִי, וְלֹא אָמַרְת מִמָּאן הוּא, בְּגִין כֶּךָ, אִיהוּ הוּא בְּאַתְבְּסִיָּא. דָּא אָמַרְת מוֹאָב, מֵאָב הוּא דָּנָא, מֵאָבָא אוּלִידַת לִיָּה, דְּרִגָּא דִּילִיָּה פְעוּ"ר מְלָה בְּאַתְגַּלִּיָּא.

336. וּבְתִרִין אֲלִין, אַחִיד דְּוֹד מְלָכָא לְבִתָּר, מִן מוֹאָב אֲתַת רוּת, וְנָפַק מִנָּה דְּוֹד מְלָכָא. מִן עֲמוֹן אֲתַעֲטָר דְּוֹד מְלָכָא, בְּהֵאֵי עֲטָרָא, דְּאִיָּהִי סְהִדוּתָא לְזֹרְעָא דְּדוֹד, דְּכִתִּיב וַיִּתֵּן עָלָיו אֶת הַגִּזְר וְאֶת הָעֵדוּת. וְהֵאֵי הוּת מִן מְלָכָם, דְּרִגָּא דְּבִנֵּי עֲמוֹן, דְּכִתִּיב וַיִּקַּח אֶת עֲטָרַת מְלָכָם.

337. Malcom is the grade of the children of Amon. As it is written: "and it was set on David's head" (II Shmuel 12:30). And from then on, it became an everlasting testimony for his sons after him. Through it, it became evident who are of the sons of David and worthy of kingship. IF HE WAS ABLE TO BEAR THE CROWN UPON HIS HEAD, then they said that he is certainly from the seed of David. Even on the day he was born, he was already able to bear the weight of the crown upon his head, though it was heavy with gold and a precious stone. Others, WHO WERE NOT FROM DAVID'S SEED, could not bear it. Therefore, it is written about Yoash: "and he put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony."

338. King David was attached to both of these grades. They are the might of his kingdom. Through them, he was able to overcome all other nations. If he had not been included within their aspects, he would not have been able to overcome them. So all the grades of all the other nations of the world were included within David, so that he could overcome them.

339. "And Lot went up out of Tzoar, and dwelt in the mountain." It is written: "The leech hath two daughters, crying: Give, give..." (Mishlei 30:15). These are the two daughters of the Evil Inclination who arouse the Evil Inclination to rule the body. One is the Nefesh that constantly grows within the body; the other is the Nefesh that lusts after evil desires of this world. The latter is the firstborn, while the former, THE FIRST ONE, is the younger.

340. The Evil Inclination always clings to both of these SOULS in order to seduce human beings and make them trust it, SO THAT IT MAY lead them to the place WHERE THEY ARE SHOT BY the 'Arrows of Death' and torn into shreds, as it is written: "Till a dart strike through his liver..." (Mishlei 7:23).

341. AND THIS IS SIMILAR to those thieving bandits in the mountains who hide in a frightening spot to which most people refrain from traveling. How do they bring people to that place? They choose from among them the one who has the sharpest tongue, one who knows how to tempt people. This one leaves them and travels on the main path TO THE PLACE through which all people pass. As soon as he arrives there and meets them, NAMELY, THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD, he joins them. HE PULLS THEM INTO HIS NET AND BRINGS THEM TO THAT EVIL SPOT WHERE THE OTHER BANDITS WAIT TO ROB AND MURDER THEM. THIS IS HOW THE EVIL INCLINATION WORKS. IT SEDUCES HUMAN BEINGS AND PERSUADES THEM TO HAVE FAITH IN IT, WHILE IT BRINGS THEM TO THE PLACE OF THE "ARROWS OF DEATH."  
End of Sitrei Torah

337. מלכם, דרגא דבני עמון הוא, דכתיב ותהי על ראש דוד, ומתמן הוה סהדותא לבנוי לעלמין, ובה אשתמודע מאן דאיהו מן בנוי דדוד דאתחזי למלכא ודאי, דאמרין מן דוד הוא. דאפילו אתיליד בהווא יומא, וכול הוה למסבל ההיא עטרא על רישיה, דהות משקל ככר זהב, ואבן יקרה הות. ובר נשאחרא לא וכול למסבלא. ודא הוא דכתיב ביזאש ויתן עליו את הגזר ואת העדות.

338. ובתרין דרגין אתאחיד דוד מלכא, ואינון תוקפא דמלכותיה, לאתתקפא על שאר עמין, דאי לא אתכליל בסטרא דלהון, לא וכול לאתתקפא עליהו, כל דרגין דשאר עמין כלילן ביה בדוד, לאתגברא ולאתתקפא עליהו.

339. ויעל לוט מצוער וישב בהר. כתיב לעלוקה שתי בנות הב. אלן שתי בנות דיצר הרע, דאינון מתערין ליה, לשלטא בגופא. חדא איהי נפש, דאתרביאת תדיר בגופא. וחדא איהי נפש דכסיפת בתיאובתין בישינ, ובכל כסופין בישינ דהאי עלמא. דא איהי בכיר"ה ודא איהי צעיר"ה.

340. ויצה"ר לא אתחבר תדיר, אלא בתרין אלן, בגין לפתא לבני נשא ובגין דיהמנון ליה לאוברא להו, לאתר גירין דמותא, ופלאחון ליה. כד"א עד יפלא חץ בדרו.

341. ללסטים דמקפחי בטוריא, וטמירו גרמניהו באתר דחיל דטוריא, וידעין דהא בני נשא אתטמרן גרמניהו, למיהך באינון דוכתי, מה עבדי, ברירו מנייהו ההוא דחדירא בלישניה מכלא, ההוא דידע למפתי בני נשא, ויפוק מביניהו, ויטיב באורח מישר, דכל בני עלמא עברין תמן, כיון דמטא לגביניהו, שרי לאתחברא תמן.  
(ער כאן סתרי תורה).

25. "She is my sister"

Before Avraham goes down into the land of Egypt, he attaches himself to the divine presence known as the Shechinah. The word Egypt is a code for negativity and darkness. The spiritual principle concealed in this story can be revealed by analogy. If a person lowers himself into a deep, darkened pit, filled with deadly snakes, to retrieve a great treasure, he first secures himself to a powerful rope to ensure a safe retreat. The rope becomes his lifeline as he enters into a dangerous environment. Avraham attached himself to the force called Shechinah before he entered into the pit of negativity [Egypt] so that he would maintain a lifeline to the Creator.

The Relevance of this Passage

There are moments in life when negative situations consume us. Without supernal assistance, we fall prey to the traps and lures set up by the forces

of negativity. We are building for ourselves a secure lifeline to the Creator for those difficult moments in life when we stumble and fall into negativity.

342. "And Avraham journeyed from there toward the south country" (Beresheet 20:1). All of Avraham's journeys were to the south, WHICH IS CHESED, rather than in any other direction. He planned wisely, so that he would be attached to the south.

343. "And Avraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister..." (Beresheet 20:2). We have learned that a person should not rely on miracles. If the Holy One, blessed be He, performs a miracle for somebody, he should not rely on a miracle another time, because miracles do not simply occur at any given time.

344. A person who knowingly puts himself in danger may use up all of his merits, because, as it is written: "I am unworthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the trust..." (Beresheet 32:11). AND HE ASKS: If Avraham knew that his emergence from Egypt was a miracle, why did he put himself into difficulty again by saying, "She is my sister?"

345. AND HE REPLIES: Avraham did not rely on himself at all, but saw the Shechinah dwelling constantly in Sarah's residence, from which She never moved. And because THE SHECHINAH was there, Avraham relied on Her and said, "She is my sister," as it is written: "Say to Wisdom, You are my sister" (Mishlei 7:4). THIS MEANS THAT THE SHECHINAH IS ALSO CALLED WISDOM. Therefore he said, "She is my sister."

346. "But Elohim came to Avimelech..." HE ASKS: Could it be that the Holy One, blessed be He, visits the wicked, as it is written: "and Elohim came to Bilaam" (Bamidbar 22:9) and "Elohim came to Lavan" (Beresheet 31:24)? AND HE REPLIES: This was only a Governor, a messenger who was in charge over them, as EVERY NATION HAS A CELESTIAL GOVERNOR. When ANGELS complete their missions, WHICH THEY RECEIVE FROM HASHEM, they are called by the holy name ELOHIM, because they represented the aspect of Judgment AND THE NAME ELOHIM IS AN INDICATION OF JUDGMENT. This is why it is written: "But Elohim came to Avimelech, in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, you are but a dead man for the woman which you have taken," (Beresheet 20:3) REFERRING ONLY TO THE ANGEL THAT GOVERNS HIS NATION AND NOT TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE.

347. Rabbi Shimon opened the discourse with the verse: "The language of truth shall be established forever..." (Mishlei 12:19) This refers to Avraham, whose words were always truthful. The phrase, "but a lying tongue is but for a moment" (Ibid.), however, refers to Avimelech.

342. וַיֵּסַע מֶשֶׁם אַבְרָהָם אֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב. כָּל מַטְלָנוּי הוּא לְסִטְרָא דְּדְרוּמָא, יְתִיר מִסִּטְרָא אַחֲרָא, בְּגִין דִּהָא בְּחֻמְתָּא עֵבֶר, לְאַתְדַּבְקָא בְּדְרוּמָא.

343. וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אַחֹתִי הִיא. תְּנִינָן לָא לִיבְעִי לִיהּ לְבַר נָשׁ לְסַמְכָא עַל נִיסָא, וְאִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֶרְחִישׁ נִיסָא לְבַר נָשׁ, לָא אִית לִיהּ לְסַמְכָא עַל נִיסָא זְמָנָא אַחֲרָא, בְּגִין דְּלֹאוּ בְּכָל שַׁעְתָּא וְשַׁעְתָּא אֶתְרְחִישׁ נִיסָא.

344. וְאִי יוֹעוּל בַּר נָשׁ גְּרָמִיָּה בְּאַתְר דְּנוֹקָא אִשְׁתַּכַּח לְעֵינָא, הָא פִּקַּע כָּל זְכוּתִיה דְּעֵבֶר בְּקַדְמִיתָא, וְאִוְקְמוּהּ. כִּד "אֶקְטוֹנְתִי מִכָּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל הָאֱמֶת וְגו'." וְאַבְרָהָם בִּיּוֹן דְּסָלִיק מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְאִשְׁתַּזִּיב זְמָנָא חָדָא, הִשְׁתָּא אֲמַאי אֵעִיל גְּרָמִיָּה בְּצַעֲרָא בְּקַדְמִיתָא, וְאִמַּר אַחֹתִי הִיא.

345. אֵלֹא אַבְרָהָם לָא סָמִיךְ עַל גְּרָמִיָּה כְּלוּם, וְחֻמָּא שְׂכִינְתָּא תְּדִיר בְּדִיּוּרָה דְּשָׂרָה, וְלֹא אַעֲדִי מִתְמָן, וּבְגִין דִּהּוֹת תְּמָן, אִסְמִיךְ אַבְרָהָם וְאִמַּר אַחֹתִי הִיא, כִּמָּה דְּכְתִיב אִמַּר לַחֲכָמָה אַחֲתִי אַתְּ, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ אִמַּר אַחֹתִי הִיא.

346. וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹקִים אֶל אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וְגו'. וְכִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֶתָּא לְגַבְיֵיהּ דְּרִשְׁוֵיעִיָּא, כִּמָּה דְּכְתִיב וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹקִים אֶל בְּלָעָם. וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹקִים אֶל לָבָן. אֵלֹא הֵהוּא מְמָנָא שְׁלִיחָא דְּאַתְפָּקְדָא עֲלֵיהּ הוּא, בְּגִין דְּכָלְהוּ בַּר עֲבָדֵי שְׁלִיחוּתָא, נִטְלִי שְׁמָא דָא, וּמִסִּטְרָא דְּדִינָא קָא אֶתִּיּוֹן. וְעַל דָּא, וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹקִים אֶל אֲבִימֶלֶךְ בְּחֻלּוֹם הַלֵּילָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִנֵּךְ מֵת עַל הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְתָּ וְגו'.

347. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן פֶּתַח וְאִמַּר שְׁפַת אֱמֶת וְגו'. שְׁפַת אֱמֶת תְּכוּן לְעַד. דָּא אַבְרָהָם, דְּכָל מַלּוֹי בְּקַדְמִיתָא וּבְסוּפָא הוּא בְּאֱמֶת. וְעַד אֶרְגִּיעָה לְשׁוֹן שְׁקֵר. דָּא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ.

348. Of Avraham it is written: "And Avraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister." This is similar to what he said IN EGYPT, when he said to the Shechinah that accompanied Sarah, "She is my sister." SO TWICE AVRAHAM SAID, "SHE IS MY SISTER," AND REFERRED TO THE SHECHINAH WHEN HE SAID IT. And Avraham did EVERYTHING wisely.

349. HE ASKS: Why IS THE SHECHINAH CALLED SISTER? AND HE RESPONDS: Because Avraham is related to the right side, he said, "She is my sister." And the secret corresponds to what is written: "my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled" (Shir Hashirim 5:2). And Avraham always called Her "my sister" because he cleaved to Her and they were never separated.

350. In the end, it is written: "And yet indeed she is my sister, she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother" (Beresheet 20:12). SO HE ASKS: Was IT REALLY so? WAS SHE NOT THE DAUGHTER OF HARAN? AND HE REPLIES: Everything that he said was a reference to the Shechinah. "She is my sister," that he said in the beginning is similar to, "Say to Wisdom, You are my sister." And he concluded, "And yet indeed." What is MEANT BY "And"? It expands THE EXPLANATION with: "she is my sister, the daughter of my father," WHICH MEANS THAT THE SHECHINAH is a daughter of the supernal Chochmah, WHICH IS THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA, BOTH OF WHICH ARE CALLED ABA. This is why THE SHECHINAH is called his 'Sister' and 'Wisdom', but not, AS STATED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH, "the daughter of my mother." THIS MEANS THAT "MY MOTHER" IS DRAWN from the place where everything begins and where everything is concealed, WHICH IS ARICH ANPIN. FROM ARICH ANPIN, THE SECRET OF BINAH THAT RETURNS TO BECOME CHOCHMAH IS DRAWN. BINAH BECOMES ENCLOTHED BY YISRAEL-SABA AND TENUVAH, COLLECTIVELY CALLED IMA. SO THE SHECHINAH HERE IS NOT A "DAUGHTER," BUT RATHER A "MOTHER" HERSELF, AS SHE ENCLOTHES HER. Therefore, BECAUSE SHE IS THE ASPECT OF THE LEFT, FROM THE SIDE OF THE MOTHER, "she became my wife" in fondness and affection as expressed in the verse, "and his right hand embraces me" (Shir Hashirim 8:3). SHE LONGS FOR THE CHASSADIM OF THE RIGHT, SO THAT HER CHOCHMAH MAY BE ENCLOTHED BY THE CHASSADIM. All this is according to the secret of Wisdom.

351. Come and behold: when they first went down to Egypt, he said, "SHE IS MY SISTER" in order to cleave to the Faith. Therefore, he called Her "my sister," so that they would not be mistaken and follow those grades outside HOLINESS. So here as well, WITH AVIMELECH, he said, "my sister" in order not to be diverted from the proper Faith.

352. This is because Avimelech and all the inhabitants of the land followed idolatry, while AVRAHAM cleaved to the Faith. So when he entered there, he said OF THE SHECHINAH, "She is my sister." Just as a sister can never be separated from a brother, so here as well, AVRAHAM WAS ATTACHED TO THE SHECHINAH IN SUCH A MANNER THAT THEY COULD NEVER BE SEPARATED. Although a wife can be separated FROM HER HUSBAND, a sister can never be separated FROM HER BROTHER, because two siblings can never ever be separated.

348. בְּאַבְרָהָם נֹאמַר, וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אַחֹתִי הִוא. דָּא בְּקַדְמִיתָא, דְּאָמַר בְּגִין שְׂכִינְתָא דְּהוּת עִמָּה דְּשָׂרָה, אַחֹתִי הִיא, וַאֲבָרָהָם בְּחֻכְמָתָא עֲבַד.

349. מ"ט, בְּגִין דְּאַבְרָהָם, מְסַטְרָא דִּימִינָא אִיהוּ, אָמַר אַחֹתִי הִיא וְרָזָא, כְּדִ"א אַחֹתִי רַעִיתִי יוֹנְתִי תַמְתִּי. וְעַל דָּא, אַבְרָהָם קָרָא לָהּ תְּדִיר אַחֹתִי, בְּגִין דְּאִתְדַבֵּק בְּהֶדְהּ, וְלֹא יִתְעַדּוּן דָּא מִן דָּא לְעַלְמִין.

350. לְסוּף מַה כְּתִיב, וְגַם אִמְנָה אַחֹתִי בֵּת אָבִי הוּא אֲךָ לֹא בֵּת אִמִּי. וְכִי הָכִי הוּהּ. אֱלָא, כֻּלָּא בְּגִין שְׂכִינְתָא קָאמַר, אַחֹתִי הִיא בְּקַדְמִיתָא, דְּכְתִיב אָמַר לְחֻכְמָה אַחֹתִי אַתָּה. וּלְבַתָּר וְגַם אִמְנָה. מֵאִי וְגַם, לְאַתּוּסְפָּא, עַל מַה דְּקָאמַר בְּקַדְמִיתָא. אַחֹתִי בֵּת אָבִי הִיא. בְּרַתִּיהּ דְּחֻכְמָה עֲלָאָה, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ אִתְקַרֵּי אַחֹתִי, וְאִתְקַרֵּי חֻכְמָה. אֲךָ לֹא בֵּת אִמִּי. מֵאִתְרִ דְּשִׁירוּתָא דְּכֻלָּא, סְתִימָא עֲלָאָה. וְעַל דָּא, וְתֵהִי לִי לְאִשָּׁה. בְּאַחֹה בְּחִבּוּתָא, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּמְיֶנּוּ תַחְבֻּקֵּנִי. וְכֻלָּא רָזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא אִיהוּ.

351. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּקַדְמִיתָא כְּדִ נְחָתוּ לְמִצְרַיִם, הָכִי קָאמַר, בְּגִין לְאַתְדַבֵּקָא בְּגוּ מַהִימְנוּתָא, וְקָרָא לָהּ אַחֹתִי, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִטְעוּן גּוֹ אֵינּוֹן דְּרִגִּין דְּלִבְר. אוּף הֵכָא אַחֹתִי, בְּגִין דְּלֹא אִתְעִידִי מִגּוּ מַהִימְנוּתָא, כְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

352. דְּהָא אָבִימֶלֶךְ, וְכָל אֵינּוֹן יִתְבִּי אַרְעָא, הוּוּ אֲזִלּוּ בְּתַר פּוֹלְחָנָא נּוֹכְרָאָה, וְאִיהוּ אִתְדַבֵּק גּוֹ מַהִימְנוּתָא, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, עָאֵל לְתַמּוֹן, וְאָמַר אַחֹתִי, מַה אַחֹת לֹא אִתְפָּרַשׁ מֵאַחָא לְעַלְמִין, אוּף הֵכָא. דְּהָא אִתְתָּא יָכִילַת לְאַתְפָּרַשָׁא, אֲבָל אַחֹת לֹא אִתְפָּרַשׁ, דְּהָא תְּרִין אַחִין לֹא יָכִלִין לְאַתְפָּרַשָׁא, לְעַלְמִין וְלְעַלְמִי עַלְמִין.

353. Thus Avraham said, "She is my sister." Everybody was enthusiastic about running after and worshipping the lights of the stars and constellations, but Avraham cleaved to the Faith and said ABOUT THE SHECHINAH, "She is my sister," and we shall never be separated from each other. You may derive this FROM THE WORDS: "And for his sister a virgin," (Vayikra 21:3) which has been said about the priest, but signifies the place where Avraham, WHO IS THE RIGHT COLUMN AND CHESED, resides. THE SHECHINAH IS CALLED HIS "VIRGIN SISTER" BECAUSE, FROM THE ASPECT OF THE RIGHT SIDE, THE SHECHINAH IS CALLED BOTH A "SISTER" AND A "DAUGHTER."

354. It is written: "You shall fear Hashem your Elohim, Him you shall serve, and to Him you shall cleave, and swear by his Name" (Devarim 10:20). This phrase has already been explained, but nevertheless, come and behold. It is not written: 'Hashem (to Hashem) your Elohim you shall have fear,' USING THE DATIVE CASE, but only "fear (Heb. et) Hashem." So what does THE ACCUSATIVE PARTICLE Et mean? It refers to the first grade OF THE TEN SFIROT, COUNTING UPWARD, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS the region of fear of the Holy One, blessed be He. Therefore, it is written: "You shall fear," because there, IN THE NUKVA, a person should fear his Master, as She represents Judgment.

355. "And him (Heb. oto) you shall serve" alludes to the upper grade, NAMELY YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, which resides above this lower grade, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and they are never separated from each other. THESE TWO WORDS, Et ('the') and Oto ('him') cleave to each other and are never separated. SO HE ASKS: What does "Oto" mean? AND HE ANSWERS: This is the region of the Holy Covenant, an everlasting sign (Heb. ot) THAT REFERS TO YESOD, because no worshipping is done in Et ('the'), which does not pertain to service, but to fear. But service is above IN YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS NAMED OTO. And this is why IT IS WRITTEN: "him (Heb. oto) you shall serve."

356. The phrase, "and to Him you shall cleave" refers to the region where cleaving occurs, which is the center of the body, NAMELY IN THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS TIFERET AND LIES BETWEEN THE TWO ARMS, WHICH ARE CHESED AND GVURAH, WHO REPRESENT THE TWO COLUMNS--LEFT AND RIGHT. The words, "and swear (Heb. tishave'a) by His name" refer to the seventh (Heb. sheva) region among the grades, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS RELATED TO THE SECRET OF SHABBAT. And this is learned from the verse: "and David their king, whom I will raise up for them" (Yirmeyah 30:9).

357. This is how Avraham cleaved to the Faith. THIS IS AN ALLUSION TO THE SECRET OF THE SHECHINAH AT THE GRADE OF 'SISTER', when he went down to Egypt and when he went to the land of the Philistines. This is similar to a person who plans to descend into a deep pit, but is afraid that he may not be able to climb back out. What does he do? He fastens a rope high above the pit, and says to himself: Now that I have tied this knot, I will enter the pit. Similarly, before Avraham went to Egypt, he secured himself with the knot of Faith. Only after this was secure did he travel to Egypt.

353. ובגין כך אמר אברהם אחותי היא, דהא בלהון הוה להוטין גו טהרי כבביא ומזלי, ופלחי לון, ואברהם הוה מתדבק גו מהימנותא, ואמר אחותי, דלא נתפרש לעלמין. וסימניך ולאחותו התגלה. דאתמר לכהן, אתרא דאברהם שריא ביה.

354. כתיב את יי' אלהיך תירא אתו תעבד ובו תדבק ובשמו תשב. האי קרא אוקמוה. אבל תא חזי, ליי' אלהיך תירא, לא כתיב, אלא את יי', מאי את, דא דרגא קדמא, אתר דחלא דקדשא בריך הוא, ובגין כך כתיב תירא, דתמן בעי בר נש לדחלא קמי מאריה, בגין דאיהו דינא.

355. ואותו תעבוד. דא דרגא עלאה, דקיימא על האי דרגא תתאה, ולא מתפרשא לעלמין, את ואותו, דא בדא דבין, ולא אתפרשן. מאי ואותו. דא אתר ברית קדישא. אות לעלמין, דהא פולחנא לא שריא באת, ולא איהו למפלח, אלא למדחל, אבל פולחנא איהו לעילא, ובגין כך ואותו תעבוד.

356. ובו תדבק. באתר דאיהו דבקוהא לאתדבקא, דאיהו גופא, דשרי באמצעיתא. ובשמו תשב, אתר שביעאה דדרגין. וסימניך ואת דוד מלכם אשר אקים להם.

357. בגין כך אתדבק אברהם במהימנותא, בר נחת למצרים, וכד אזל לארעא דפלשתים. לבר נש, דבעא לנחתא גו גובא עמיקא, דחיל דלא יכיל לסלקא מגו גובא, מה עבד, קשר חד קשרא דחבל לעילא מן גובא, אמר, הואיל דקשירנא קשרא דא, מכאן ולהלאה אעול תמן. כך אברהם, בשעתא דבעא לנחתא למצרים, עד לא ייחות תמן, קשר קשרא דמהימנותא בקדמיתא, לאתתקפא ביה, ולבתר נחת.

358. And he did the same when he entered the land of the Philistines. This is why it is written: "The language of truth is established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment." (Mishlei 12:19) THIS APPLIES TO Avimelech, who said: "In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands have I done this" (Beresheet 20:5). But ELOHIM answered him by saying: "I know that you did this in the simplicity of your heart" (Ibid. 6). He did not say, 'and innocence of your hands,' AS AVIMELECH CLAIMED. THUS, AVIMELECH LIED WHEN HE SAID, "AND THE INNOCENCY OF MY HANDS," AND THIS IS WHY IT IS WRITTEN OF HIM: "BUT A LYING TONGUE IS BUT FOR A MOMENT."

359. "Now, restore to the man his wife, for he is a prophet" (Beresheet 20:7). Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse, "He guards the feet of his pious ones (Heb. chasidav)..." (I Shmuel 2:9). Chasidav is spelled WITHOUT THE LETTER YUD, WHICH INDICATES THAT THE VERSE APPLIES to one PIOUS MAN. And this is Avraham, who is always protected by the Holy One, blessed be He, as He never removed His protection from over him. It is written, "He guards the feet" BECAUSE "THE FEET" allude to AVRAHAM'S wife, along with whom, in order to guard her, the Holy One, blessed be He, sent His Shechinah.

360. Another explanation of the verse: "He guards the feet of his pious ones" IS THAT CHASIDAV IS WRITTEN WITHOUT THE LETTER YUD, WHICH IMPLIES One. That one was Avraham, who was always accompanied by the Holy One, blessed be He, so that nobody could harm him. "...and the wicked shall be silent in darkness..." refers to the kings whom the Holy One, blessed be He, had slain during that night that Avraham pursued them.

361. Therefore, it is written: "shall be silent in darkness," WHICH MEANS the night, NAMELY THE NUKVA. Avraham pursued the kings, and the night, as it became united with the darkness, slew the kings. Thus, it is written: "And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night (lit. 'And the night divided upon them) and smote them" (Beresheet 14:15). Therefore, the phrase, "And the night divided upon them" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, who separated Judgment from Mercy, in order to avenge Avraham. Thus, IT IS WRITTEN: "and the wicked shall be silent in darkness...and (he) smote them." It should have been written: 'and (they) smote them' IN THE PLURAL, BECAUSE AVRAHAM AND HIS SERVANTS SMOTE THEM. But of course, it was the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO REALLY SMOTE THEM, "for by strength shall no man prevail," (I Shmuel 2:9) as he was alone there with Eliezer. THE NUMERICAL VALUE OF ELIEZER IS 318 AND AVRAHAM HAD 318 SERVANTS, WHICH ARE MENTIONED IN THE SCRIPTURES.

362. Rabbi Yitzchak said: But we have learned that where harm is expected, a person should not depend on a miracle to save him. And there is no place more dangerous than that into which Avraham pursued the four kings to wage war against them. WHY, THEN, DID HE RELY ON A MIRACLE TO HAPPEN? Rabbi Yehuda responded: Avraham did not set out with the intention of waging war, nor did he rely on the occurrence of a miracle. Rather, he left his house because of the distress of Lot, whom he planned to ransom and free. And had he not been able to free him, he would have died with him in captivity. But as soon as he began his journey, he saw the Shechinah shining in front of him and armies OF ANGELS surrounding him. At that time, he started to pursue them while the Holy One, blessed be He, slew them. This is why it is written: "and the wicked shall be silent in darkness."

358. אוף הכי נמי, כד עאל לארעא דפלשתים. בגין כרשפת אמת תבון לעד. ועד ארגיעה לשון שקר, דא אבימלך, דאמר בתום לבבי ובנקיון כפי. וכד אהדרו ליה, מה כתיב, גם אנכי ידעתי כי בתם לבבך עשית זאת ולא כתיב נקיון כפים.

359. ועתה השב אשת האיש כי נביא הוא. ר' יהודה פתח ואמר, רגלי חסידו ישמר וגו'. חסידו כתיב, חר, ודא אברהם, דקודשא בריך הוא נטיר ליה תדיר, ולא אעדי נטירו מניה לעלמין. ומה דאמר רגלי, דא אתתיה, דקודשא בריך הוא שדר שכינתיה עמה, ונטר לה תדיר.

360. דבר אחר רגלי חסידו ישמר. חר, דא אברהם, דקודשא בריך הוא אזיל עמיה תדיר, בגין דלא יוכלון לנזקא ליה. ורשעים בחשך ידמו. אלין אינון מלכין. דקטל קודשא בריך הוא בההוא ליליא, דרדף בתרייהו.

361. הה"ד בחשך ידמו, דא ליליא, דאתקשר בחשוכא, וקטל לון, ואברהם רדיף, וליליא קטיל לון, הה"ד ויחלק עליהם לילה הוא ועבדיו ויכם. ויחלק עליהם לילה, דא קודשא בריך הוא דפליג רחמי מן דינא, בגין למעבד נוקמין לאברהם, ובגין כך ורשעים בחשך ידמו. ויכם, ויכום מפעי ליה. אלא, דא קודשא בריך הוא. כי לא בכח וגבר איש. דאיהו ואליעזר, הוו בלחודייהו.

362. ר' יצחק אמר, והא תנינן באתר דנזקא שכיח, לא יסמוך בר נשעל ניסא, ולא הוה אתר דנזקא אשתכח בהאי, דאברהם אזיל בתר חמשה מלכין למרדף בתרייהו, ולאגחא קרבא. אמר ר' יהודה כד אזיל אברהם להאי, לא אזיל לאגחא קרבא, ולא סמך על ניסא, אלא צערא דלוט, אפקיה מביתיה, ונטיל ממונא למפרק ליה, ואי לאו, דימות בהדיה גו שביה. ביון דנפק חמא שכינתא דנהרא קמיה, וכמה חילין סחרניה, בההיא שעתא רדף בתרייהו וקודשא בריך הוא קטיל לון, הדא הוא דכתיב ורשעים בחשך ידמו.

363. Rabbi Shimon said: There is a secret hidden in the verse, "He guards the feet of his pious," who is Avraham. When Avraham set out TO WAGE WAR ON THE KINGS, Yitzchak joined him. And they fell before him. If Yitzchak had not joined Avraham, he would not have been able to slay them, as it is written: "and the wicked shall be silent in darkness." "...by strength shall no man prevail." Even though strength always lies with the right, WHICH IS AVRAHAM, if THE RIGHT was not included within the left side, WHICH IS YITZCHAK, then THE KINGS would not have retreated before him.

364. Another explanation of the verse, "He guards the feet of his pious ones" is that when a person loves the Holy One, blessed be He, the Holy One, blessed be He, returns that love by guarding all that he does and his journeys. As it is written: "Hashem shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth and even for evermore" (Tehilim 121:8).

365. Come and behold: observe how much Avraham loved the Holy One, blessed be He. Wherever he went, he had no regard for his possessions at all. All his thoughts were directed toward cleaving to the Holy One, blessed be He, alone. Therefore, the verse "He guards the feet of his pious" alludes to his wife, BECAUSE HIS FEET ALLUDE TO HIS WIFE, about whom it is written: "Now Avimelech had not come near her," (Bereshheet 20:4) and also, "therefore I did not allow you to touch her" (Ibid. 6).

366. About Pharaoh, it is written: "And Hashem plagued Pharaoh, and his house with great plagues" (Bereshheet 12:17). SARAH spoke out directly to the Holy One, blessed be He, ASKING HIM TO SMITE, and He smote. It is written: "He guards the feet of the pious (ones), and the wicked are silent in darkness," BECAUSE it was Pharaoh and Avimelech on whom the Holy One, blessed be He, inflicted Judgments at night--BY DARKNESS. Who is the "man" referred to in the verse: "for by strength shall no man prevail?" This man is Avraham, as it is written: "Now therefore, restore the man his wife..." (Bereshheet 20:7)

363. ר' שמעון אמר, רזא איהו, רגלי חסידו ישמר, דא אברהם. וכד נמק אשתתף יצחק בהדיה, ונמלו קמיה, ואי לאו דאשתתף יצחק בהדיה דאברהם, לא אשתציאו, הה"ד ורשעים בחשך ידמו. כי לא בכח יגבר איש. אף על גבדחילא אשתכח תדיר בימינא, אי לא הוה בסטרא דשמאלא, לא אתדחיין קמיה.

364. דבר אחר רגלי חסידו ישמר, בשעתא דבר נשרחים ליה לקודשא בריך הוא, קודשא בריך הוא רחים ליה, בכל מה דאיהו עביר, ונטיר ארחוי, כד"א יי' ישמר צאתך ובואך מעתה ועד עולם.

365. תא חזי כמה חביבותיה דאברהם, לגבי קודשא בריך הוא, דבכל אתר דהוה אזיל, לא הוה חייס על דייליה כלום, אלא, בגין לאתרבקא ביה בקודשא בריך הוא, ובגין כך רגלי חסידו ישמר. ודא היא אתתיה, דכתיב ואבימלך לא קרב אליה. וכתיב כי על כן לא נתתיך לנגע אליה.

366. בפרעה מה כתיב, וינגע יי' את פרעה וגו' על דבר. איהי אמרה, וקודשא בריך הוא הוה מחי, ובגין כך רגלי חסידו ישמר. ורשעים בחשך ידמו, אליו פרעה ואבימלך, דקודשא בריך הוא עבד בהו דינין בליליא. כי לא בכח יגבר איש. מאן איש, דא אברהם, דכתיב ועתה השב אשת האיש וגו'.

26. "And the Satan standing at his right to prosecute him"

The negative angel, Satan, stands on the right side of the High Priest Joshua, who has just been thrown into a pit of fire. Kabbalistically, the right side signifies the attribute of mercy, and fire signifies the concept of severe judgment. In this story, the angel Satan tells the Creator that if He is going to show mercy upon Joshua, then He should be obligated to save all the people who were with Joshua, even though they are unworthy. In other words, Satan is cleverly implying that the Creator cannot possibly save Joshua because of these special circumstances. Nonetheless, the Creator emancipates Joshua. The spiritual lesson of this story is as follows: During a time of intense judgment, the righteous can still be saved amidst all the upheaval and destruction. According to the Kabbalah, another example of the Creator performing the difficult task of concurrently emitting the forces of mercy and judgment, was during the splitting of the Red Sea, when the Israelites crossed over to safety while the Egyptians were drowning.

The Relevance of this Passage

Both wicked and righteous people dwell among us and their behavioral actions have an appropriate effect on the state of the world. By mending our own ways and choosing the path of spirituality, we are securely connected, by this section, to the Creator's attributes of mercy during times of severe judgment.

367. "And Hashem visited Sarah as He had said..." (Beresheet 21:1) Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "And he showed me Yehoshua the high priest standing before the angel of Hashem, and the Satan standing at his right to prosecute him" (Zecharyah 3:1). This passage should be studied carefully. "And he showed me Yehoshua the high priest" refers to Yehoshua, the son of Yehotzadak. In the phrase, "standing before the angel of Hashem," who is the "angel of Hashem"? It is the region THAT IS CALLED the Bundle, TO WHICH the soul of the righteous is attached. And all the souls of the righteous are there. This is the "angel of Hashem," WHICH IS MENTIONED IN THE VERSE.

368. The phrase, "and the Satan standing at his right to prosecute him" refers to the Evil Inclination, which roams the world snatching souls and taking spirits FROM HUMAN BEINGS by bringing accusations against humankind, above as well as below. This occurred when Nevuchadnetzar cast YEHOSHUA, THE HIGH PRIEST, into the fire, together with all the false prophets. At that time, the Satan brought accusations against him above, so that he would be burned with them.

369. This is the way OF THE SATAN, who shows his indictment at the hour of danger or when the world is in distress. At those times, he is allowed to prosecute and punish, even without justice, as it is written: "but sometimes ruin comes for want of judgment" (Mishlei 13:23). What is meant by "to prosecute him"? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT DID HE ACCUSE HIM OF? He was asking that they all be saved or all be burned. When the Angel of Destruction is granted permission to destroy, the righteous are in as much danger as the wicked.

370. Therefore, when Judgment hangs over a city, a man should flee before he is captured there AND FALLS INTO THE HANDS OF THE DESTROYER. Once the Angel of Destruction resides IN A PLACE, he treats the righteous the same as the wicked. All the more so, as all three of them were together. THIS REFERS TO YEHOSHUA, THE HIGH PRIEST, AND THE OTHER TWO FALSE PROPHETS--ACHAV, THE SON OF KOLYAH, AND TZIDKIYAHU, THE SON OF MA'ASSIYAH. THE SATAN was demanded that all be burned or all be saved, because if a miracle is to occur, there cannot be half a miracle. It must be the same for all--either miracle or Judgment.

371. Rabbi Yosi said to him: That is not so. For when the Holy One, blessed be He, split the sea for Yisrael, He divided the sea only for those, NAMELY, THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL. They walked on dry land while the waters came together again and drowned the others, NAMELY, THE EGYPTIANS who perished. So there was a miracle on one side and judgment on the other, EVEN THOUGH they both occurred together.

367. וַיִּי פָקַד אֶת שָׂרָה כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר וְגו'. רַבִּי חִיָּיא, פָּתַח וְאָמַר, וַיִּרְאֵנִי אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עוֹמֵד לִפְנֵי מֶלֶאךָ יי' וְהִשְׁטָן עוֹמֵד עַל יְמִינוֹ לְשֹׁטֵנוֹ. הָאִי קָרָא אֵיךְ לְאַסְתָּכְלָא בֵּיהּ. וַיִּרְאֵנִי אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל, דָּא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן יְהוֹצָדָק. עוֹמֵד לִפְנֵי מֶלֶאךָ יי', מֵאַן מֶלֶאךָ יי'. דָּא אַתְרָא צְרוּרָא דְנִשְׁמָתִיהּ דְּצִדִּיק צְרִירָא בֵּיהּ, וְכָל אֵינוֹן נִשְׁמָתִין דְּצִדִּיקֵי קִיּוּמִין תָּמָן, וְדָא הוּא מֶלֶאךָ יי'.

368. וְהִשְׁטָן עוֹמֵד עַל יְמִינוֹ לְשֹׁטֵנוֹ. דָּא יֵצֵר הָרַע, דְּאִיהוּ מְשׁוּטֵט וְאִזִּיל בְּעָלְמָא, לְנִטְלָא נִשְׁמָתִין, וְלֹא פִקָּא רוּחִין, וְלִמְסָטִי לֹון לְבְרִייתָא, לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא. וְדָא הוּא בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּאִטִּיל לִיהּ נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר לְאַשָּׁא, עִם אֵינוֹן נְבִיאֵי הַשֶּׁקֶר, וְהָאִי הוּא מְסָטִין לְעִילָא, בְּגִין דִּיתוּקֵד עֲמֵהוּן.

369. דְּהֵכִי הוּא אוֹרְחוּי, דְּלֹא אִיהוּ מְקַטְרֵג, אֶלָּא בְּזִמְנָא דְּסַכְנָה וּבְזִמְנָא דְּצַעְרָא שְׂרִיא בְּעָלְמָא, וְאִיךְ לִיהּ רְשׁוֹ, לְמְסָטִי וְלִמְעַבֵּד דִּינָא אֶפִּילוּ בְּלֹא דִּינָא, כְּדָבָר אַחֵר וַיֵּשׁ נִסְפָּה בְּלֹא מִשְׁפָּט. מְהוּ לְשֹׁטֵנוֹ, דְּהוּא אָמַר, אוֹ כִּלְהוּ וְשִׁתְּזַבּוּן, אוֹ כִּלְהוּ יִתּוּקְדּוּן. דְּהָא בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּאִתִּיחֵיב רְשׁוּתָא לְמַחְבֵּלָא לְחַבְלָא, לֹא אִשְׁתְּזַיב זַכָּא מִן חֵיבֵיא.

370. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּדִינָא שְׂרִיָּא בְּמַתָּא, בְּעִי בִּר נֶשׁ לְעָרְקָא, עַד לֹא אֶתְפֹּס תָּמָן, דְּהָא מַחְבֵּלָא בֵּינָן דְּשִׂרִי, הֵכִי נִמִּי עֲבִיד לְזַכָּא כְּחֵיבָא. וְכָל שְׁכָן דְּהוּא תִּלְתִּיהוֹן בְּחָד, וְהוּא תִּבְעֵי דִּיתוּקְדּוּן כִּלְהוּ, אוֹ יִשְׁתְּזַבּוּן כִּלְהוּ. בְּגִין דְּכֵד אֶתְעִבִּיד נִיסָא, לֹא אֶתְעִבִּיד פִּלְגּוּ נִיסָא, וּפִלְגּוּ דִּינָא, אֶלָּא כִּלְא בְּחָדָא, אוֹ נִיסָא אוֹ דִּינָא.

371. אָמַר לוֹ ר' יוֹסִי, וְלֹא, וְהָא בְּזִמְנָא דְּבִקְעָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יִמָּא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, הוּא קָרַע יִמָּא לְאֵלִין, וְאִזִּלִּין בִּיבְשָׁתָא, וּמִיָּא הוּוּ תְּבִין מְסָטְרָא אַחֲרָא, וְטְבַעִין לְאֵלִין, וּמִתִּין, וְאִשְׁתַּכַּח נִיסָא הֵכָא, וְדִינָא הֵכָא כִּלְא בְּחָדָא.

372. He said to him: This is why THE SPLITTING OF THE RED SEA was so difficult for Him. When the Holy One, blessed be He, simultaneously performs a miracle and executes His Judgment, it does not usually happen in the same place, nor even in the same house. If it occurs IN THE SAME PLACE, AS HAPPENED AT THE RED SEA, then it is difficult for Him. In Heaven, everything is done to perfection. EVERYTHING IS as one and at one place--either a miracle or doom, but not usually half and half, HALF MIRACLE AND HALF DOOM.

373. This is why the Holy One, blessed be He, does not punish the guilty until they have all filled their measure of sin. THIS WAY, HE DOES NOT HAVE TO SAVE ANY OF THEM FROM PUNISHMENT. As it is written: "for the iniquity of the Emori is not yet full," (Bereshheet 15:16) and "You should punish it in exact measure" (Yeshayah 27:8). Therefore, THE SATAN demanded that Yehoshua be burned together with the rest, SO THERE WOULD NOT BE HALF MIRACLE HALF DOOM, until he said to him: "May Hashem rebuke you, Satan" (Zecharyah 3:2). AND HE ASKS: Who said to him, "May HASHEM REBUKE YOU, SATAN"? AND HE REPLIES: It was the Angel of Hashem WHO SAID SO.

374. You may say that since IT IS WRITTEN: "And Hashem said to the Satan, Hashem rebuke you, Satan," THEREFORE IT IS HASHEM WHO SAYS SO, AND NOT AN ANGEL. Come and behold: the same is true of Moshe in the bush, about which it is written: "And the angel of Hashem appeared to him in a flame of fire" (Shemot 3:2) and, "And when Hashem saw that he turned aside to see" (Ibid. 4). Sometimes IT IS WRITTEN: "the angel of Hashem," sometimes "an angel," and sometimes, "Hashem." THEREFORE, HERE AS BEFORE, "AND HASHEM SAID TO THE SATAN" MAY REFER TO AN ANGEL, AS WITH MOSHE. This is why he said to him: "May Hashem rebuke you, Satan" rather than 'I hereby rebuke you, Satan.' HAD IT BEEN HASHEM WHO HAD SAID THIS, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WRITTEN: 'I HEREBY REBUKE YOU, SATAN.' THEREFORE, WE CONCLUDE THAT THE ONE WHO SAID THIS WAS AN ANGEL.

375. Come and behold: the same applies when Judgment hangs over the world, and the Holy One, blessed be He, sits upon the Throne of Judgment. Then the Satan, who accuses above and below, comes to destroy the world and snatch away the souls OF HUMAN BEINGS, BECAUSE THE SATAN IS ALSO THE ANGEL OF DEATH, AS IS ALREADY KNOWN.

27. "And the elders of that city shall break the heifer's neck in the ravine"

When someone is murdered and the killer is not brought to justice for whatever reason, the soul of the dead person remains in this realm as a negative force and influence upon the community. In ancient times, the Elders of the town performed a ritual slaughter on a Heifer [calf] to remove this negativity.

The Relevance of this Passage

Situations in life unexpectedly turn negative for no apparent reason. Whatever can possibly go wrong does so to the detriment of our well being. . There are no coincidences in life, no random events of chaos. It is our inability to perceive the metaphysical influences that manifest in our environment, that creates the illusion of disorder. The spiritual energy of this passage eliminates unseen negative forces and influences from our life.

376. While studying Torah, Rabbi Shimon examined the meaning of the verse: "And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer to a rough ravine...and shall break the heifer's neck in the ravine" (Devarim 21:4). According to the law, its head should be severed with a hatchet, THAT IS, WITH AN AX. Rabbi Elazar asked him why.

372. אָמַר לוֹ, וְדָא הוּא דְקִשְׁיָא קַמִּיה, דְּכִדּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲבִיד דִּינָא וְנִיסָא בְּחָדָא, לָאוּ בְּאַתֵּר חָד, וְלֹא בְּבֵיתָא חָדָא, וְאִי אֲתַעְבִּיד, קִשְׁיָא קַמִּיה, דְּהָא לְעִילָא, לֹא אֲתַעְבִּיד כְּלָא, אֲלֵא בְּשִׁלְמוֹ בְּחָדָא, אוּ נִיסָא, אוּ דִינָא בְּאַתֵּר חָד, וְלֹא בְּפִלְגָּא.

373. בְּגִין כֵּךְ, לֹא עֲבִיד קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דִּינָא בְּחֵיבָא, עַד דְּאֲשַׁתְּלִימוּ בְּחֻבִּיהוּ הָה"ד בִּי לֹא שְׁלָם עוֹן הָאֱמֹרִי עַד הֵנָּה. וְכַתִּיב בְּסֵאֶסְאָה בְּשִׁלְחָה תְּרִיבְנָה. וְעַל דָּא, הוּא אֶסְטִין לִיה לִיהוֹשֻׁעַ, דִּיתוּקֵהּ בְּהוּ, עַד דְּאָמַר לִיה, יִגְעַר יִי בְּךָ הַשֵּׁטָן. מֵאֵן אָמַר לִיה, דָּא, מִלֵּאךְ יִי.

374. וְאִי תִימָא וַיֹּאמֶר יִי אֶל הַשֵּׁטָן יִגְעַר יִי בְּךָ וְגו'. תָּא חֲזִי הָכִי נָמִי לְמִשָּׁה בְּסִנָּה, דְּכַתִּיב וַיֵּרָא מִלֵּאךְ יִי אֵלָיו בְּלִבַּת אִשׁ. וְכַתִּיב וַיֵּרָא יִי בִי סָר לְרֵאוֹת. לְזִמְנִין מִלֵּאךְ יִי, וְלְזִמְנִין מִלֵּאךְ, וְלְזִמְנִין יִי. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, אָמַר לִיה יִגְעַר יִי בְּךָ הַשֵּׁטָן, וְלֹא אָמַר הֲנִי גוֹעֵר בְּךָ.

375. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּגוּוֹנָא דָּא, בְּיוֹמָא דְּאֲשַׁתְּכַח דִּינָא בְּעֵלְמָא, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יְתִיב עַל כְּרִסְיָא דְּדִינָא, בְּדִין אֲשַׁתְּכַח הָאִי שֵׁטָן, דְּאֶסְטִי לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא, וְאֲשַׁתְּכַח אִיהוּ לְחַבְלָא עֵלְמָא, וְלִישׁוּל נִשְׁמַתִּין.

376. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן הוּא יְתִיב וְלֵעִי בְּאוּרִייתָא, וְהוּא מְשַׁתְּדֵל בְּהָאִי קָרָא. וְלִקְחוּ זִקְנֵי הָעִיר הַהִיא עֵגְלָת בָּקָר וְגו'. וְעָרְפוּ שָׁם אֶת הָעֵגְלָה בְּנֶחֱל. וְדִינָא אִיהוּ בְּקוּפִין לְעָרְפָּא לָהּ. אָמַר לִיה רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר הָאִי לְמָאִי אֶצְטְרִיךְ.

377. Rabbi Shimon wept and said: Woe to the world that has been lured after this, REFERRING TO THE HEIFER. BECAUSE OF THIS, THEY HAVE TO BREAK ITS NECK. Ever since the day that Adam was enticed by that evil Serpent, it obtained control over Adam and all the people in the world. And so the Serpent persecutes humankind, who cannot evade its inflictions--NAMELY THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH--until King Mashiach appears. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, will revive those who sleep in the dust, as it is written: "He will swallow up death for ever," (Yeshayah 25:8) and, "I will cause the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zecharyah 13:2). But until then, He remains to seize the souls from all human beings WHO LIVE IN THIS WORLD.

378. Come and behold. It is written: "If a corpse is found slain..." (Devarim 21:1) The souls of all human beings are taken away by the Angel of Death. But if you say that the Angel of Death took away the soul of this person, WHO WAS FOUND SLAIN, you would be in error. He who killed him has taken his soul away before it was time for the Angel of Death to rule.

379. This is why it is written: "and the land cannot be cleansed" (Bemidbar 35:33). THE KILLERS are not satisfied that THE EVIL SERPENT inflicts punishments on the world without reason, and falsely accuses them constantly of sins so that they have to take away that which he is entitled to receive. But the Holy One, blessed be He, has Mercy on His children. This is why they sacrifice a heifer. In so doing, they correct TWO THINGS: (a) that the soul of the man was taken from him, REFERRING TO THE MAN FOUND SLAIN, AND (b) they prevent him from prosecuting the world.

380. We have here a deep and sublime secret, because a bull, a cow, calf, and a heifer all follow a supernal and secret pattern. Therefore, with the heifer, everything is properly atoned for. As it is written: "Our hands have not shed this blood..." (Devarim 21:7) Thus, we "have not shed" this blood, nor have we caused his death. As a result, they are free from any accusations. Thus, the Holy One, blessed be He, provides a solution for every problem in the world.

377. בְּכֹה ר' שִׁמְעוֹן וַאֲמַר, וַיְוִי לְעֹלָמָא, דְּאִתְמַשֵּׁךְ בְּתֵר דָּא, דְּהָא מִן הָהוּא יוֹמָא, דְּהָהוּא חֻוּיָא בִּישָׁא, דְּאִתְפַּתָּה בִּיה אָדָם, שְׁלִיט עַל אָדָם וְשְׁלִיט עַל בְּנֵי עֹלָמָא, אִיהוּ קָאִים לְמַסְטִי עֹלָמָא, וְעֹלָמָא לֹא יָכִיל לְנַפְקָא מֵעוֹנְשִׁיהָ עַד דִּינִיתִי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא, וְיוֹקִים קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְדַמְיָכִי עֲפָרָא, דְּכִתִּיב בְּלַע הַמּוֹת לְנֶצַח וְגו'. וְכִתִּיב וְאֵת רוּחַ הַטְּמֵאָה אֶעֱבִיר מִן הָאָרֶץ. וְאִיהוּ קָאִים עַל עֹלָמָא דָּא, לְמִיטֵל נִשְׁמָתִין דְּכָל בְּנֵי נָשָׂא.

378. וְתָא חֲזִי, הָא כְּתִיב בִּי יִמְצָא חָלָל וְגו', תָּא חֲזִי כָּל בְּנֵי עֹלָמָא, ע"י מַלְאָךְ הַמּוֹת נִפְקָא נִשְׁמָתֵיהוּ, אִי תִימָא דְּבֵר נִשְׁדָּא, עַל יְדָא דְּהָהוּא מַלְאָךְ הַמּוֹת, נִמְקֵי נִשְׁמָתֵיהּ, לֹאֵו הָבִי, אֶלָּא מֵאן דְּקִטִּיל לִיהּ, אִפִּיק נִשְׁמָתֵיהּ, עַד לֹא מָטָא זְמַנָּיהּ, לְשִׁלְטָא בִּיה הָהוּא מַלְאָךְ הַמּוֹת.

379. וּבְגִין כֵּן וְלֹאֲרֵץ לֹא יִכְפֹּר וְגו', וְלֹאֲרֵץ הִילָן. וְלֹא הִי לֹון, דְּקָאִים אִיהוּ לְמַסְטִי עֹלָמָא לְמַגְנָא, וְלְקִטְרָגָא תְּדִיר, כ"ש דְּגִזְלִין מִינֵיהּ, מַה דְּאִית לִיה לְנִטְלָא, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא חֲיוּס עַל בְּנוּי, וּבְגִין כֵּן, קְרִבִּין עַל הָאִי עֲגֵלָא, בְּגִין לְתַקְנָא עֲמִיהּ, מַה דְּאִתְנַטִּיל, הֵיאֵא נִשְׁמָתָא דְּבֵר נִשְׁמָנִיהּ, וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּכַּח מְקִטְרָגָא עַל עֹלָמָא.

380. וְרָזָא עֲלָאָה תְּגִינָן הֶכָא, שׁוּר, פָּרָה, עֲגֵל, עֲגֵלָה, כֻּלְהוּ בְּרָזָא עֲלָאָה אִשְׁתַּכַּחוּ, וּבְגִין כֵּן, בְּרָא מִתְקַנֵּין לִיהּ, וְדָא הוּא דְּכִתִּיב יְדִינוּ לֹא שְׁפַכְהָ אֶת הַדָּם הַזֶּה וְגו', לֹא שְׁפַכְהָ, וְלֹא גְרִימָנָא מִיתְתִּיהּ וּבְדָא לֹא אִשְׁתַּכַּח מְקִטְרָגָא עֲלִייהּ, וּבְכֻלָּא יְהִיב קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ עֵיטָא לְעֹלָמָא.

## 28. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Hakippurim

Through the Zohar, various mysteries about Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are revealed. The penetrating sound of the Shofar has the power to confuse the negative angel called Satan, who acts as prosecutor during these days of judgment and repentance. The ten days that fall between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are likened to a great gift. This time frame provides us with the chance to remove all the negativity and decrees of judgment that we have brought down upon ourselves through our wrongful actions over the prior year. The prerequisite for accomplishing this goal is accountability and genuine permanent change in our character.

### The Relevance of this Passage

The act of repentance is a profound tool available to each of us anytime we truly choose to change our ways. The energy radiating from the verses revealing the hidden mysteries of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, allow us to continually draw upon the forces of purification throughout the entire year.

381. Come and behold: the same applies for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Hakippurim, when Judgment hovers over the world and the Satan is there to prosecute. The children of Yisrael should be aroused by the Shofar, to create a voice (also: 'sound') that is a combination of water, fire, and wind, WHICH ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, which become one in it, and sound that voice from within the Shfar.

382. And this voice rises up to the Throne of Judgment, strikes it, and rises further. And after this voice has reached above, then the voice of Ya'akov is established on high and the Holy One, blessed be He, is aroused with Mercy. Just as Yisrael uses the Shofar to release a voice from below, which includes fire, water, and air, so a voice is released from on high from the supernal Shofar, WHICH IS BINAH. THE POWER TO BLOW THE SHOFAR IS FIRE, AND THE VOICE IS FORMED BY THE AIR. THE AIR IS MINGLED WITH SWEAT AND HOT BREATH, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF WATER, AND THESE AROUSE THE THREE UPPER COLUMNS OF BINAH, FROM WHERE THE MOCHIN ARE DRAWN DOWN TO ZEIR ANPIN AND MALCHUT. And this voice, which consists of fire, water, and air, AND HAS RISEN FROM BELOW; it is established and appears from below, and another appears from above. So the world, WHICH IS MALCHUT, is established and Mercy prevails.

383. Now the prosecutor is confused, because he thought that by executing Judgment, he would punish the world. But when he realizes that Mercy was aroused, he is perplexed, his strength fails, and he is unable to do anything. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, judges the world with Mercy. You may say that Judgment has been executed, but it is not so. Judgment and Mercy are joined, and the world is judged Mercifully.

384. Come and behold. It is written: "Blow the Shofar at the new moon, at the time appointed (lit. 'when the moon is covered') on our solemn feast day," (Tehilim 81:4) when the moon, WHICH IS MALCHUT, is covered, because at that time, AS A RESULT OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, that evil Serpent prevails and may bring harm to the world. But when Mercy is aroused BY BLOWING THE SHOFAR, the moon rises and moves away FROM THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT. THUS, THE SATAN is confused and loses control. Then he is removed FROM THE MOON and never comes near again. This is why on Rosh Hashanah (New Year), THE SATAN IS dumbfounded, as is a person who has just been awakened and is still half asleep.

385. On Yom Hakippurim, we should pacify and appease THE SATAN by offering him a scapegoat. BY SENDING IT TO THE DESERT, WHICH IS HIS PLACE, then he will become a defender for Yisrael. But on Rosh Hashanah, he is confused, and loses his abilities. He does not know, nor is he able to do anything, as he sees Mercy aroused from below and endowed from on high. And the moon, WHICH IS THE MALCHUT, rises in between them. This is when he is perplexed and no longer knows anything. Thus, he loses his power.

381. תָּא חֲזִי, כְּגֻוֹנָא דָא, בְּיוֹם ר"ה, וְיוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים, דְּדִינָא אֲשֶׁתִּכַּח בְּעֵלְמָא, אִיהוּ קָאִים לְקַטְרָגָא, וְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵינָן לְאַתְעָרָא בְּשׁוּפָר, וְלְאַתְעָרָא קוּל, דְּכִלְיָל בְּאֶשׁ"א וּמִי"א וְרוּח"א, וְאַתְעִבִּירוּ חָד, וְלֹאֲשֻׁמְעָא הֵהוּא קוּל, מְגוּ שׁוּפָר.

382. וְהֵהוּא קוּל, סְלָקָא עַד אֲתָר, דְּכִרְסִינְיָא דְּדִינָא יִתְבָּא, וּבִטְשׁ בֵּה, וְסְלָקָא, בֵּינָן דְּמֵטָא הָאִי קוּל מִתְתָּא, קוּל דִּיעֵקֵב אֲתַתְקֵן לְעִילָא, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲתַעַר רַחֲמֵי, דְּהָא כְּגֻוֹנָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מִתְעַרִי לְתַתָּא, קוּל חָד, כִּלְיָל בְּאֶשׁ"א וְרוּח"א וּמִי"א, דְּנִפְקִי בְּחָדָא, מְגוּ שׁוּפָר, הֵכִי נָמִי אֲתַעַר לְעִילָא שׁוּפָר, וְהֵהוּא קוּל דְּכִלְיָל בְּאֶשׁ"א וּמִי"א וְרוּח"א אֲתַתְקֵן, וְנִפְקֵי דָא מִתְתָּא, וְדָא מְעִילָא, וְאַתְתְּקֵן עֲלֵמָא, וְרַחֲמֵי אֲשֶׁתִּכַּחוּ.

383. וְהֵהוּא מְקַטְרָגָא אֲעֵרֵב, דְּחֲשִׁיב לְשִׁלְטָאָה בְּדִינָא, וְלְקַטְרָגָא בְּעֵלְמָא, וְחֲמִי דְּמִתְעַרִי רַחֲמֵי, בְּדִין אֲעֵרֵב, וְאַתְשֵׁשׁ חִילִיָּה, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמַעְבְּד מְדִי, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דָאִין עֲלֵמָא בְּרַחֲמֵי, דָּאִי תִימָא דְּדִינָא אֲתַעֲבִיד, לָאוּ הֵכִי, אֶלָּא אֲתַחֲבִרוּ רַחֲמֵי בְּדִינָא, וְעֲלֵמָא אֲתַדֵּן בְּרַחֲמֵי.

384. תָּא חֲזִי, כְּתִיב תִּקְעוּ בַּחֹדֶשׁ שׁוּפָר בְּכֶסֶה לְיוֹם חֲגֻגוֹ דְּאַתְכַּסִּיא סִיּהָרָא, דְּהָא בְּדִין, שְׁלֵטָא הָאִי חִיּוּנָא בִּישָׁא, וְיָכִיל לְנֹזָקָא עֲלֵמָא, וְכֵד מִתְעַרִי רַחֲמֵי, סְלָקָא סִיּהָרָא, וְאַתְעִבְרַת מִתְמָן, וְאִיהוּ אֲתַעֲרֵב, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְשִׁלְטָאָה, וְאַתְעִבְרַת, דְּלֹא יִתְקַרֵב תְּמָן, וְעַל דָּא, בְּיוֹם ר"ה, בְּעִי לְעֵרֵבָא לִיָּה, כְּמָאן דְּאַתְעַר מִשְׁנִיתִיה, וְלֹא יָדַע כְּלוּם.

385. בִּי"ה בְּעִי לְנִיּוּחָא, וְלְמַעְבְּד לִיָּה נִיּוּחָא דְּרוּחָא, בְּשַׁעִיר דְּקִרְבִּין לִיָּה, וּבְדִין אֲתַהֲפֹךְ סְנִיגוּרִיא, עֲלִיּוּהוּ דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲבָל בְּיוֹמָא דְּר"ה, אֲתַעֲרֵב, דְּלֹא יָדַע וְלֹא יָכִיל לְמַעְבְּד כְּלוּם. חֲמִי אֲתַעֲרוּתָא דְּרַחֲמֵי סְלָקִין מִתְתָּא, וְרַחֲמֵי מְלֵעִילָא, וְסִיּהָרָא סְלָקָא בִּינְיָוִהוּ, בְּדִין אֲתַעֲרֵב וְלֹא יָדַע כְּלוּם, וְלֹא יָכִיל לְשִׁלְטָאָה.

386. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, judges Yisrael with Mercy. He has pity on the children of Yisrael and gives them time--the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Hakippurim--to accept those who repent before Him, and atone for their sins. Then He raises them up to THE SANCTITY OF Yom Hakippurim.

386. וְקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הָן לְהוּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמֵי, וְחַיִּים עֲלֵיהֶו, וְאַשְׁתַּכַּח לְהוּ זְמַנָּא כָּל אֵינוֹן י' יוֹמִין, דְּבִין ר"ה לְיוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים, לְקַבֵּל אֵינוֹן דְּתִיבִין קָמִיָּה, וּלְכַפֵּרָא לֹון מַחֲבוּיָהוּ, וְסָלִיק לֹון לְיוֹמָא דְכְּפוּרִי.

387. From that day forward, to keep all in order, the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded Yisrael to perform the precept OF 'THE BLOWING OF THE SHOFAR' so that the Satan would not have dominion over them. THIS MEANS TO ABOLISH THE SATAN AND HIS PERSECUTION, so that Mercy, and not Judgment, will prevail, and so they will be worthy on earth OF THE MERCY OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, which is like the Mercy of a father towards his children. All this depends on THE AROUSAL OF THE LOWER BEINGS by action and words. And all this has already been explained.

387. וְעַל דָּא, בְּכָל א קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אִפְקִיד לֹון לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, לְמַעַבַּד עוֹבְדָא, בְּגִין דְּלֹא יִשְׁלוּט עֲלֵיהֶו, מֵאֵן דְּלֹא אֶצְטְרִיךְ, וְלֹא יִשְׁלוּט עֲלֵיהֶו דִּינָא, וְהוּן כְּלָהוֹן זְכָאִין בְּאַרְעָא, בְּרַחֲמֵי דְאָבָא עַל בְּנִין, וְכָל א בְּעוֹבְדָא וּבְמִלִּין תְּלִיא, וְהָא אֻקְיַמְנָא מְלִין.

## 29. "And Hashem visited Sarah"

A beautiful discussion takes place between the great sages concerning the mysteries of the resurrection of the dead and the events that will unfold at the End of Days. The End of Days will see the dawning of an abundance of spiritual energy, unprecedented in human history. The determining factor as to who will harness this energy and generate a radiance of Light and who will short-circuit and suffer, will be based upon one parameter: treating our fellow man with human dignity. Whereas in the past, the consequences of our intolerant behavior were delayed for years or even lifetimes, the End of Days will see the distance between cause and effect contract and the repercussions of our actions, positive or negative, will be felt immediately. Judgment and mercy will co-exist side-by-side.

### The Relevance of this Passage

According to the wisdom of Kabbalah, it is the behavioral interactions of mankind that drive the cosmos, establishing the positive and negative conditions of our global and personal existence. We arouse compassion and mercy towards our fellow man in order to ensure that we connect to a positive manifestation of the End of Days.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

388. "And Hashem visited Sarah as He had said..." (Beresheet 21:1) Rabbi Yochanan opened the discussion with this verse: "Your head upon you is like Carmel, and the hair of your head like purple; the king is held in the galleries" (Shir Hashirim 7:6). The Holy One, blessed be He, placed governors on high and down below. When the Holy One, blessed be He, raises the governors on high, He grants the same elevation to the kings below. Thus, because He gave the governor of Babylon rise, Nevuchadnetzar the Wicked also received it, as it is written about him: "You are this head of gold" (Daniel 2:38). And the entire world was enslaved by him, by his son, and by the son of his son. It is written, "Your head upon you is like Carmel," which applies to Nevuchadnetzar. And it is also written: "the beasts of the field had shadow under it" (Daniel 4:9). The phrase, "and the hair of your head like purple" applies to Belshatzar, who said: "shall be clothed with scarlet (purple)" (Daniel 5:7). "The king is held in the galleries" refers to Evil Merodach (the king of Babylon), who was imprisoned until the death of his father, and then ruled in his place.

## מִדְּרַשׁ הַנֶּעְלָם

388. וְה' פָּקַד אֶת שָׂרָה כְּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר. ר' יוֹחָנָן פָּתַח, בְּהַאי קְרָא, רֵאשֶׁן עַלְיָן כְּבַרְמֶל וְדִלַת רֵאשֶׁן כְּאַרְגָּמָן מֶלֶךְ אֲסוּר בְּרֵהֲטִים. עָשָׂה קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא שְׁלֹטוֹנִים לְמַעְלָה, וְשְׁלֹטוֹנִים לְמַטָּה, כְּשִׁנּוּתוֹן קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מַעְלָה לְשָׂרִים שֶׁל מַעְלָה נוֹטְלִים מַעְלָה הַמְּלָכִים שֶׁל מַטָּה, נָתַן מַעְלָה לְשָׂרוֹ שֶׁל בָּבֶל, נָטַל מַעְלָה נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר הָרָשָׁע, דְּכַתִּיב בֵּיהּ, אֲנִי הוּא רֵאשָׁה דִּי דְהָבָא, וְהִיו כָּל הָעוֹלָם, מְשׁוּעָבְדִים תַּחַת יָדוֹ, וּבְנוּ וּבְנוּ בְנוֹ, הַה"ד רֵאשֶׁן עַלְיָן כְּבַרְמֶל, זֶהוּ נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר הַה"ד תַּחַתּוּהִי תַטְלַל חַיּוֹת בְּרָא. וְדִלַת רֵאשֶׁן כְּאַרְגָּמָן, זֶהוּ בִלְשָׁצַר, דְּאָמַר אַרְגָּוֹנָא וּלְבָשׁ. מֶלֶךְ אֲסוּר בְּרֵהֲטִים, זֶהוּ אוּל מְרוֹדַךְ, שְׁהִיָּה אֲסוּר, עַד שְׁמַת אָבִיו נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר, וּמֶלֶךְ תַּחַתּוֹ.

389. Rabbi Yehuda asked: Why does this description appear in the Song of Songs? Then he continued to explain that seven items were created before the creation of the universe. The first is the Throne of Glory, as it is written: "Your throne is established of old, You are from everlasting" (Tehilim 93:2) and "A glorious high throne from the beginning" (Yirmeyah 17:12). Hence, this was the beginning; it preceded everything else. And the Holy One, blessed be He, took the pure soul from the Throne of Glory, so it would shine on the body. This is as it is written: "Your head upon you is like Carmel," which refers to the Throne of Glory, which is the "head" over everything. And the phrase, "the hair of your head like purple" refers to the soul that is taken from it. "...the king is held in the galleries" is the body imprisoned in the grave and consumed in the dust. Nothing remains of it except for a scrap of rot, but from this, the entire body will be rebuilt. And when the Holy One, blessed be He, visits the body, He will tell the earth to cast it out, as it is written: "and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Yeshayah 26:19).

390. Rabbi Yochanan said: The dead of the land (of Yisrael) shall be the first to live, as it is written: "Your dead men shall live..." (Yeshayah 26:19); "dead bodies shall arise," refers to those who have died away from the land (of Yisrael). "Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust" refers to those who have died in the desert. As Rabbi Yochanan asked: Why did Moshe die away from the land (of Yisrael)? It was to show the entire world that just as the Holy One, blessed be He, shall resurrect Moshe in the future, so shall He resurrect his generation, who received the Torah. And of them it is written: "I remember in your favor, the kindness of your youth, the love of your espousals, when you went after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown" (Yirmeyah 2:2).

391. Another explanation of the verse, "Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust" is that it refers to the Patriarchs. And the bodies of those who died away from the land (of Yisrael) will be rebuilt, and they shall roll under the ground until they reach the land of Yisrael. There, and not away from the land (of Yisrael), they shall receive their souls. As it is written: "Therefore prophecy, and say to them: Thus says Hashem Elohim, Behold, my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Yisrael" (Yechezkel 37:12), which is followed by: "And I shall put my spirit in you, and you shall live..." (Ibid. 14)

389. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, לְמַאי אָתָּא, הָאֵי טַעַם בְּשׁוּר הַשִּׁירִים. אֲלֵא אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, שְׁבַעַה דְּבָרִים נִבְרָאוּ, קודֶם שְׁנִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן וְכוּ', כֶּסֶּא הַכְּבוֹד, שְׁנֵאמַר נִכּוֹן כֶּסֶּאךָ מֵאִז מְעוֹלָם אָתָּה. וּכְתִיב, כֶּסֶּא כְבוֹד מְרוֹם מֵרָאשׁוֹן. שֶׁהוּא הִיךָ רֹאשׁ, הַנִּקְדֵּם לְכָל, וְנִטַּל, הַקּוֹדֵשׁ בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֶת הַנִּשְׁמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה, מִכֶּסֶּא הַכְּבוֹד, לְהִיּוֹת מֵאִיכָּה לַגּוֹף, הֵךָ הוּא דְכְּתִיב, רֹאשׁךָ עָלֶיךָ כְּבָרְמֶל, זֶהוּ כֶּסֶּא הַכְּבוֹד, שֶׁהוּא רֹאשׁ עַל הַכָּל. וְדִלֵּת רֹאשְׁךָ כְּאַרְגָּמָן, זֶה הִיא הַנִּשְׁמָה, הַנִּטְלָה מִמֶּנּוּ. מֶלֶךְ אֲסוּר בְּרֵהִטִּים, זֶהוּ הַגּוֹף, שֶׁהוּא אֲסוּר בְּקִבְר, וְכֹלָה בְּעַפָּר, וְלֹא נִשְׁאַר מִמֶּנּוּ, אֲלֵא כְּמֵלֶא תְרוּדָה רֶקֶב, וּמִמֶּנּוּ יִבְנֶה כָּל הַגּוֹף. וּכְשֶׁפּוֹקֵד הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת הַגּוֹף, הוּא אוֹמֵר לָאָרֶץ, שֶׁתִּמְלִיט אוֹתוֹ לַחוּץ, דְּכְּתִיב וְאַרְץ רַפְּאִים תִּמְלִיט.

390. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, הַמֵּתִים שְׁבָאָרֶץ, הֵם חַיִּים תַּחֲלָה, הֵךָ הוּא דְכְּתִיב יַחֲיוּ מֵתֶיךָ, נִבְלָתִי יִקּוּמוּן, אֵלּוּ שְׁבַחוּצָה לָאָרֶץ. הִקִּיצוּ וְרִנְנוּ שׁוֹכְנֵי עֶפֶר, אֵלּוּ הַמֵּתִים שְׁבַמְדָּבָר. דֹּאמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, לְמַה מֵת מֹשֶׁה, בַּחוּצָה לָאָרֶץ. לְהִרְאוֹת לְכָל בָּאֵי עוֹלָם, כִּשֶּׁם שֶׁעֲתִיד הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, לְהַחְיֹת לְמֹשֶׁה, כֵּן עֲתִיד לְהַחְיֹת לְדוֹרוֹ, שֶׁהֵם קִבְּלוּ הַתּוֹרָה. וְעָלִיהֶם נֵאמַר, זְכַרְתִּי לָךְ חֶסֶד נְעוּרֶיךָ אֲהַבֵּת בְּלוֹלוֹתֶיךָ לְכַתֵּךְ אַחֲרֵי בְּמִדְבָר בָּאָרֶץ לֹא זְרוּעָה.

391. דְּבַר אַחֵר, הִקִּיצוּ וְרִנְנוּ שׁוֹכְנֵי עֶפֶר, אֵלּוּ הֵם הָאֲבוֹת. וְהַמֵּתִים בַּחוּצָה לָאָרֶץ, יִבְנֶה גּוֹפֵם, וּמִתְגַּלְגָּלִים תַּחַת הָאָרֶץ, עַד אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְשָׁם יִקְבְּלוּ נִשְׁמָתָם, וְלֹא בַּחוּצָה לָאָרֶץ, הֵךָ הוּא דְכְּתִיב, לִכֵּן הִנֵּבֵא וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלֵיהֶם הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת קְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם וְהַעֲלִיתִי אֶתְכֶם מִקְבְּרוֹתֵיכֶם עִמִּי וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם אֶל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. מֵה כְּתִיב אַחֲרָיו, וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְכֶם וְחִייתֶם.

392. Rabbi Pinchas said: The soul is taken from the Throne of Glory, which is the "head," as it is written: "Your head upon you is like Carmel." "...and the hair of your head like purple" means the soul that is the hair of the head. Finally, "the king is held in the galleries" means the body that is held in the grave. This refers to the body, Sarah, and the King. So the Holy One, blessed be He, shall visit it at the appointed time, as it is written: "And Hashem visited Sarah as He had said." He shall visit the body at the appointed time, when He shall visit upon the righteous."

393. Rabbi Pinchas said: In the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will make the bodies of the righteous as beautiful as Adam was when he entered the Garden of Eden, as it is written: "And Hashem shall guide you continually...and you shall be like a watered garden" (Yeshayah 58:11) Rabbi Levi then said: As long as the soul remains in its exalted position, it is nourished by the Light from above and is en clothed with It. And when it enters the body in the future, it shall enter with that same Light. Then the body will shine as the brightness of the firmament. This is as it is written: "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament..." (Daniel 12:3) And people will attain full knowledge, as it is written: "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Hashem" (Yeshayah 11:9). How do we reach this conclusion? From the verse: "And Hashem shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought" (Yeshayah 58:11). This is the Light of above. "...and make fat your bones" is the visiting of the body, while "and you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" is the knowledge of the Blessed Creator. Then all creatures shall know of the soul that entered them--that it is the soul of Life, the soul of Delight, which has received all pleasures and delights for the body from above. And all are amazed by it, saying: "How fair and how pleasant are you, love, in delights," (Shir Hashirim 7:3) all of which refers to the soul.

394. Rabbi Yehuda said: Come and behold. It is indeed so. It is written: "the king is held in the galleries," and then, "How fair and how pleasant are you..." Rabbi Yehuda continued: At that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, will make His world happy, and rejoice in His created beings, as it is written, "Hashem shall rejoice in his works" (Tehilim 104:31). And then there will be laughter in the world, which we do not see now, as it is written: "Then will our mouth be filled with laughter..." (Tehilim 126:2) This is according to the verse: "And Sarah said, 'Elohim has made for me to laugh..." (Beresheet 21:6). So at that time, people will chant songs, as it is a time of laughter. Rabbi Aba added that on the day when the Holy One, blessed be He, will rejoice together with His created beings, there will be joy such as has not existed since the world was created. And the righteous that remain in Jerusalem shall return no more to dust, 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) precisely "he that is left in Tzion, and he that remains in Jerusalem."

392. רבי פנחס אמר, הנשמה נטלה מכסא הכבוד, שהוא הראש, בדקאמר ראשך עליך כפרמל. ודלת ראשך בארגמן. זו היא הנשמה שהיא דלת הראש. מלך אסור ברהטים, הוא הגוף, שהוא אסור בקברים, זהו הגוף, וזהו שרה, וזהו מלך. וקודשא בריך הוא פוקדה, למועד אשר דבר אליו, הה"ד וה' פקד את שרה כאשר אמר. פוקד את הגוף, לזמן הידוע שבו יפקוד הצדיקים.

393. אמר רבי פנחס, עתיד הקודשא בריך הוא, ליפות לגוף הצדיקים לעתיד לבא, כיופי של אדם הראשון כשנכנס לגן עדן, שנאמר ונחך ה' תמיד וגו' והיית כגן רוח. אמר רבי לוי, הנשמה בעודה במעלתה, ניוזנת באור של מעלה, ומתלבשת בו, וכשתכנס לגוף לעתיד לבא, באותו האור ממש תכנס, ואזי הגוף יאיר, כזוהר הרקיע, הה"ד, והמשכילים יזהירו כזוהר הרקיע, וישיגו בני אדם דעה שלימה, שנאמר כי מלאה הארץ דעה את ה'. מנ"ל הא, ממה דכתיב, ונחך ה' תמיד והשביע בצחצחות נפשך. זה אור של מעלה. ועצמותיך יחליץ, זה פקידת הגוף. והיית כגן רוח וכמוצא מים אשר לא יכזבו מימיו. זהו דעת הבורא יתברך, ואזי ידעו הבריות, שהנשמה הנכנסת בהם, שהיא נשמת החיים, נשמת התענוגים, שהיא קבלה תענוגים מלמעלה, ומעדנות לגוף, והכל תמהים בה, ואומרים מה יפית ומה נעמית אהבה בתענוגים. זו היא הנשמה, לע"ל.

394. אמר רבי יהודה תא חזי שכך הוא, דכתיב מלך אסור ברהטים. וכתיב בתריה מה יפית ומה נעמית. ואמר ר' יהודה, באותו זמן, עתיד הקודשא בריך הוא לשמח עולמו, ולשמח בבריותיו, שנאמר ישמח ה' במעשיו. ואזי יהיה שחוק בעולם, מה שאין עכשיו, דכתיב אז ימלא שחוק פיני וגו'. הה"ד ותאמר שרה צחוק עשה לי אלהים. שאזי עתידים בני אדם לומר שירה, שהוא עת שחוק. רבי אבא אמר, היום שישמח הקודשא בריך הוא עם בריותיו, לא היתה שמחה כמותה, מיום שנברא העולם, והצדיקים הנשארים בירושלים, לא ישובו עוד לעפרם, דכתיב והיה הנשאר בציון והנותר בירושלם קדוש יאמר לו. הנותר בציון ובירושלם דייקא.

395. Rabbi Acha asked: Then there will only be a few? Rather, the rule that applies to Jerusalem and Tzion applies to all those who remained in the holy land of Yisrael. This teaches us that the whole land of Yisrael is included within Jerusalem, based on what is written: "And when you shall come into the land..." (Vayikra 19:23)--the entire land as a whole.

396. Rabbi Yehuda, the son of Rabbi Elazar, asked Rabbi Chizkiyah about the dead that the Holy One, blessed be He, shall resurrect: Why does He not give them back their souls in the places where they were buried and let them come to live in the land of Yisrael? Rabbi Chizkiyah responded: The Holy One, blessed be He, took an oath to build Jerusalem and to see that it shall never be destroyed. As Rabbi Yirmeyah said, The Holy One, blessed be He, shall renew His world, and build Jerusalem. He shall bring it down from above completely built, so that it may never be destroyed. And he took a solemn oath that the Congregation of Yisrael shall never be exiled again and that Jerusalem shall never be destroyed, as it is written: "You shall no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall your land any more be termed Desolate..." (Yeshayah 62:4). Everywhere you find a double negative, there is an oath, as it is written: "neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth" (Beresheet 9:11), and it is written: "for as I have sworn that the waters of Noach should no more go over the earth" (Yeshayah 54:9). From this we conclude that a double negative is a solemn oath, and from that negative, we can hear an affirmative. So the Holy One, blessed be He, shall reestablish His world in the future in such a manner that the Congregation of Yisrael shall never be exiled and the Temple will never be destroyed. Therefore, they shall not be given back their souls except in a place that is forever established, so that the soul will forever dwell in the body. Thus, it is written: "he that is left in Tzion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy."

397. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: Thus, He is holy, Jerusalem is holy, and he who remains in it is holy. He is holy, as it is written: "holy is Hashem Tzva'ot," (Yeshayah 6:3) and "the Holy One in your midst" (Hoshea 11:9); Jerusalem is holy, as is written: "had gone from the holy place" (Kohelet 8:10); and he that remains in it is holy, 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). So as the first holy one is established, so are the other two holy ones.

395. אָמַר רַבִּי אַחָא, אִם כֵּן זְעִירִין אֵינּוּן, אֲלֵא כָּל אֵינּוּן דְּאַשְׁתָּאֲרוּ בְּאַרְעָא קְדִישָׁא דִּישְׂרָאֵל, דִּינָא דְלָהוּן, בִּירוּשָׁלַם, וּכְצִיּוֹן לְכָל דְּבַר, מְלִמַּד דְּכָל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָלל בִּירוּשָׁלַם הִיא, מִמַּשְׁמַע דְּכֶתִיב וְכִי תָבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ, הֵבֵל בְּכָלל.

396. ר' יְהוּדָה בִּר' אֶלְעָזָר, שָׁאַל לְרַבִּי חִזְקִיָּה, אָמַר לוֹ, מֵתִים שְׁעֵתִיד הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְהַחְיֹתָם, לְמָה לֹא יְהִיב נִשְׁמָתָהוֹן, בְּאַתְר דְּאַתְקַבְּרוּ תַּמָּן, וְיִיתוּן לְאַחֲיָא בְּאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל. אָמַר לוֹ, נִשְׁבַּע הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְבָנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם, וְשִׁלָּא תִהְרַס לְעוֹלָמִים, דָּאֵמַר ר' יִרְמְיָה, עֵתִיד הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְחַדֵּשׁ עוֹלָמוֹ, וְלְבָנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם, וְלַהּוֹרִידָהּ בְּנוֹיָהּ מִלְּמַעְלָה, בְּגִין שִׁלָּא תִהְרַס, וְנִשְׁבַּע שִׁלָּא תִגְלָה עוֹד בְּנִסְתַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְנִשְׁבַּע שִׁלָּא יִהְרַס בְּנִין יְרוּשָׁלַם, שְׁנֵאמַר לֹא יֵאמַר לֶךְ עוֹד עֲזוּבָה וְלֹאֲרִצָּךְ לֹא יֵאמַר עוֹד שְׁמָמָה. וּבְכָל מְקוֹם, שְׁאַתָּה מוֹצֵא לֹא לֹא, הִיא שְׁבוּעָה, הֵה"ד וְלֹא יִכְרַת כָּל בָּשָׂר עוֹד מִמֵּי הַמַּבּוּל. וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עוֹד מַבּוּל וְגו'. וְכֶתִיב אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מֵעַבְרִי מִי נָח. מִכָּאן שִׁלָּא לֹא שְׁבוּעָה, וּמִן לֹא אֵתָה שׁוֹמֵעַ הֵן. וְעֵתִיד הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְקַיֵּים עוֹלָמוֹ, קִיּוּם שִׁלָּא תִגְלָה בְּנִסְתַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְלֹא תִהְרַס בְּנִין בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, לְפִיכָךְ, אֵין מְקַבְּלִין נִשְׁמָתָן, אֲלֵא בְּמְקוֹם קִיּוּם לְעוֹלָמִים, כְּדִי שְׁתַּהֲיָה הַנִּשְׁמָה קִיּוּמָתָהּ בְּגוֹף לְעוֹלָמִים, וְדָא הוּא דְכֶתִיב, הַנִּשְׁאָר בְּצִיּוֹן וְהַנּוֹתָר בִּירוּשָׁלַם קְדוֹשׁ יֵאמַר לוֹ וְגו'.

397. אָמַר רַבִּיחִזְקִיָּה, מֵהֶכָא, הוּא קְדוֹשׁ, יְרוּשָׁלַם קְדוֹשׁ, הַנּוֹתָר בָּהּ קְדוֹשׁ, הוּא קְדוֹשׁ, דְּכֶתִיב קְדוֹשׁ ה' צְבָאוֹת. וְכֶתִיב בְּקִרְבֶּךָ קְדוֹשׁ. יְרוּשָׁלַם קְדוֹשׁ, דְּכֶתִיב וּמִמְקוֹם קְדוֹשׁ יִהְלֹכוּ. הַנּוֹתָר בָּהּ קְדוֹשׁ, דְּכֶתִיב וְהָיָה הַנִּשְׁאָר בְּצִיּוֹן וְהַנּוֹתָר בִּירוּשָׁלַם קְדוֹשׁ יֵאמַר לוֹ. מֵה קְדוֹשׁ הָרֵאשׁוֹן קִיּוּם, אִף הַשְּׂאָר קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קִיּוּם.

398. Rabbi Yitzchak asked: What is meant by the verse: "Once again old men and old women will dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand because of old age" (Zechariah 8:4)? What is the good in phrasing it thus: "and every man with his staff"? Rabbi Yitzchak replied that the righteous shall revive the dead in the future as did Elisha the prophet, as it is written: "and take my staff in your hand, and go your way..." "and lay my staff upon the face of the child" (II Melachim 4:29). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: 'What the righteous are to perform in the future which is to come, you wish to accomplish now.' And what is written? "...and he laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor sound." (Ibid. 31). But the righteous in the future shall succeed in accomplishing this promise, as it is written: "and every man with this staff in his hand" will use it to revive the dead, those who have converted from among the nations of the world, as it is written of him: "for the child shall die a hundred years old; and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be deemed cursed" (Yeshayah 65:20). Rabbi Yitzchak said that the end of this passage confirms this, as it is written: "because of old age."

399. A different explanation of the verse: "And Sarah said: Elohim has made for me to laugh," is that it is written: "Rejoice you with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her, rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her" (Yeshayah 66:10). Rabbi Yehuda said that since the world was created, there is no greater joy for the Holy One, blessed be He, as the joy in rejoicing with the righteous in the future. Each and every one shall point his finger and say: "This is our Elohim: we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Yeshayah 25:9), and "Sing to Hashem; for He has done wonders: this is known in all the earth" (Yeshayah 12:5).

400. Rabbi Yochanan said that we have not seen a person who has explained this term better than King David, who said: "You hide your face, they are troubled" (Tehilim 104:29). According to this, the Holy One, blessed be He, never harms anyone. But if He does not supervise a person, he simply dies on his own, as it is written: "You hide your face, they are troubled: You take away their breath (spirit), they die and return to their dust," (Ibid.) then, "You send forth Your spirit, they are created..." and finally, "The glory of Hashem shall endure for ever, Hashem shall rejoice in His works" (Ibid. 30-31). Then shall there be laughter in the world, as it is written: "Then will our mouth be filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." This is as we read "And Sarah said: Elohim has made for me to laugh," to rejoice in his salvation.

398. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מֵאִי דְכֶתִיב, עוֹד יֵשְׁבוּ זָקֵנִים וְזָקֵנוֹת בְּרֻחוֹבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעֲנָתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ מִרֹב יָמִים. מֵאִי טִיבוֹתָא דָא לְמִיזֵל כְּדִין, דְכֶתִיב וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעֲנָתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ. אֵלָא אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, עֲתִידִים הַצְדִּיקִים לַעֲתִיד לָבֹא, לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים כְּאַלְיָשָׁע הַנְּבִיא, דְכֶתִיב וְקַח מִשְׁעֲנָתִי בְיָדְךָ וְלֵךְ. וְכֶתִיב וְשָׁמַת מִשְׁעֲנָתִי עַל פְּנֵי הַנֶּעֱר. אָמַר לוֹ קוֹדֶשָׁא בְרִין הוּא, דְּבַר שְׁעִתִּידִים לַעֲשׂוֹת הַצְדִּיקִים, לַעֲתִיד לָבֹא, אֲתָה רוֹצֶה עֲכָשׁוּי לַעֲשׂוֹת, מַה כְּתִיב וְיִשָּׁם אֶת הַמִּשְׁעֲנָת עַל פְּנֵי הַנֶּעֱר וְאִין קוֹל וְאִין עוֹנָה וְאִין קֶשֶׁב. אֲבָל הַצְדִּיקִים לַעֲתִיד לָבֹא, עֲלֵה בְיָדְךָ, הַבְּטָחָה זֹה, דְכֶתִיב וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעֲנָתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ, כְּדִי לְהַחְיֹת בּוֹ אֶת הַמֵּתִים, מִהַגְרִים שְׁנַתְּגִירוּ מֵאוּ"ה, דְכֶתִיב בְּהוּ כִי הַנֶּעֱר בֶּן מֵאָה שָׁנָה יָמוֹת וְהַחוּטָא בֶּן מֵאָה שָׁנָה יְקוּלָל. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, סוֹפִיָה דְקָרָא מוֹכִיחַ, דְכֶתִיב מִרֹב יָמִים.

399. דְּבַר אַחֵר, וְתֵאמַר שְׂרָה צָחוֹק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים. כְּתִיב שְׁמַחוּ אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְגִילוּ בָהּ כָּל אֲהֲבֵיהָ שִׂישׁוּ אֲתָה מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל הַמִּתְאַבְּלִים עֲלֶיהָ. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, לֹא הִיָּתָה שְׂמֵחָה, לְפָנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, מִיּוֹם שְׁנִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, כְּאוֹתָהּ שְׂמֵחָה, שְׁעִתִּיד לְשִׂמּוֹחַ עִם הַצְדִּיקִים, לַעֲתִיד לָבֹא. וְכָל אַחֵר וְאַחֵר, מֵרֵאשִׁית בְּאַצְבָּע, וְאוֹמֵר הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ זֶה קוֹיְנוּ לוֹ וְיִוְשִׁיעֵנוּ זֶה ה' קוֹיְנוּ לוֹ נְגִילָה וְנִשְׂמַחָה בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ. וְכֶתִיב וְזָמְרוּ ה' כִּי גֵאוֹת עָשָׂה מוֹדַעַת זֹאת בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ.

400. רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר, לֹא חֲזִינָן מֵאֵן דְּפָרִישׁ הָאִי מֶלֶךְ בְּדוֹד מַלְכָּא, דְּאָמַר תְּסַתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ וְיִבְהַלֵּן וְגו'. מִכָּאֵן שְׁאִין הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִין הוֹאֲעוֹשָׂה רַעָה לְשׁוֹם אָדָם, אֵלָא כְּשִׁאיְנוּ מְשֻׁגָּיִח בּוֹ, הוּא כָּלָה מֵאֲלִיו, דְכֶתִיב תְּסַתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ וְיִבְהַלֵּן תוֹסֵף רוּחָם יִגְעוּן וְגו'. וְאַחֲרַכְתָּ שְׁלַח רוּחְךָ יִבְרָאוּן וְגו'. וְאַחֲרַכְתָּהּ כְּבוֹד ה' לְעוֹלָם יִשְׁמַח ה' בְּמַעֲשָׁיו. וְאִזִּי הַשְׁחֹק בְּעוֹלָם, דְכֶתִיב אִזִּי יִמְלֹא שְׁחֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רָנָה. הֵה"ר, וְתֵאמַר שְׂרָה צָחוֹק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים לְשִׂמּוֹחַ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ.

401. Rabbi Chiya said: Come and behold. When the body exists in this world, it has not yet reached perfection. After it becomes righteous, walks the paths of honesty, and dies in its righteousness, then it is called 'Sarah' (lit. 'provided what is necessary'), as it has been perfected. When it reaches the Resurrection of the Dead, it is still called Sarah, so that nobody will say that the Holy One, blessed be He, has revived a different body. And after it becomes alive and rejoices with the Shechinah, and the Holy One, blessed be He, has wiped all distress from the world, as it is written: "He will swallow up death forever; and Hashem Elohim will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Yeshayah 25:8). Then it shall be called Yitzchak (lit. 'be laugh'), because of the laughter and happiness of the righteous in the future.

402. Rabbi Yehuda arrived at the village of Chanan, and all the inhabitants sent him a gift. Rabbi Aba came to him and asked: Sir, when are you leaving? He replied: I shall pay for what the people of the village have given me and be on my way. He said to him: Sir, do not feel troubled because of the gift. It was offered for (in honor of) the Torah, so they will not accept anything from you. He responded: Will they accept words of Torah? He said: Yes. All the people of the village came. Rabbi Yehuda said: Are they all Yeshivah deans? He then said: If there is anyone who does not attend the Yeshivah, let him get up and leave. Rabbi Aba stood up and separated ten men from them all to receive the leanings from Rabbi Yehuda. Rabbi Aba said to them: Be seated here you masters (teachers), while the rest of us will sit with him tomorrow and receive the learnings. They went, and the ten who stayed sat down. But he said nothing. They said to him: If it pleases Sir, let us welcome the Shechinah. He said to them: While Rabbi Aba is not here? So, they sent for him, and he came.

403. He opened the discussion with the verse: "And Hashem visited Sarah as He had said." Why is it written this way? It should have been written: 'And Hashem remembered Sarah,' as he said, "And Elohim remembered Rachel" (Beresheet 30: 22). This is because there is no visiting unless it was previously mentioned, but it was previously written: "I will certainly return to you this season" (Beresheet 18:10). And, in relation to this issue, it is now said that He visited. This we derive from the words, "as He had said," because had it not been said, "as He had said," it would have said 'He remembered'. So the visiting is connected to the phrase, "He said, 'At the time appointed I will return to you'" (Ibid. 14).

404. Afterward he said: The image of this righteous man, who has merited to be elevated up to that Glory on high, is engraved on the Throne of Glory. And each and every righteous person has his image above, IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN, just as it was down below IN THIS WORLD. This secures the holy soul AND ENSURES ITS RESURRECTION IN A BODY IN THIS WORLD.

401. רבי חייא אמר, תא חזי, עד שהגוף עומד בעולם הזה, הוא חסר מן התשלום, לאחר שהוא צדיק, והולך בדרכי יושר, ומת ביושרו, נקרא שרה בתשלומו, הגיע לתחיית המתים הוא שרה, כרי שלא יאמרו שאחר הוא שהחיה קודשא בריך הוא. לאחר שהוא חי, ושמח עם השכינה, ומעביר הקודשא בריך הוא, היגון מן העולם, דכתיב בלע המות לנצח ומחה ה' אלהים דמעה מעל כל פנים וגו'. אזי נקרא יצחק, בשביל הצחוק והשמחה, שיהיה לצדיקים לעתיד לבא.

402. רבי יהודה אתא להווא אתר דכפר חנן, שדרו ליה תקרובתא, כל בני מאתא, עאל לגביה ר' אבא, אמר לו אימתי ליזיל מר, אמר לו, אפרע מה דיהבו לי בני מאתא ואיזיל, אמר ליה, לא ליחוש מר להאי תקרובתא, לאורייתא הוא דעבדו, ולא יקבלו מנך כלום, אמר ליה, ולא מקבלי מלי דאורייתא, אמר אין. אתו כל בני מאתא. אמר לו רבי יהודה, בלהון מארי מתיבתא, אמר ליה, ואי אית מאן דלא יאות למיתב הכא ליקום וליזיל. קם רבי אבא, ואבדיל מניהו עשרה, די יקבלון מניה, אמר להו, תיבו בהדי גברא רבא דנא, ואנא ואינן נקבל למחר, ונתיב עמיה. אזלו. ואינן עשרה דאשתארו עמיה, ותיבו, ולא אמר כלום, אמרו ליה, אי רעותיה דמר, נקבל אפי שכינתא. אמר להו, והא רבי אבא לית הכא, שדרו בהדיה ואתא.

403. פתח ואמר, וה' פקד את שרה כאשר אמר. מאי שנויא הוה הכא, הוה ליה למימר וה' זכר את שרה. במה דאמר ויזכר אלהים את רחל. דאין פקידה, אלא על מה דהוה בקדמיתא. אלא בקדמיתא הוה, דכתיב שוב אשוב אליך בעת חיה, ועל אותו ענין נאמר, שפקד עכשיו, משמע דכתיב כאשר אמר, דאלמלא לא נאמר כאשר אמר, לימא זכירה, אבל פקד ההיא מלה דאמר, למועד אשוב אליך.

404. לבתר אמר הכי, האי צדיק, דזכי למיסק, להווא יקר עלאה, דיוקניה מתפתח בכרסי יקריה, וכן לכל צדיק וצדיק, דיוקניה לעילא, כד הוה לתתא, לאבטחא לההיא נשמטא קדישא.

405. This is what Rabbi Yochanan said that the verse: "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation," (Chavakuk 3:11) TEACHES US that the body and the soul are in the Holy Supernal Chamber above, and shine in the same image there as they had on the earth in this world. And the sustenance of this image, OF THIS WORLD, comes from the pleasure of the soul. And it shall enter into this bone, WHICH IS CALLED LUZ that remains intact in the earth UNTIL THE DEAD SHALL RISE. The earth is conceived by it and throws out its refuse. This IMAGE is called 'Holy'.

406. So when this image OF THIS WORLD exists above, it then comes on every first day of the month to bow before the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another..." (Yeshayah 66:23). And He, THE HOLY KING, says to it: "At the time appointed I will return to you," REFERRING to the time when He shall resurrect the dead in the future, when it will be visited, as was promised. And this is why it is written: "And Hashem visited Sarah, as He had said." This is the day when the Holy One, blessed be He, shall rejoice with His creations, as it is written: "Hashem shall rejoice in His works" (Tehilim 104:31).

407. Rabbi Aba said to him, AS HE HEARD HIM BEGIN WITH THE VERSE, "HASHEM SHALL REJOICE IN HIS WORKS": May Sir speak and tell us his explanation of THE VERSES IN this portion, AND NOT OF THE VERSES OF TEHILIM. RABBI YEHUDA said to them: It is appropriate for you to open with this passage. He said: "And it came to pass after these things, that the Elohim did test Avraham...And He said, Take now your son, your only son, whom you love..." (Bereshheet 22:1-2). We should study this verse carefully. THIS IS SIMILAR TO a craftsman who takes silver from the earth. What does he do with it? First he puts the raw material into the burning fire until all the dirt of the earth is removed and only the silver remains. But even this is not yet pure silver. So what does he do next? He puts it into the fire again and extracts the dross, as we may read: "Take away the dross from the silver" (Mishlei 25:4). And then the silver is pure.

408. So does the Holy One, blessed be He, put the body under the ground until it is completely petrified and all the rotten defilement completely leaves it. And a handful of rot is all that is left. Then the body is rebuilt from this, but it is still an incomplete body.

405. והיינו דאמר רבי יוחנן, מאי דכתיב שמש וירח עמד זבלה, דזהרן גופא ונשמתא, דקיימין באדרא קדישא עלאה דלעילא, בדיוקנא דהוה קאים בארעא, וההיא דיוקנא ממזונה הנאת נשמתא, וההיא, עתידה לאתלבש, בהאי גרמא, דאשתאר בארעא, וארעא מתעבר מניה, ופלט טיגיה לברא, ודא הוא דאתקרי קדושה.

406. וכד קיימא דיוקנא ההיא דלעילא, אתא בכל ירחא לסגדא, קמי מלכא קדישא בריך הוא, דכתיב והיה מדי חדש בחדשו. והוא מבשר ליה, ואמר למועד אשוב אליך, לההוא זמן דעתיד לאחיא מיתא, עד דאתפקדת לההוא זמנא, כמה דאתבשר, הה"ד וה' פקד את שרה כאשר אמר. וההוא יומא, דחדי קודשא בריך הוא בעובדו, הה"ד ישמח ה' במעשיו.

407. אמר לו ר' אבא, לימא לן מר, על פרשתא, לבתר אמר, ואות לכוך למפתח פרשתא דא. פתח ואמר, ויהי אחר הדברים האלה והאלהים נסה את אברהם וגו'. ויאמר קח נא את בנך את יחידך אשר אהבת וגו'. הכא אית לאסתכלא האי אומנא, דאפיק בספא, ממקורא דארעא, מאי עבד, בקדמיתא, מעייל ליה בגור דליק, עד דנפיק מניה כל זוהמא דארעא, והא אשתארת בספא, אבל לא כספא שלימתא, לבתר מאי עבד, מעייל ליה בגורא, בדבקדמיתא, ומפיק מניה סטויפי, בדבר אחר הגו סיגים מכסף וגו'. וכדין, הוא כספא שלימתא, בלא ערבוביא.

408. כך הקודשא בריך הוא, מעייל האי גופא תחות ארעא, עד דמתרקב כוליה, ונפיק מניה כל זוהמא בישא, ואשתאר ההוא תרווד רקב, ואתבני גופא מניה, ועד כען הוא גופא לא שלים.

409. This is after that Great Day, as it is written: "But it shall be one day which shall be known to Hashem, not day nor night..." (Zecharyah 14:7). This is the day when everyone shall hide in the earth as they did in the beginning, THAT IS, AS THEY WERE IN THE GRAVE BEFORE THE RESURRECTION, because of the fear and the mighty power of the Holy One, blessed be He. As it is written: "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of Hashem, and for the glory of His majesty..." (Yeshayah 2:19). And their souls shall leave and the handful of rot shall be digested there. The body that is rebuilt shall remain there as the light of the sun and the splendor of the firmament. As it is written: "And they who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (Daniel 12:3). And then the silver is pure, WHICH MEANS THAT the body is pure without any other mixture.

410. As Rabbi Ya'akov said, the Holy One, blessed be He, shall cast down a shining body from above, as it is written: "for your dew is as the dew (Heb. tal) of the herbs..." (Yeshayah 26:19) and, "Behold Hashem will carry you away (Heb. metaltelcha)" (Yeshayah 22:17). And then they shall be called Celestial Holy Ones, as it is written: "and he...shall be called holy" (Yeshayah 4:3). This is what is called the last resurrection of the dead, as they shall never taste death anymore, as it is written: "By Myself I have sworn, says Hashem, because you have done this thing...that I will exceedingly bless you..." (Bereshheet 22:16-17). During that period, the righteous pray that they may never experience this again.

411. What is then written? "And Avraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold behind him a ram..." (Bereshheet 22:13) WHICH ALLUDES TO the other wicked people of the world who are called 'rams,' as it is written: "the rams of Nevayot shall minister to you" (Yeshayah 60:7). And this PHRASE is translated INTO ARAMAIC as: "the high ranks (also: 'the proud people') of Nevayot...". "caught in a thicket..." This is as you may read: "All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off" (Tehilim 75:11). The phrase: "and Avraham went and took the ram," means that they are about to go through all kinds of bad experiences. But the righteous, in the future, shall remain as the holy supernal angels, to bring about the unison of His Name. Therefore it is written: "in that day Hashem shall be one, and His Name One" (Zecharyah 14:9).

412. Rabbi Yehuda said to him: From here on, open up the gate, WHICH MEANS THAT FROM NOW ON, WHOEVER WANTS TO ENTER MAY DO SO, BECAUSE HE HAS FINISHED REVEALING ALL THE MOST SUBLIME MYSTERIES. All the people of the village came to him. They said: May Sir tell us a few words of the Torah about the portion of the week that we read on the day of Shabbat, "and Hashem visited Sarah." He stood up between the pillars, opened, and said: "And Hashem visited Sarah..."--The Holy One, blessed be He, has three keys in His hands, which He did not hand over to any angel. They are: the Key of Life, the Key of Rain, and the Key of Resurrecting the Dead. Eliyahu came and took two: the one of rain and the one of resurrecting the dead. Rabbi Yochanan disagreed and said: Eliyahu was handed only one. Rabbi Yochanan explained: When Eliyahu wanted to revive the son of the woman of Tzarfat, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: It is not proper for you to take two keys and hold them in your hands. So give Me the key of rain, and go and and revive the dead. This is as it is written: "Go, show yourself to Achav, and I will send rain upon the earth" (I Melachim 18:1). He did not say, 'and send rain,' but rather, "and I will send rain."

409. לְבִתְרִי, הֵהוּא יוֹמָא רַבָּא, דְּכִתִּיב וְהָיָה יוֹם אֶחָד הוּא וְיֻדַּע לֵה' לֹא יוֹם וְלֹא לַיְלָה. מִתְטַמְרֵן בְּלֵהוּ בַּעֲפָרָא בְּדִבְקָרְמִיתָא, מִן קֳדָם דְּחִילוּ וְתִקְיֻפוּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, הֵה"ד וּבָאוּ בַּמַּעְרוֹת צְרִים וּבְמַחְלוֹת עָפָר מִפְּנֵי פֶחַד ה' וּמִהֲדָר גְּאוּנוֹ וגו'. וְנִמְיָק נִשְׁמַתִּיהוּ, וּמִתְעַבֵּל הֵהוּא תְרוּוד רַקָּב, וְאַשְׁתָּאֵר גּוֹפָא דְאַתְבְּנִי תַּמָּן נִהוּרָא, דִּילִיָּה בְּנִהוּרָא דְשִׁמְשָׁא, וּכְזֹהֲרָא דְרִקִּיעָא, דְּכִתִּיב וְהַמִּשְׁכִּילִים יִזְהִירוּ בְּזֹהַר הָרָקִיעַ וגו'. וּכְדִין כְּסָפָא שְׁלִים, גּוֹפָא שְׁלִימָא, בְּלֹא עֲרֻבּוּבָא אַחֲרָנִיתָא.

410. דְּאָמַר ר' יַעֲקֹב, גּוֹפָא דְנִהוּרִי, יִרְמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מְלַעִילָא, דְּכִתִּיב כִּי טַל אִוְרוֹת טַלִּיךְ. וּכְתִיב הִנֵּה ה' מְטַלְטֵלךְ וגו'. וּכְדִין יִתְקְרוּן, קְדִישִׁין עֲלָאִין, דְּכִתִּיב קְדוֹשׁ יֵאמַר לוֹ. וְדָא הוּא, דְּאַתְקְרִי תַחֲוִית הַמַּתִּים דְּבִתְרִייתָא, וְדָא הוּא נְסִיוָנָא בְּתִרְיִיתָא, וְלֹא יִטְעֻמוּן עוֹד טַעֲמָא דְמוֹתָא, דְּכִתִּיב כִּי נִשְׁפַּעְתִּי נֶאֱמַר ה' כִּי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ וגו' כִּי בְּרַךְ אֲבִרְכְךָ וגו'. וּבִהְיוֹת זְמַנָּא, מְצִלוּ צְדִיקֵינָא. דְּלֹא יִתְנַסּוּן בְּדָא יְתִיר.

411. מַה כְּתִיב וַיֵּשָׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה אֵיל וגו'. אֵלִין שְׂאָר חֵיבֵי עֲלֻמָּא. דְּאַתְקְרוּן אֵילִים, כְּדָבָר אַחֲרֵי אֵילֵי נְבִיּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִתְרַגְּמִין רַבְרָבֵי נְבִיּוֹת. אַחֲרֵי נֶאֱחָז בְּסַבֵּךְ וגו'. כְּדָבָר אַחֲרֵי וְכָל קְרָנֵי רְשָׁעִים אֲגִידַע וַיִּלָּךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אֶת הָאֵיל וגו'. דְּאִינוּן מְזוּמְנִין, לְאַתְנַסָּא בְּכָל נְסִיוָנָא בִּישָׂא, וַיִּשְׁתַּאֲרוּן הַצְדִּיקִים, לְעֲלֻמָּא דְאַתִּי, כְּמִלְאֲכִין עֲלָאִין קְדִישִׁין, לִיְחִידָא שְׁמִיָּה, וּבְגִין כֶּן כְּתִיב, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה ה' אֶחָד וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד וגו'.

412. אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי יְהוּדָה מִכָּאן וְלַהֲלָאָה, אֶצְלָחוּ פִּתְחָא. עָאֵל יוֹמָא אַחְרָא, עָאֵלוּ קָמִיָּה כָּל בְּנֵי מִתָּא, אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ, לִימָא לָן מַר, מַלְיָא דְאֹרִינְתָא, בְּפִרְשָׁתָא דְקָרִינָן בַּהּ יוֹמָא דְשַׁבְּתָא, וְה' פִּקֵּד אֶת שָׂרָה. קָם בִּינֵי עֲמוּדֵי, פִּתַּח וְאָמַר וְה' פִּקֵּד אֶת שָׂרָה וְגו'. ג' מִפְּתָחוֹת בִּידוֹ שֶׁל הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְלֹא מִסֶּרֶם לֹא בִיד מִלֶּאךְ, וְלֹא בִיד שָׂרָה, מִפְּתַח שֶׁל חַיָּה, וְשֶׁל גִּשְׁמִים, וְשֶׁל תַּחֲנוּת הַמֵּתִים. בָּא אֵלֶיהּ, וְנָטַל הַשָּׁנִים, שֶׁל גִּשְׁמִים וְשֶׁל תַּחֲנוּת הַמֵּתִים. וְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, לֹא נִמְסַר בִּיד אֵלֶיהּ, אֶלָּא אַחַת. דָּאָמַר ר' יוֹחָנָן, בְּשִׁבְקָשׁ אֵלֶיהּ, לְהַחְיוֹת בֶּן הַצֶּרֶפֶת, אָמַר לוֹ קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לֹא יֵאוּת לָךְ, לְמִיּוֹסֵב בִּידְךָ, שְׁתִּי מִפְּתָחוֹת, אֶלָּא תָּן לִי מִפְּתַח הַגִּשְׁמִים, וְתַחֲיָה הַמֵּת. וְהֵינֵנו דְּכֹתִיב לָךְ הִרְאָה אֶל אַחָאָב וְגו'. וְאַתְנָה מָטַר. לֹא אָמַר, וְתָן מָטַר, אֶלָּא וְאַתְנָה.

413. And then Elisha had to establish a double portion of Eliyahu's spirit. Nevertheless, the Holy Once, blessed be He, did not hand three of them over to any messenger. As Rabbi Simon said: Come and behold the might of the Holy One, blessed be He. Simultaneously He resurrects the dead, He "brings down to the grave and brings up," (I Shmuel 2:6), He makes the luminaries shine, brings down rain, "causes the grass to grow," (Tehilim 104:14) fertilizes the crop, visits barren women, supplies food, helps the needy, supports those who have fallen, makes those who are bent down stand erect, removes kings, and raises kings. He does all this at the same time and at the same moment, a task no messenger can ever accomplish.

413. וְהָא אֵלִישַׁע הוּא לֵיהּ. אֵין. לְקִיּוּם פִּי שָׁנִים בְּרוּחוֹ שֶׁל אֵלֶיהּ, אֶלָּא, שְׁלֹשָׁתָם לֹא מִסֶּרֶם הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בִּיד שְׁלִיחַ, דָּאָמַר רַבִּי סִימוֹן, בָּא וּרְאֵה כַּחוֹ שֶׁל הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּפַעַם אַחַת מַחְיָה מֵתִים, וּמוֹרִיד שְׁאוּל וְיַעַל, מְזַרְיַח מְאוּרוֹת, וּמוֹרִיד גִּשְׁמִים, מַצְמִיחַ חֲצִיר, מְדַשֵּׁן יְבוּלִים, פּוֹקֵד עֲקָרוֹת, נוֹתֵן פְּרִנְסוֹת, עוֹזֵר דָּלִים, סוֹמֵךְ גּוֹפְלִים, זוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים, מְהַעֲדָא מַלְכִּין, וּמְהַקֵּם מַלְכִּין, וְהַבֵּל בְּזָמַן אֶחָד, וּבְרִגְעָא אֶחָד, וּבְבֵת אַחַת, מַה שְּׂאִין שְׁלִיחַ, לְעוֹלָם יָכוֹל לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ.

414. We have learned, as Rabbi Yosi said: All that the Holy One, blessed be He, does, He can do by a word. As soon as He says from the place of His Holiness 'let this be done', it immediately occurs. Behold the power of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His might, as it is written: "By the word of Hashem were the heavens made" (Tehilim 33:6). Rabbi Yochanan then asked: Why is it written: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt, I and not an angel" (Shemot 12:12)?

414. תִּנְיָא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, כָּל מַה שְּׁעוֹשֶׂה הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת, אֶלָּא בְּדַבָּר, דְּכִיּוֹן דָּאָמַר, מִמָּקוֹם קְדוּשָׁתוֹ יְהֵא כֶּךָ, מִיד נַעֲשֶׂה. בָּא וּרְאֵה כַּח גְּבוּרָתוֹ שֶׁל הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּכֹתִיב בְּדַבָּר ה' שְׁמִים נַעֲשׂוּ. דָּאָמַר ר' יוֹחָנָן מַאי דְּכֹתִיב וְעִבְרָתִי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי וְלֹא מַלְאָךְ וְגו'.

415. If so, it is a great honor for Egypt, because it is not the same to be caught by a king and as to be caught by a simple man. Even more so, as there is no nation that is as defiled with all sorts of impurity as Egypt, of which it is written: "whose flesh is as the flesh of asses," (Yechezkel 23:20) because they are suspected of sodomy. And they issue from Cham, who did what he did to his father, who then cursed him and his son Cna'an. Did not the Holy One, blessed be He, have an angel or a messenger to send to take revenge on Egypt, as he had done to Ashur who was the son of Shem, as it is written: "The children of Shem, Elam and Ashur..." (Beresheet 10:22)? And Shem was a high priest who was blessed, as it is written: "Blessed be Hashem, the Elohim of Shem" (Beresheet 9:26). Thus, Shem received blessings and attained superiority over his brothers. Of them, it is written: "Then the angel of Hashem went forth and smote in the camp of Ashur" (Yeshayah 37:36). So this revenge was accomplished by a messenger. So much more so with Egypt, the most impure of all nations. Nevertheless, He said, "I and not an angel."

416. Rabbi Yehuda said that from this we learn the great might of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His exaltedness, which is high above all. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: This nation of Egypt is impure and full of filth, so it is not proper to send an angel or anything holy among filthy, impure, and cursedly wicked people. So I will perform what cannot be done by an angel or a messenger or a saraph. From the place of My holiness I announce, Let this be done. And immediately what cannot be done by an angel is done. So the Holy One, blessed be He, from His place of holiness, announces: Let thus happen so! And all that He wanted done occurs immediately. Therefore, this revenge was not accomplished by an angel or a messenger, for the dishonor of the Egyptians, and to display the greatness of the Creator, who did not want anything holy to enter among them. According to this, it is written: "I and not an angel"; I alone am able to perform this.

417. Rabbi Yehuda continued by asking: Why is it written: "And Hashem spoke to the fish..." (Yonah 2:11)? How many righteous and pious men of Yisrael did the Holy One, blessed be He, never speak to, while He came to speak to the fish, who does not know or recognize Him? Rabbi Yehuda continued: Because Yonah's prayers reached to the Holy One, blessed be He, He spoke, from the place of His holiness, so that the fish would vomit Yonah out and cast him ashore. So why did He speak to the fish? Hashem spoke to the fish, so that Yonah would be thrown back to the shore. So from the place of His Holiness, the Holy One, blessed be He, said: Let this happen. And immediately it was done, something that no messenger was able to do.

415. אִי הָכִי, יִקְרָא סְגִיָּאָה הוּא לְמִצְרָאִי, דְּלֹא דְמִי מֵאֵן דְּתַמֵּשׁ מִלְכָּא, לְמֵאֵן דְּתַמֵּשׁ הַדְּיוּטָא. וְעוֹד אֵין לֶךְ אֻמָּה מְזוּהָמָת בְּכָל טוּמְאָה, כְּמוֹ הַמִּצְרִים, דְּכִתְיִב בְּהוּ אֲשֶׁר בָּשָׂר חֲמוּרִים בְּשָׂרָם וּגו'. שְׁהִם חֲשׂוּדִים עַל מִשְׁכַּב זָכוּר, וְהִם בָּאִים מִחֵם, שְׁעֵשָׂה מֶה שְׁעֵשָׂה לְאָבִיו, וְקָלַל אוֹתוֹ, וְלִכְנֹעַן בְּנוֹ. וְכִי לֹא הָיָה לְהַקְדֵּשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מִלָּאךְ, אוֹ שְׁלִיחַ, לְשַׁגֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת נִקְמָה בַּמִּצְרִים, כְּמוֹ שְׁעֵשָׂה בְּאַשּׁוּר, שְׁהָיָה בְּנוֹ שֶׁל שֵׁם, דְּכִתְיִב וּבְנֵי שֵׁם עִילָם וְאַשּׁוּר. וְשֵׁם הָיָה כְּהֵן גָּדוֹל וְנִתְבָּרֵךְ, שְׁנֵאֲמַר בְּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵי שֵׁם. וְהָיָה לְשֵׁם הַגְּדוּלָּה וְהַבְּרָכָה עַל אַחִיו. וְכִתְיִב בָּם, וַיֵּצֵא מִלָּאךְ ה' וַיִּכֶּה בְּמַחֲנֶה אֲשּׁוּר. וְעַל יְדֵי שְׁלִיחַ נַעֲשָׂה, כ"ש הַמִּצְרִים, שְׁהִם מְזוּהָמִים, יוֹתֵר מִכָּל אֻמָּה, וְאָמַר אֲנִי וְלֹא מִלָּאךְ.

416. אֵלֶּא אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, מִכָּאֵן לְמַדְנֵנוּ כַּח גְּבוּרָתוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּמַעֲלָתוֹ, שְׁהוּא גְבוּהָ עַל הַכָּל. אָמַר הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אֻמָּה זֹאת שֶׁל מִצְרִים, מְזוּהָמָת וּמְטוּנָפֶת, וְאֵין רְאוּי לְשַׁגֵּר מִלָּאךְ, וְלֹא שָׂרָף, דְּבַר קְדוֹשׁ בֵּין רְשָׁעִים אַרְוִירִים מְטוּנָפִים, אֵלֶּא אֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, מֶה שְׁאֵין יָכוֹל לַעֲשׂוֹת מִלָּאךְ, וְלֹא שָׂרָף, וְלֹא שְׁלִיחַ. שְׁאֲנִי אוֹמֵר מִמְּקוֹם קְדוּשָׁתִי, יֵהָא כֶּךָ, וּמִיָּד נַעֲשֶׂה, מֶה שְׁאֵין הַמִּלָּאךְ יָכוֹל לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ. אֲבָל הַקְּדוֹשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מִמְּקוֹם קְדוּשָׁתוֹ, אוֹמֵר יֵהָא כֶּךָ, וּמִיָּד נַעֲשֶׂה, מֶה שְׁהוּא רוֹצֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת. וּלְפִיכֶךָ לֹא נַעֲשִׂית נִקְמָה זֹאת, ע"י מִלָּאךְ וְשְׁלִיחַ, בְּשִׁבּוּל קְלוֹן הַמִּצְרִים, וְלִהְרָאוֹת גְּדוּלָּתוֹ שֶׁל מְקוֹם, שֶׁלֹּא רָצָה שְׁיִכְנֹס בִּינֵיהֶם דְּבַר קְדוֹשׁ, וְעַל הַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה נֵאֱמַר, אֲנִי וְלֹא מִלָּאךְ, אֲנִי יָכוֹל לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ וְלֹא מִלָּאךְ.

417. כִּיּוֹצֵא בּוֹ אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, מֵאִי דְכִתְיִב וַיֹּאמֶר ה' לְדָג. וְכִמְה צְדִיקִים וְחֲסִידִים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁלֹּא דְבַר עֲמָהֶם הַקְּדוֹשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּבֹא לְדַבֵּר עִם הַדָּג, דְּבַר שְׁאֵינוֹ מְכִיר וְיוֹדֵעַ. אֵלֶּא אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, בֵּינוֹן שְׁעֵלְתָּה תַּפְלָתוֹ שֶׁל יוֹנָה, לְפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מִמְּקוֹם קְדוּשָׁתוֹ אָמַר, בְּשִׁבּוּל שְׁיָקִיא הַדָּג אֶת יוֹנָה אֶל הַיָּבֶשֶׁה, לִמ"ד לְדָג, כְּמוֹ בְּשִׁבּוּל, כְּלוּמַר, וַיֹּאמֶר ה' בְּשִׁבּוּל הַדָּג, שְׁיָקִיא אֶת יוֹנָה אֶל הַיָּבֶשֶׁה, מִמְּקוֹם קְדוּשָׁתוֹ אָמַר הַקְּדוֹשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יֵהָא כֶּךָ, וּמִיָּד נַעֲשֶׂה, מֶה שְׁאֵין שְׁלִיחַ, יָכוֹל לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ.

418. We learned as Rabbi Shimon said: The key of Life is in the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He. So while the mother still lies in labor, the Holy One, blessed be He, examines the newborn. If he is worthy of emerging and coming into this world, then He opens the gates of her womb and he comes out. If not, then He shuts the gates and they both die. If so, an evil person will never come into the world. Rather we have learned that women die because of three transgressions. Rabbi Yitzchak asked: Why should any woman have a miscarriage and lose the fruit of her womb? Rabbi Yitzchak responded: The Holy One, blessed be He, examines that fetus that is not fit to come into the world and kills it while it is still in the womb of its mother, as it is written: "there were giants (Heb. nefilim) on the earth in those days..." (Beresheet 6:4) Nefilim is spelled without the first Yud (Heb. nefalim or: 'miscarriages'). And why? Because later, "the sons of Elohim came onto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them," by prostitution. And so the number of bastards grew in the world.

419. "...they were the men of renown which were of old..." (Beresheet 6:4) because there is no greater tyrant, robber, or mighty man than a bastard. They were recognized as "...men of renown (lit. 'men of the name')" by all, and called by that known brand, 'bastard'. Because they all see by his actions that he is a tyrant, a robber, and mighty man, they call him by that name. And Rabbi Shimon said that the Holy One, blessed be He examines the newborn. There is no wicked person in the world who is not examined by the Holy One, blessed be He. And He checks whether that person will ever beget a righteous son or save somebody from Yisrael from a cruel death or do even one good deed. And if the answer is yes, the Holy One, blessed be He, allows him to come out into the world.

420. In the days of Rabbi Yosi, there were bandits who robbed people in the mountains, along with bandits from other nations of the world. When they found someone, they seized him for the purpose of killing him. They said to him: What is your name? If he was a Jew, they accompanied him, bringing him out and away from the mountains. But if he was not a Jew, they killed him. Rabbi Yosi said: Nevertheless, they are yet suitable to enter the world to come and attain its life.

418. תָּנִינָא אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, מִפְּתַח שֶׁל חַיָּה, בִּידוֹ שֶׁל הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הִיא, וּבַעוֹר שֶׁהִיא יוֹשֶׁבֶת עַל הַמִּשְׁבֵּר, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, מַעֲיִין בְּאוֹתוֹ הוֹלֵד, אִם רָאוּי הוּא לְצֵאת לְעוֹלָם, פּוֹתַח דְּלֶתוֹת בִּטְנָהּ וְיוֹצֵא, וְאִם לֹא סוֹגֵר דְּלֶתוֹתֶיהָ, וּמֵתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם. אִי הָכִי, לֹא יֵצֵא רָשָׁע לְעוֹלָם. אֲלֵא הָכִי תְּנִינָן, עַל שְׁלֹשׁ עֲבִירוֹת נָשִׁים מֵתוֹת וְכוּ'. וְאָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, לָמָּה אֲשֶׁה מַפְלַת פְּרִי בִטְנָהּ. אֲלֵא אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא רוֹאֶה אוֹתוֹ הַעוֹבֵר, שְׂאִינוּ רָאוּי לְצֵאת לְעוֹלָם, וּמִקְדִּים לְהַמִּיתוֹ בְּמַעֲיָ אָמוֹ, שְׂנֵאֲמַר הַנִּפְלִים הָיוּ בְּאֶרֶץ בִּימֵי הָהֶם. הַנִּפְלִים כְּתִיב, בְּלֹא יוֹ"ד רִאשׁוֹנָה. וְלָמָּה, בְּשִׁבּוֹל שְׂאֲחָרֵי כֵן, בָּאוּ בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם, וַיֵּלְדוּ לָהֶם בְּזוֹנוֹת, וַיִּרְבוּ מִמֶּזְרִים בְּעוֹלָם.

419. הֵמָּה הַגְּבוּרִים אֲשֶׁר מַעֲוָלָם. שְׂאִין גְּבוּר וּפְרִיץ וְעָרִיץ, כְּמוֹ הַמִּמְזֹר. אֲנָשֵׁי הַשֵּׁם, שֶׁהִכֵּל וּכְרוּ, לְקִרְוָתוֹ הַשֵּׁם הִידוּעַ מִמֶּזֶר, דְּכִיּוֹן שְׂרוּאִים מַעֲשִׂיו, שֶׁהוּא פְּרִיץ וְעָרִיץ וּגְבוּר, הִכֵּל וְקִרְאוּהוּ אוֹתוֹ שֵׁם. וְכֵן הָאָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מַעֲיִין בְּאוֹתוֹ הוֹלֵד. אִין לֶךְ רָשָׁע בְּעוֹלָם, מֵאוֹתָם הַרְשָׁעִים הַיוֹצֵאִים לְעוֹלָם, שְׂאִין הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מַעֲיִין בּוֹ, וְרוֹאֶה אִם אוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף, יִנִּיחַ בֵּין צַדִּיק וְכָשֶׁר, אוֹ שְׂיַעֲשֶׂה לְאָדָם מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּיתָה מְשׁוּנָה, אוֹ שְׂיַעֲשֶׂה טוֹבָה אַחַת, וּבְשִׁבּוֹל כֶּךָ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מוֹצִיא לְעוֹלָם.

420. בִּיּוֹמוֹי דְּרַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָיוּ אֵינוֹן פְּרִיזִי, דְּהָיוּ מִשְׁדָּדֵי בְּטוּרֵינָא, עִם פְּרִיזִי אֹמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם, וְכַד מִשְׁכַּחֵי בְּרִי נֶשׁ, וְתַפְשִׁי לִיהָ לְקַטְלִיהָ, הָיוּ אֲמַרִּין לִיהָ, מַה שְׁמֶךָ, אִי הוּא יוֹדָאִי, הָיוּ אֲזֵלִין עֲמִיָּה, וּמִפְקִין לִיהָ מִן טוּרֵינָא, וְאִי הוּא בְּרִי נֶשׁ אַחֲרִינָא, קַטְלֵי לִיהָ, וְהוּא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, אֶתְחַזּוֹן אֵינוֹן, בְּכָל הָאִי, לְמִיעַל לְעֵלְמָא דְּאֵתִי.

421. The sages taught that the following three things do not come into the world except through voices: the voice of a woman giving birth, as it is written: "in sorrow shall you bring forth children," (Beresheet 3:16) and "and Elohim hearkened to her" (Beresheet 30:22); the voice of the rains, as it is written: "The voice of Hashem is upon the waters" (Tehilim 29:3) and, "a sound of the rumbling of the rainstorm" (I Melachim 18:41); the voice of the resurrection of the dead, as it is written: "A voice cries...in the wilderness" (Yeshayah 40:3). What is the purpose of the voice in the wilderness? Rabbi Zrika says this voice came to raise the dead of the wilderness. From this we derive that it is true for the whole world. Rabbi Yochanan says we learned that when a man enters the grave he does so with voices. And when they rise at the resurrection of the dead, should they not also rise with great voices?

422. Rabbi Ya'akov said that a divine voice will burst in the graveyards, saying: "Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust," (Yeshayah 26:19) and they will live by the dew of a great supernal light from above, as it is written: "for your dew is as the dew of the herbs ('lights'), and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Yeshayah 26:19). Amen, may it be so.  
End of Midrash Hane'elam

423. "And Hashem visited Sarah, as He had said..." This is IN ACCORDANCE WITH what is written: "I will certainly return to you, at this season, and Sarah shall have a son." And we have learned in relation to "visited Sarah," that visitation is related to the female, while remembrance is related to the male. Therefore, IT IS WRITTEN ABOUT SARAH: "And Hashem visited Sarah." AND HASHEM (VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI) IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, NAMELY HIM AND HIS COURT OF JUDGMENT. The words, "as He had said" REFER TO WHAT is written: "As the time appointed I will return to you..." From this we learn THAT THE VERSE: "And he said: As the time appointed I will return to you..." IS WRITTEN AS "He said," in a general way. Thus, it was he, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHO "HAD SAID" and not any other messenger. OTHERWISE, HOW COULD IT BE WRITTEN HERE: "AND HASHEM (VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI) VISITED SARAH, AS HE HAD SAID." WHERE ELSE DID HE SAY THIS?

421. ת"ר, ג' דברים הללו, אינן באן לעולם אלא בקולות, קול חיה, דכתיב בעצב תלדי בנים. וכתיב וישמע אליה אלהים. קול גשמים, דכתיב, קול ה' על המים. וכתיב כי קול המון הגשם. קול תחיית המתים, דכתיב קול קורא במדבר. מאי בעי הקא קלא במדברא. אלא אמר רבי זריקא אלין אינון קלויא, לאתערא מתי מדבר, ומכאן דהוא הדין לכל העולם. אמר רבי יוחנן, הא תנן, בשנכנס אדם לקבר, נכנס בקולות. בשיוקמו בתחיית המתים, אינו דין שיוקמו בקולי קולות.

422. אמר רבינעקב, עתידה בת קול, להיות מתפוצצת, בבתי קברות, ואומרת, הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר, ועתידים לחיות, בטל של אור גדול של מעלה, דכתיב כי טל אורות טלך וארץ רפאים תפיל, אכ"ר.  
(ע"כ מדרש הנעלם).

423. ויי' פקד את שרה כאשר אמר, דכתיב, למועד אשוב אליך כעת חיה ולשרה בן. ותנינן פקד את שרה, פקידה לנוקבא, זכירה לדכורא ובגין כך, ויי' פקד את שרה כאשר אמר, דכתיב שוב אשוב אליך כעת חיה וגו', מהכא משמע דאמר, ויאמר שוב אשוב אליך, ויאמר סתם, דאיהו הוה, ולא שליחא אחרא.

### 30. "And Hashem did to Sarah"

Children help their parents earn and enhance a connection to the Light of the Creator when they pursue a spiritual path in life.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

A spiritual umbilical cord between parent and child remains in place for all eternity. Hence, the actions of a parent influence the child, and the actions of the child bear spiritual consequences for the parents. We arouse and bestow tremendous Light upon our children that will help motivate and guide them towards a spiritual lifestyle and existence.

424. "And Hashem did to Sarah..." (Beresheet 21:9). HE ASKS: It is said, "And Hashem visited Sarah." Why, then, DO WE ALSO NEEDS "And Hashem did to Sarah"? AND HE REPLIED: We have learned that the 'fruits' of the works of the Holy One, blessed be He, come from the river that flows and issues from Eden, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, and are the souls of the righteous. IN OTHER WORDS, HIS WORKS ARE THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS. And this is Mazal (lit. 'Flow') from where all the good blessings and blessed rains flow. And from there they issue, as it is written: "to water the garden," (Beresheet 2:10) as it flows and irrigates from above downward, because (bearing) children depends on Mazal and no other place.

425. So in reference to this, it is written: "And Hashem visited Sarah," IN WHICH "visit," only WHICH IS THE SECRET OF NUKVA, IS MENTIONED. In the phrase, "And Hashem did to Sarah," THIS 'doing,' WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHILDREN AND THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, WHICH ARE THE FRUITS OF HIS HANDIWORK, is higher than the grade OF THE "VISIT," which depends on Mazal, as previously explained.

This is why IT IS DESCRIBED here AS a "visit," WHICH IS RELATED TO THE NUKVA, and there as a 'doing,' WHICH IS RELATED TO ZEIR ANPIN. And therefore it is said, "And Hashem," and again, "And Hashem," both being the same. OF THE "VISIT," IT IS WRITTEN: "AND HASHEM (VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI) VISITED," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF HIM AND HIS COURT OF JUDGMENT, WHICH IS THE NUKVA--WHILE IN THE 'DOING,' IT IS WRITTEN: "HASHEM (YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI) DID," WHICH RELATES TO ZEIR ANPIN.

426. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "For children are the heritage of Hashem, and fruit of the womb is a reward" (Tehilim 127:3). "For children are the heritage of Hashem" MEANS "a heritage" by which one can cleave to Hashem and never turn away from Him, because a person who merits the virtue of having children in this world shall, as a result of those children, deserve to join the company OF THE HOLY ONCE, BLESSED BE HE, in the world to come. Thus, that child, whom that person merited and left behind in this world, shall in return bring him merit in the world to come. Thereby, he shall merit to enter the "heritage of Hashem."

427. HE ASKS: What is the "heritage of Hashem?" AND HE ANSWERS: This is the 'Land of the Living', NAMELY THE NUKVA. And King David called the land of Yisrael, which is the 'Land of the living,' also, the "heritage of Hashem," as it is written: "for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the heritage of Hashem, saying, Go, serve other Elohim" (I Shmuel 26:19). And this is why THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "For children are the heritage of Hashem." Who enables a person to inherit THE HERITAGE OF HASHEM? Children ENABLE HIM. So if he has the merit of BEGETTING CHILDREN in this world, "the fruit of the womb is a reward," because they are the reward and good portion in that ETERNAL world. So because of this "fruit of the womb," a person deserves to enter the Eternal World.

428. Come and behold: "For children are the heritage of Hashem." THIS REFERS TO the inheritance and heritage of the fruit of the handiwork of the Holy One, blessed be He--NAMELY, the 'Tree of Life', AS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, IS CALLED THE 'TREE OF LIFE', because a person merits his children from there. As it is written: "From me is your fruit found" (Hoshea 14:9). What is written? "Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them, they shall not be ashamed..." (Tehilim 127:5). Happy is he in this world, and happy is he in the world to come.

424. וַיַּעַשׂ יי' לְשָׂרָה וְגו'. בֵּינוֹן דְּאָמַר וַיַּי' פֶּקַד אֶת שָׂרָה, מֵהוּ וַיַּעַשׂ יי' לְשָׂרָה. אֶלֶּא הִכִּי תְנִינִן דְּאִיבָא דְּעוֹבְדוֹי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מֵהֵהוּא נְהַר דְּנִגְיִד וְנִפִּיק מֵעֶרְן אִיהוּ, וְאִיהוּ נִשְׁמַתְהוֹן דְּצִדִּיקָיָא, וְאִיהוּ מִזְלָא, דְּכָל בְּרַכָּאן טְבָאן, וְגִשְׁמֵי בְּרַכָּאן, נִזְלִי מִנִּיהּ, וּמִתְמֵן נִפְקִי, דְּכִתִּיב לְהִשְׁקוֹת אֶת הַגֶּן, דְּאִיהוּ מִזִּיל, וּמִשְׁקָה מַעֲיֹלָא לְתַתָּא, בְּגִין דְּבָנֵי בְּהַאי מִזְלָא תְלִינן, וְלֹא בְּאַתֵּר אַחֲרָא.

425. וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב, וַיַּי' פֶּקַד אֶת שָׂרָה, פְּקִידָה בְּלַחֲדוֹי. וַיַּעַשׂ יי' לְשָׂרָה. עֲשִׂיָּה אִיהוּ, לַעֲיֹלָא מֵהַאי דְּרָגָא, כְּמָה דְּאִתְמַר דְּהָא בְּמִזְלָא תְלִינָא, וְעַל דָּא, כָּאן פְּקִידָה, וְכָאן עֲשִׂיָּה. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ אָמַר יי' וַיַּי', וְכָלֵּא חַד.

426. רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר, פִּתַּח וְאָמַר, הִנֵּה נִחְלַת יי' בָּנִים שְׂכָר פְּרִי הַבֶּטֶן. הִנֵּה נִחְלַת יי', אַחְסַנְתָּא לְאַתְאֲחָרָא בִּי, דְּלֹא יִתְעַבֵּר מִינֵה לַעֲלָמִין, דְּבַר נֶשׁ דְּזָכִי לְבָנִין בְּהַאי עֲלָמָא, זָכִי בְּהוּ לְמִיעַל לְפִרְגוּדָא, בְּעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי. בְּגִין, דְּהֵהוּא בְּרָא דְּשִׁבִּיק בַּר נֶשׁ, וְזָכִי בִּיהּ בְּעֲלָמָא דָּא, אִיהוּ יִזְכִּי לִיהּ לַעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי וְזָכִי לַאֲעֵלָא בִּיהּ, לְנִחְלַת יי'.

427. מָאן נִחְלַת יי', דָּא אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים. וְהִכִּי קָרָא לָהּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּאִיהוּ אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים. דוּר מַלְכָּא, קָרָא לִיהּ נִחְלַת יי' דְּכִתִּיב בִּי גִרְשׁוֹנֵי הַיּוֹם מֵהִסְתַּפַּח בְּנִחְלַת יי' לֵאמֹר לֶךְ עֲבַד אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרַיִם, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, הִנֵּה נִחְלַת יי' בָּנִים. מָאן אֲזָכִי לִיהּ, לְבַר נֶשׁ. בְּנִין. אִי זָכִי בְּהוּ בְּהַאי עֲלָמָא, שְׂכָר פְּרִי הַבֶּטֶן, אֲגֵרָא וְחוּלְקָא טְבָא, בְּהֵהוּא עֲלָמָא, בְּהֵהוּא אִיבָא דִּמְעוּי, אִיהוּ דְּזָכִי בַּר נֶשׁ, בְּהֵהוּא עֲלָמָא, בְּהוּ.

428. תָּא חַזִּי הִנֵּה נִחְלַת יי' בָּנִים. יְרוּתָא וְאַחְסַנְתָּא, דְּאִיבִין דְּעוֹבְדוֹי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מַלְעִיָּלָא, אִיהוּ מְאִילָנָא דְּחַיִּי, דְּהָא מִתְמֵן זָכִי בַּר נֶשׁ לְבָנִין, כַּד "א מִמֶּנִּי פְּרִיךְ נִמְצָא. מֵה כְּתִיב, אֲשֶׁרִי הִגְבֵּר אֲשֶׁר מִלֹּא אֶת אֲשַׁפְתּוֹ מֵהֶם לֹא יִבוֹשׁוּ וְגו'. אֲשֶׁרִי בְּעֲלָמָא דִּין, וְאֲשֶׁרִי בְּעֲלָמָא דְּאִתִּי.

429. Of the verse: "they shall not be ashamed when they shall speak with the enemies at the gate," (Ibid.) HE ASKS: Who are the 'enemies at the gate'? AND HE ANSWERS: These are the accusers, because when the soul departs from this world many accusers are standing ready before it, as it enters into its place. "The gate" is the gate through which it enters TO REACH ITS PLACE, AND THERE THEY WAIT. BUT IT IS SAVED FROM THEM, because he has left offspring in this world, REFERRING TO HIS CHILDREN. And because of them, he shall merit the world OF ETERNITY. This is why: "they shall not be ashamed when they shall speak with the enemies at the gate."

430. While walking together, Rabbi Yehuda said to Rabbi Yosi: Open your mouth and delve into the teachings of Torah, for the Shechinah dwells upon you. Whenever a person delves into the study of Torah, the Shechinah joins him, and even more so when walking along the road. Then the Shechinah comes and welcomes him and goes in front of those who have merited the Faith in the Holy One, blessed be He.

### 31. "Your wife shall be as a fruitful vine"

The importance of modesty and spiritual behavior for the wife of a man is examined through the teachings of the holy Zohar. A woman corresponds to the Sfirah of Malchut, which is the receptacle and vessel for the Light of the Creator in this physical realm. A woman plays the same role in the physical world of family, manifesting spiritual energy for the entire household. The more pure her vessel is, the more Light she generates for her loved ones.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The letters that form these mystical texts arouse a greater sense of appreciation for the dynamic role that a woman's virtue plays in the family. This appreciation helps to purify a woman's vessel, making her a more effective channel of energy for her family.

431. Rabbi Yosi began the discussion with the verse: "Your wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of your house, your children like olive plants round about your table" (Tehilim 128:3). "Your wife shall be as a fruitful vine" MEANS THAT as long as the woman remains by the sides of the house and does not go outside, she is modest and worthy of bearing worthy children. "As a fruitful vine" means that just as a vine is always planted with its own kind, so shall an honorable wife never grow any sprouts, NAMELY CHILDREN, from another man. And just as a vine is never grafted with another kind of tree, so an honorable wife NEVER MATES WITH ANOTHER MAN.

432. What is her reward? It is "your children like olive plants." Just as the leaves of the olive plants never fall, but are attached to the tree all the time, so "the children like olive plants round about your table" SHALL ALWAYS BE ATTACHED TO YOU.

429. לא יבושׁוּ כִּי יִדְבְּרוּ אֶת אוֹיְבֵיכֶם בְּשַׁעַר. מֵאן אוֹיְבִים בְּשַׁעַר. אֵלֵין מֵאֲרִיהוֹן דְּרִינִין, דְּכַד נִשְׁמַתָּא נִפְקַת מֵהַאי עֲלָמָא, כְּמָה אֵינּוֹן מֵרִיהוֹן דְּרִינִין, דְּזִמְיִנִין קָמִיָּה, עַד לֹא יִיעוּל לְדוּכְתִּיָּה, בְּשַׁעַר. בְּהָהוּא תַרְעָא, דְּיִיעוּל תַּמָּן, בְּגִין דְּמִשְׁכּוּנִין, שְׂבִיק בְּהַאי עֲלָמָא, וּבְגִינִיהוֹן יִזְכִּי בְּהָהוּא עֲלָמָא, וְעַל דָּא, לֹא יִבושׁוּ כִּי יִדְבְּרוּ אֶת אוֹיְבֵיכֶם בְּשַׁעַר.

430. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה וּרְבִי יוֹסִי, הוּוּ אָזְלִי בְּאַרְחָא, אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי יְהוּדָה לְרַבִּי יוֹסִי, פֶּתַח פּוֹמָךְ, וּלְעֵי בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, דְּהָא שְׂכִינְתָּא אֲשֶׁתְּכַחַת גַּבְךָ, דְּכָל זְמַן דְּבִמְלֵי דְּאוֹרֵייתָא לְעָאן, שְׂכִינְתָּא אֲתִיא וּמִתְחַבְּרָא וְכָל שָׁכֵן בְּאוֹרְחָא, דְּשְׂכִינְתָּא קִדְמָא וְאֲתִיא וְאִזְלָא קָמִיָּהוּ דְּבָנֵי נִשָּׂא, דְּזָכָאן בְּמַהִימְנוּתָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

431. פֶּתַח רַבִּי יוֹסִי וְאָמַר, אֲשֶׁתְּךָ כְּגֶפֶן פְּרִיָּה בִּירְכָתִי בֵּיתְךָ בְּנִיךָ כְּשִׁתְּיָלִי זֵיתִים סָבִיב לְשִׁלְחָנְךָ. אֲשֶׁתְּךָ כְּגֶפֶן פְּרִיָּה, כָּל זְמַנָּא, דְּאֲתָתָא בִּירְכָתִי בֵּיתָא, וְלֹא נִפְקָא לְבַר, הִיא צְנוּעָה, וְאֲתַחְזִי לְאוֹלָדָא בְּנִין דְּכִשְׁרֹן. כְּגֶפֶן, מַה גֶּפֶן, לֹא אֲתַנְטַעָא אֶלָּא בְּזִינָה, וְלֹא בְּזִינָא אַחֲרָא. כִּךְ אֲתָתָא דְּכִשְׁרָא, לֹא תַעֲבֵד נְטִיעָן בְּבַר נֶשׁ אַחֲרָא. מַה גֶּפֶן, לֹא אֵית בֵּיהּ רְכִיבָה מְאִילָנָא אַחֲרָא, אוֹף הָכִי אֲתָתָא דְּכִשְׁרָא הָכִי נָמִי.

432. חָמִי מַה אֲגֵרָה, בְּנִיךָ כְּשִׁתְּיָלִי זֵיתִים. מַה זֵיתִים לֹא נִפְלִי טְרַפְיָהוּ, כָּל יוֹמֵי שְׁתָּא, וְכִלְהוּ קְשׁוּרִין תְּדִיר. אוֹף הָכִי בְּנִיךָ כְּשִׁתְּיָלִי זֵיתִים סָבִיב לְשִׁלְחָנְךָ.

433. What is written next? "Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed, that fears Hashem" (Tehilim 128:4). AND HE ASKS: What is MEANT BY "Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed." SHOULD IT NOT BE WRITTEN: 'BEHOLD--THUS'? AND HE REPLIES: This is another issue that is learned from her. As long as the Shechinah was kept modestly in Her place, as is properly suited for Her, then it is as though "your children like olive plants." These are the children of Yisrael living in the land OF YISRAEL "round about your table," as they eat, drink, offer sacrifices, and rejoice before the Holy One, blessed be He. And the upper and lower beings are blessed because of them.

434. After the Shechinah departed FROM HER PLACE, the children of Yisrael were exiled from the table of their Father and dispersed among the nations. And they cry out all day long, but there is no one who takes heed except the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies..." (Vayikra 26:44) And we do see how many holy and saintly men did perish under harsh decrees, all this being a punishment of the Torah, which Yisrael did not observe when they lived in the Holy Land.

435. As it is written: "Because you do not serve Hashem your Elohim with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things" (Devarim 28:47). There is a secret in this verse. The verse "Because you serve not Hashem your Elohim with joyfulness" refers to when the priests offered sacrifices and burned offerings, which is done "...with joyfulness." "And with gladness of heart..." refers to the Levites. And "for the abundance of all things" refers to the Yisraelites, who are positioned in the middle, between THE PRIESTS AND THE LEVITES, and receive blessings from both sides--FROM THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT.

436. As it is written: "You have multiplied the nation, and increased its joy" (Yeshayah 9:2). This refers to the priests. "Yisrael rejoiced before You as the joy in harvest" refers to the Yisraelites, who are blessed by the Holy One, blessed be He, with the harvest OF the fields, as they offer a tenth of everything. "...and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil" refers to the Levites, who receive a tenth from the threshing floor.

437. A different meaning of "You have multiplied the nation" is that it refers to Yisrael, who properly keep Faith in the Holy One, blessed be He. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH INCLUDES THE RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS, AS WAS SAID BEFORE. The words "and increased its joy" mean the grade of the supernal Head, REFERRING TO CHESED THAT HAS BECOME CHOCHMAH, to which Avraham has cleaved, because it is called 'Great' and joyfulness can be found in it. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, WHICH IS CHESED.

433. מֵה כְּתִיב בְּתִרְיָהּ, הִנֵּה כִּי כֵן יִבְרַךְ גִּבּוֹר יִרְאֵי'. מֵאִי הִנֵּה כִּי כֵן יִבְרַךְ גִּבּוֹר. הִנֵּה כֵן מִבְּעֵי לִיָּהּ. אֲלֵא לֹאסְגָאָה מִלֵּה אַחֲרָא, דְּאוֹלִיפְנָא דָא מִנָּה, דְּכָל זְמָנָא דְשְׂכִינְתָא הוּא צְנִיעָא בְּאַתְרָהּ, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי לָהּ, כְּבִיכּוֹל, בְּנִיךְ כְּשִׁתְּלִי זִיתִים, אֵלִין יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדִ שְׂרָאן בְּאַרְעָא. סְבִיב לְשַׁלְחָנָךְ. דְּאֲכִלִי וְשִׁתָּאן, וְקָרְבִין קְרַבְנִין וְחֲדָאן קָמִי קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּמִתְבָּרַךְ עֲלֵאִין וְתַתָּאִין בְּגִינֵיהוּ.

434. לְבִתֵּר דְשְׂכִינְתָא נִפְקֵת, אֲתַגְלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, מֵעַל פְּתוּרָא דְאַבּוּהוֹן, וְהוּוּ בִינֵי עַמְמֵיָא, וְצוּחִין כָּל יוֹמָא, וְלִית דְּאֲשַׁגַּח בְּהוּ, בְּרִי קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּכְתִיב וְאַף גַּם זֹאת בְּהִיּוֹתָם בְּאַרְץ אוֹיְבֵיהֶם וּגו'. וְחֲמִינִן, כְּמָה קְדִישִׁין עֲלֵאִין, מִיתוּ בְּגִזְרִין תְּקִיפִין, וְכָל דָּא, בְּגִין עוֹנָשָׁא דְאוֹרִייתָא, דְּלֹא קִיִּימוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּדִ הוּוּ שְׂרָאן בְּאַרְעָא קְדִישָׁא.

435. חֲמִי מֵה כְּתִיב, תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא עֲבַדְתָּ אֶת יי' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְטוֹב לֵב לְכָב מְרֹב כָּל. הָאִי קְרָא, אִיהוּ רְזָא תַּחַת, אֲשֶׁר לֹא עֲבַדְתָּ בְּשִׂמְחָה בְּזִמָּן דְּכַהֲנֵי הוּוּ קְרַבִּין קְרַבְנִין וְעֵלּוּן, וְדָא הִיא בְּשִׂמְחָה. וּבְטוֹב לֵב, אֵלִין לִיּוֹאִי. מְרֹב כָּל, אֵלּוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּהוּוּ אֲמַצְעֵיִם בִּינֵיהוּ, וְנִטְלִי בְּרַכָּאן מִכָּל סְטְרִין.

436. דְּכְתִיב הִרְבִּיתָּ הַגּוֹי לֹו הַגְּדִלְתָּ הַשְּׂמֵחָה. אֵלִין כְּהֵנִי. שְׂמַחוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָת בְּקִצִּיר, אֵלּוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּקוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּרִיךְ לֹון, עֲבוּרָא דְחֻקְלָא, וְיִהְיִי מַעֲשָׂא מַכְלָא. כְּאֲשֶׁר יִגְלוּ בְּחֻלְקָם שְׁלָל. אֵלִין לִיּוֹאִי, דְּנִטְלָא מַעֲשָׂא, מִגּוֹ אֲדָרָא.

437. דְּבֵר אַחֲרֵי הִרְבִּיתָּ הַגּוֹי. אֵלִין יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא דְּקוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲלֵיהוּ, בְּדָקָא חֲזִי לֹו הַגְּדִלְתָּ הַשְּׂמֵחָה. דָּא אִיהוּ דְּרָגָא, רִישָׁא עֲלָאָה דְּאַבְרָהָם דְּאֲתַדְּבַק בָּהּ, דְּאִיהוּ גְּדוֹל, וְחֲדוּהָ בִּיה אֲשַׁתְּכַח.

438. "They rejoiced before You" refers to the time when they rose to cleave to You "as the joy in harvest," which is the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, which rejoiced in His harvest. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT COLUMN, BECAUSE THE REAPING OF THE CROP OF A FIELD COMES FROM THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT. AND THE "HARVEST" IS THE DESIRED RESULT OF WORKING THE FIELDS. SO WHEN IT IS SAID, "THE JOY IN HARVEST," THIS IS THE SECRET OF HER HUSBAND BEING CROWNED BY HER, WHILE SHE IN RETURN IS NOT CROWNED BY HER HUSBAND. "...as men rejoice when they divide the spoil" refers to rejoicing by the other hosts and Chariots, THOSE BENEATH THE NUKVA, while they divide among themselves the spoil and fall upon the prey before everyone else. THIS REFERS TO THE SUPERNAL HEAD, WHICH AVRAHAM CLEAVED TO AND WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, WHICH IS CHESED.

438. שִׂמְחוּ לִפְנֵיךְ בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּסִלְקִין לְאַתְּדַבְּקָא בְּךָ. בְּשִׂמְחַת בְּקָצִיר. דָּא כְּנִסְת יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּשִׂמְחַת בְּקָצִיר דִּילִיָּהּ הוּא. כְּאִשְׁר יִגְלוּ בְּחִלְקֵם שְׁלָל. כְּאִשְׁר יִגְלוּ, אֵלִין שְׁאֵר חִילִין, וּרְתִיבִין לְתַתָּא, בְּזִמְנָא דְּמִחְלָקֵי שְׁלָל, וְטְרַמֵּי טְרַמָּא, בְּרֵאשִׁיתָא דְּכָלָא.

### 32. The reckoning of the Messianic era

The Zohar reveals two potential ways in which the Messiah will appear in our world: one is the path of mercy, the other is the path of harsh judgment. When we facilitate this process through our own proactive initiative towards self-transformation, we can usher in the age of Messiah through the path of mercy. If, however, [Heaven forbid] man remains in his self-indulgent ways, it will be through a path of judgment that the Messiah will appear.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Kabbalistically, the Messiah is not a righteous individual who will emancipate the world, performing all the spiritual work on our behalf. Rather, the concept of Messiah refers to both a personal state of existence and a global happening. The toil of our own spiritual work will produce personal peace through a merciful path. Global turmoil will force change upon those who reject transformation. As people change, a critical mass will eventually be met and the global Messiah will appear to signify a new world. A proactive desire for self-transformation is awakened within us so that our spiritual development occurs within a framework of mercy and positivity.

439. Rabbi Yehuda opened with the verse: "It is time to work for Hashem, for they have made void Your Torah" (Tehilim 119:126). AND HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "It is time to work for Hashem"? AND HE REPLIES: This has already been explained. Nevertheless, "time" alludes to the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, which is called "time." As it is written: "that he come not at all times into the holy place" (Vayikra 16:2). And what is MEANT BY "that he come not at all times?" The meaning is similar to what is written: "That they may keep you from a strange woman" (Mishlei 7:5). And this also relates to the verse: "and offered strange fire before Hashem" (Vayikra 10:1). IN OTHER WORDS, THE NUKVA OF THE KLIPOT IS ALSO CALLED 'TIME', WHICH IS A STRANGE WOMAN, A STRANGE FIRE. THIS IS WHY IT IS WRITTEN: "THAT HE COME NOT AT ALL TIMES INTO THE HOLY PLACE," BUT ONLY AT THE TIMES OF HOLINESS. AND HE ASKS: Why is THE NUKVA CALLED 'Time'? AND HE REPLIES: Because there is a time and a period for everything. THIS REFERS TO THE 28 PERIODS OF TIME THAT APPEAR IN THE BOOK OF KOHELET IN ORDER to come closer to shine from and cleave TO ZEIR ANPIN properly, as it is written: "But as for me, my prayer is to You, Hashem, in an acceptable time" (Tehilim 69:14).

439. ר' יְהוּדָה פָּתַח וְאָמַר, עֵת לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיְי' הִפְרוּ תוֹרָתְךָ. עֵת לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיְי' מִהַג. אֵלָּא, הָא אֻקְמוּהָ. אֲבָל עַתָּה: דָּא כְּנִסְת יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּאִקְרִי עַתָּה. בְּמָה דְּאִתָּא אָמַר, וְאֵל יִבָּא בְּכָל עֵת אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ. מֵאִי וְאֵל יִבָּא בְּכָל עַתָּה. בְּמָה דְּאִתָּא אָמַר, לְשִׁמְרַךְ מֵאֲשֶׁה זָרָה. וְדָא הוּא וַיִּקְרִיבוּ לִפְנֵי יי' אֵשׁ זָרָה וּגו'. מֵאִי טַעְמָא עַתָּה. בְּגִין, דְּאִיתָּ לָּהּ עֵת וּזְמַן לְכָלָא, לְקַרְבָּא, לְאַתְנֶהְרָא, לְאַתְחַבְּרָא בְּדָקָא יְאֻתָּ. כְּדָא וְאֲנִי תַפְלִיתִי לָךְ יי' עֵת רְצוֹן.

440. "To work (or make) for Hashem" is similar to what is written: "and David made himself a name," (II Shmuel 8:13) WHICH MEANS THAT HE AMENDED THE NUKVA THAT IS CALLED "A NAME." AND IN THE SAME MANNER, whoever studies Torah, it is as though he "made" and prepared the "time," WHICH IS THE NUKVA, to attach Her to the Holy One, blessed be He. And why do all that? WHY SHOULD ANYONE HAVE TO WORK AND PREPARE THE NUKVA? Because "they have made void Your Torah." Had they not "made void Your Torah," then there would not have ever been a separation of the Holy One, blessed be He, from Yisrael, BECAUSE THE UNION OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, AND HIS SHECHINAH WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN INTERRUPTED.

440. לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיְי'. בְּמָה דְּכָתִיב, וַיַּעַשׂ דָּוִד שֵׁם. דְּכָל מֵאן דְּאִשְׁתַּדַּל בְּאוּרִייתָא, כְּאִילוּ עֵבִיד וְתַקֵּן, הָאִי עַתָּה, לְחַבְרָא לָהּ בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא. וְכָל כֵּן לְמָה, בְּגִין דְּהִפְרוּ תוֹרָתְךָ, דְּאִילוּ לֹא הִפְרוּ תוֹרָתְךָ, לֹא אִשְׁתַּבַּח פְּרוּדָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל לְעַלְמִין.

441. Rabbi Yosi said that the same applies to the verse: "I Hashem will hasten it in its time" (Yeshayah 60:22). What does "in its time (Heb. itah)" mean? IT MEANS at the time (et) when Hei, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, shall rise up from Her dust--then I "will hasten it." IN OTHER WORDS, BY MY POWER, NOT BY HER OWN STRENGTH, SHE SHALL RISE FROM THE DUST OF EXILE. Rabbi Yosi said that in spite of all this, the Congregation of Yisrael lies only for one day in the dust OF EXILE, and no more. THIS REFERS TO THE ONE DAY OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHICH LASTS A THOUSAND YEARS, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "FOR A THOUSAND YEARS IN YOUR EYES ARE BUT AS YESTERDAY..." (TEHILIM 90:4) AND THIS ALLUDES TO THE FIFTH MILLENNIUM, AS IS FURTHER EXPLAINED, BECAUSE THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM WAS NOT FULL, AS IT LACKED 172 YEARS BECAUSE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE OCCURRED IN THE YEAR 3828.

442. Rabbi Yehuda then said: So it has been said. Nevertheless, come and behold the secret that I learned. At the time when the Congregation of Yisrael was exiled from Her place, it was as if the letters of the Holy Name were separated from one another. Hei was separated from Vav IN THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. As a result of this separation, it is written: "I was dumb with stillness" (Tehilim 39:3). Because the Vav departed from the Hei, the voice disappeared. As a result, Speech was silenced.

443. And because of this, She lies in the dust OF EXILE during all that day of the Hei. And when is this? It is during the fifth millennium, even though She was exiled before it began--BECAUSE THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED DURING THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM, IT WAS NOT A FULL MILLENNIUM AND WE DO NOT COUNT IT.

444. And when the sixth millennium arrives, which is the secret of the Vav--NAMELY THE YESOD, SPELLED WITH THE VAV, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN--then the Vav shall elevate the Hei, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, at the time of "six multiplied by ten", as the Vav (= six) rises up to the Yud (= ten) OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH. AND THEN the Vav descends to the Hei, AND BRINGS TO IT ABUNDANCE.

445. And when the Vav, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, reaches completion by reaching sixty (by multiplying six times ten), THE NUKVA is raised from the dust. So every sixty years during the sixth millennium, the Hei is strengthened and rises up through its own grades to become firm. And in the year 600 of the sixth millennium, the gates of Wisdom of above and the fountains of Wisdom below shall be opened. And the world shall be prepared to enter the seventh MILLENNIUM, as a person who prepares himself on the sixth day (Friday), as the sun sets, to enter the Shabbat. And as a mnemonic for this, we take the verse: "in the six hundredth year of Noach's life...all the fountains of the great deep were broken open" (Beresheet 7:11)

441. אָמַר ר' יוֹסִי, בְּגוּוֹנָא דָּא כְּתִיב, אֲנִי יוֹי בְּעֵתָהּ אֲחִישָׁנָה. מָהוּ בְּעֵתָהּ. בְּעֵת ה' דִּתְקוּם מַעֲפָרָא, בְּדִין אֲחִישָׁנָה. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, וְעַם כָּל דָּא, יוֹמָא חַד, אִיהִי בְּנִסְתַּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, גּוּ עֲפָרָא וְלֹא יִתִּיר.

442. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, הֵכִי אָמְרוּ. אֲבָל תָּא חֲזִי, רְזָא דְאֻלִּיפְנָא, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּכִנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲתַגְלִינָא מֵאַתְרָהּ, בְּדִין אֲתוּן דְּשִׁמָּא קְדִישָׁא, כְּבִיכּוּל אֲתַפְרְשׁוּ. דְּאַתְפְּרָשָׁא ה"א, מִן וַא"ו, וּבְגִין דְּאַתְפְּרְשׁוּ, מָה כְּתִיב, נֶאֱלַמְתִּי דוּמְיָהּ, בְּגִין דְּאַסְתִּילֵק, וַא"ו מִן ה"א, וְקוּל לֹא אֲשַׁתְּבַח, בְּדִין דְּבוּר אֲתַאֲלֵם.

443. וּבְגִין כֵּן, הִיא שְׁכִיבַת בְּעֲפָרָא, כָּל הַהוּא יוֹמָא דְּה"א. וּמֵאֵן אִיהִי, אֶלֶף חֲמִשָּׁאָה, וְאַף עַל גְּבִדְאֻקְדִּימַת בְּגִלּוּתָא, עַד לֹא יִיעוּל הַהוּא אֶלֶף חֲמִשָּׁאָה, רְזָא דְּה"א.

444. וְכֵד יִיתִי אֶלֶף שְׁתִּיתָאָה דְּאִיהִי רְזָא דְּוַא"ו, בְּדִין וַא"ו יוֹקִים לָהּ ה"א. בְּזִמְנָא שִׁית זְמַנִּין עָשָׂר, וַא"ו סָלְקָא בֵּי, וַא"ו נִחְתָּא בְּה"א.

445. אֲשַׁתִּלִּים וַא"ו גּוּ עָשָׂר, שִׁית זְמַנִּין, בְּדִין הוּא שְׁתִּין, לְאַקְמָא מַעֲפָרָא, וּבְכָל שְׁתִּין וְשְׁתִּין, מֵהָהוּא אֶלֶף שְׁתִּיתָאָה, אֲתַתְּקָה ה"א, וְסָלְקָא בְּדִרְגוּי, לְאַתְתְּקָמָא. וּבְשִׁית מָאָה שְׁנִין לְשְׁתִּיתָאָה, יִתְפַּתְחוּן תְּרַעֵי דְּחֻכְמָתָא לְעִילָא, וּמִבּוּעֵי דְּחֻכְמָתָא לְתַתָּא, וְיִתְתְּקֵן עֲלֵמָא, לְאַעֲלָא בְּשִׁבְעָאָה. כְּבֵר נֶשׁ, דְּמִתְתְּקֵן בְּיוֹמָא שְׁתִּיתָאָה, מִכִּי עָרַב שְׁמִשָּׁא, לְאַעֲלָא בְּשַׁבְּתָא. אוּף הֵכִי נִמִּי. וְסִימְנִין בְּשִׁנַּת שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה לַחֲזִי נֹחַ וְגו'. נִבְקְעוּ כָּל מַעְיֵינוֹת תְּהוֹם רַבָּה.

446. Rabbi Yosi said to him: This is more time than the friends have said--the exile of the Congregation of Yisrael is only for one day and no more, as it is written: "he has made me desolate and faint all the day" (Eichah 1:13). THIS IS THE SECRET OF "ONE DAY" OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHICH IS 1000 YEARS, AS EXPLAINED ABOVE. He said to him: I have learned so from my father among the secrets of the letters of the holy name, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, and in the years of the world, and the days of Creation, all is one secret.

447. And then the rainbow will be seen in the clouds in shining colors, as a woman who adorns herself for her husband--BECAUSE THE RAINBOW IS THE MYSTERY OF THE NUKVA. As it is written: "and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant" (Beresheet 9:16). And this has already been carefully explained. HOWEVER, "and I will look upon it" MEANS in its shining colors, as should properly be.

448. And then IT SHALL BE SAID, "that I may remember the everlasting covenant." And what is the "everlasting covenant"? It is the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE COVENANT. And the Vav will join the Hei and raise it from the dust, as it is written: "and Elohim remembered his covenant" (Shemot 2:24). This is the Congregation of Yisrael, which is the covenant, as it is written: "and it shall be for a sign of a covenant" (Beresheet 9:13).

449. When the Vav, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, is aroused toward the Hei, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, then signs from above shall reach the world. The children of Reuven shall wage war throughout the world and the Holy One, blessed be He, shall remember the Congregation of Yisrael, and raise Her up and out from the dust of exile.

450. And the Holy One, blessed be He, shall be with Her in exile, DURING THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM, according to the count of Vav: Vav (six) times Yud (ten) EQUALS SIXTY, and ten (Yud) times sixty EQUALS 600, NAMELY, THE YEAR 600 OF THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM. And then He shall rise and visit the world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, to execute vengeance. And whoever is humble shall be elevated.

451. Rabbi Yosi said to him: You have spoken well, because YOU HAVE EXPLAINED the secret of the letters OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. And we should not delve into the other calculations and 'end of times,' WHICH ARE NOT RELATED TO THE SECRET OF THESE LETTERS, for we have found AN ESSAY SIMILAR IN CONTENT TO this calculation OF YOURS in the book of Rav Yeba Saba (the elder.) As it is written: "Then shall the land enjoy (or desire) HER SHABBATS" (Vayikra 26:34). And this is the secret of the Vav, WHICH MEANS THAT THIS DESIRE SHALL NOT BE REVEALED TO THE LAND, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, EXCEPT WHEN THE VAV HAS REACHED COMPLETION, AS RABBI YEHUDA HAS EXPLAINED. And it is written: "And I will remember My covenant with Ya'akov" (Vayikra 26:42). OBSERVE THAT YA'AKOV IS SPELLED WITH A VAV. This is Vav, fully spelled as Vav-Vav, BECAUSE WHEN THE LETTER VAV IS PRONOUNCED, WE HEAR ANOTHER VAV. THE FIRST VAV ALLUDES TO YA'AKOV, WHO IS TIFERET, AND THE SECOND VAV ALLUDES TO THE YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE VAV THAT APPEARS IN THE NAME YA'AKOV. And all is one, WHICH MEANS THAT IN THE NAME YA'AKOV SPELLED WITH VAV, TIFERET AND YESOD ARE UNITED AS ONE. And this is why the verse is written: "I will remember," and later, "I will remember the land," (Ibid.) which is the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA. "Enjoy" (or 'be appeased') MEANS THAT the land shall be appeased by the Holy

446. אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי יוֹסִי, כָּל דָּא, אָרִיכוּ זְמַנָּא יְתִיר, מִכְּמָה דְּאוּקְמוּהּ חֲבֵרִינָא, דְּאִיהוּ יוֹמָא חָד, גְּלוּתָא דְּכִנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְלֹא יְתִיר, דְּכִתִּיב נִתְּנִי שׁוּמְמָה כָּל הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. אָמַר לוֹ, הֵכִי אוֹלִיפְנָא מֵאַבָּא, בְּרִזִּין דְּאַתּוּן דְּשִׁמָּא קְדִישָׁא, וּבְיוֹמֵי דְּשָׁנִי עֲלָמָא, וּבְיוֹמֵי דְּבְרָאשִׁית, וְכֹלָא רְזָא חָדָא אִיהוּ.

447. וּכְדִין יִתְחַזִּי קִשְׁתָּא בַּעֲנָנָא, בְּגוּוֹנֵי נְהִירִין, כְּאַתְתָּא דְּמִתְקַשְׁטָא לְבַעֲלָהּ, דְּכִתִּיב וּרְאִיתִיהּ לְזָכָר בְּרִית עוֹלָם. וְהָא אוּקְמוּהּ וְשִׁפִּיר הוּא. וּרְאִיתִיהּ: בְּגוּוֹנִין נְהִירִין כְּדָקָא יְאוּת.

448. וּכְדִין לְזָכוֹר בְּרִית עוֹלָם. מֵאן בְּרִית עוֹלָם. דָּא כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִתְחַבֵּר וַאֲ"ו בַּה"א, וְיוֹקִים לָהּ מִעֲפָרָא, בְּד"א וְיִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת בְּרִיתוֹ. דָּא כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל. דְּאִיהוּ בְּרִית, כְּד"אוֹהֵיתָה לְאוּת בְּרִית וּגו'.

449. כְּדִ יתְעַר וַאֲ"ו, לְגַבִּי ה"א, כְּדִין אֶתִּין עֲלָאִין, יתְעַרֹן בַּעֲלָמָא. וּבְנוֹי דְּרֵאוּבֵן, זְמִינִין דִּיתְעַרֹן קְרִבִּין, בְּכָל עֲלָמָא, וְכִנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹקִים לָהּ מִעֲפָרָא, וְיִדְכֹּר לָהּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

450. וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְגַבִּיהּ, גּו גְּלוּתָא כְּחוּשְׁבָן וַאֲ"ו, שִׁית זְמִנִּין י'. עֶשֶׂר זְמִנִּין שִׁית שְׁנִין, וּכְדִין תִּיקוּם, וְיִתְפַּקֵּד עֲלָמָא, לְמַעַבְדּ נּוֹקְמִין, וּמֵאן דְּאִיהוּ מֵאִיךְ יִתְרַמִּי.

451. אָמַר לוֹ ר' יוֹסִי, שִׁפִּיר קְאָמַרְתָּ, בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ גּו רְזָא דְּאַתּוּן. וְלִית לָן לְאַתְעָרָא, חוּשְׁבָן וְקִצִּין אַחֲרֵינִין, דְּהָא בַּסְפָּרָא דְּרַב יִיבָא סָבָא אֲשַׁכְחֵן, חוּשְׁבָן דָּא, דְּכִתִּיב אִז תְּרַצָּה הָאָרֶץ. וְהוּא רְזָא דְּוַא"ו, דְּכִתִּיב, וְחִבְרַתִּי אֶת בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב. וְדָא הוּא וַאֲ"ו, כֹּלָא כְּחָדָא, וְעַל דָּא אֲזָכוֹר, וּלְבַתֵּר וְהָאָרֶץ אֲזָכוֹר, דָּא כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל. תְּרַצָּה: תְּתַרְעִי אֶרְעָא, לְגַבִּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

One, blessed be He, AS HE SHALL RAISE HER. ENJOY IS READ AS PASSIVE "BE APPEASED," FOR DESIRE DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE NUKVA HERSELF, BUT ON THE WILL OF ZEIR ANPIN.

452. As for that "one day," which our friends have mentioned IN RELATION TO THE TIME OF EXILE, it is certain that everything is hidden and concealed before the Holy One, blessed be He. And everything is revealed through the secret of the letters of the Holy Name. Thus the exile, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CONCEALMENT, has been revealed to us by Rabbi Yesa through these letters. And now, through these letters, THE SECRET OF REDEMPTION is revealed to us, WHICH MEANS THAT IT DEPENDS ON THE VAV OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI ACHIEVING COMPLETION.

453. He said to him: Come and behold. Even when Sarah was visited, she was not visited by this grade OF VISITATION, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, THE LOWER HEI OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, but by the secret of the Vav, as written: "And Hashem visited Sarah..."--BECAUSE "AND HASHEM (VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI)" REFERS TO HIM AND HIS COURT OF JUDGMENT. 'HIM' IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, NAMELY THE VAV, WHILE HIS COURT OF JUDGMENT IS THE NUKVA. THEREFORE, EVEN THE VISITATION OF SARAH WAS BY THE LETTER VAV OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, because everything is according to the secret of the Vav and everything is included within it. THAT IS, EVERYTHING IS CONCEALED WITHIN THE LETTER VAV and everything is revealed there as well. IN OTHER WORDS, EVERYTHING BECOMES REVEALED BY THE COMPLETION OF THE LETTER VAV. For everything that is concealed may reveal all that is concealed, but nothing that is revealed may come and reveal what is concealed.

454. Rabbi Yosi said: How long do we have to endure the exile until we reach that time? And the Holy One, blessed be He, made everything depend on whether they atone for their sins and repented, whether they merited REDEMPTION or not, WHETHER THEY REPENTED OR NOT. As it is written: "I Hashem will hasten it in its time" (Yeshayah 60:22). If they are worthy, THAT IS, IF THEY REPENT, "I...will hasten it," but if they are unworthy, THAT IS, THEY DO NOT REPENT, then, "in its time."

455. As they walked on, Rabbi Yosi said: I have just remembered that I once sat in this place with my father. He said to me: My son, when you are sixty years old, you will find in this place a treasure of sublime Wisdom. And I have just reached this age, yet I have still found nothing. And I do not know if these new explanations are that Wisdom that he told me I SHALL FIND.

456. And he further said to me: When strikes of fire shall reach the palms of your hands, then the wisdom shall disappear from you. I said to him: My father, how do you know this? He replied: I know this by these two birds that have passed over your head.

457. In the meantime, Rabbi Yosi left RABBI YEHUDA and entered a cave where he found a hidden book in a cleft of a rock at the far end. HE TOOK IT AND left with it.

452. אַבֵּל יוֹמָא חֹד, דְּאָמְרוּ חֲבֵרִינֵי, וְדָאֵי כֻּלָּא הוּא גִנִּיז, קִמֵּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְכֻלָּא אֲשַׁתְּכַח בְּרוּזָא דְאַתְוֹן, דְּשִׁמְא קְדִישָׁא, דְּהָא גְלוּתָא, בְּאִינוּן אַתְוֹן, גְּלִי לֹון רַבִּי יִיסָא הָכָא, וְהִשְׁתָּא בְּאִינוּן אַתְוֹן אַתְגְּלִיין, וְגִלִּי לֹון.

453. אָמַר לוֹ תָא חֲזִי, דְּאִפִּילוּ כִּד אַתְמַקְדָּא שְׂרָה, מִהָאֵי דְרִגָּא, לֹא פְקִיד לָהּ, אֲלֵא בְרוּזָא דְוָא"ו, דְּכִתִּיב וַיִּי פֶקֶד אֶת שָׂרָה וְגו'. בְּגִין דְּכֻלָּא בְרוּזָא דְוָא"ו אִיהוּ, וּבְהָא כְּלִיל כֻּלָּא, וּבִיה אַתְגְּלִיָּא כֻּלָּא, בְּגִין דְּכָל מְלָה דְּאִיהִי סְתִימָא, אִיהִי גְלִי כָּל סְתִימָה, וְלֹא אֲתִי מֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ בְּאַתְגְּלִיָּא, וְיִגְלִי מִה דְּאִיהוּ סְתִימָה.

454. אָמַר רַבִּינּוּסִי, כַּמָּה אֵית לָן לְאַתְמַשְׁכָּא גוּ גְלוּתָא, עַד הָהוּא זְמָנָא, וְכֻלָּא תְּלִי לִיה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כִּד יִתּוּבוּן בְּתִיּוּבְתָא, אִי יִזְכּוּ, וְאִי לֹא יִזְכּוּ כַּמָּה דְּאַתְמַר בְּהָאֵי קָרָא, דְּכִתִּיב אֲנִי יוֹי בְּעֵתָה אַחִישָׁנָה. זָכוּ אַחִישָׁנָה, לֹא זָכוּ בְּעֵתָה.

455. אָזְלוּ עַד דְּהוּוּ אָזְלִי, אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, אֲדַכְּרָנָא הִשְׁתָּא, דְּהָא בְּאַתֵּר דָּא יִתִּיבְנָא, יוֹמָא חֹד עִם אָבָא, וְאָמַר לִי בְּרִי, זְמִין אָנָּה, כִּד מְטוֹן יוֹמָךְ, לְשִׁיתִין שְׁנִין, לְאַשְׁכְּחָא בְּהָאֵי אַתֵּר סִימָא, דְּחֻכְמָתָא עֲלָאָה, וְהָא זְכִינָא לְאִינוּן יוֹמִין, וְלֹא אֲשַׁכְּחָנָא, וְלֹא יִדְעָנָא, אִי הֲנִי מְלִין דְּקָאמְרִן, אוּ הֲהִיא חֻכְמָתָא, דְּאִיהוּ אָמַר.

456. וְאָמַר לִי כִּד יִמְטוֹן קוּלְפִין דְּנוּרָא, גוּ טְהִירִי יִדְךָ, אַתְאָבִיד מִינָךְ. אָמִינָא לִיה אָבָא כַּמָּה יִדְעָתָא. אָמַר לוֹ, בְּהִנֵּי תִרִין צְפוּרִין, דְּאֲעֵבְרוּ עַל רִישְׁךָ יִדְעָנָא.

457. אֲדַהֲבִי, אַתְפָּרֵשׁ ר' יוֹסִי, וְעָאֵל גוּ מַעֲרֵתָא חֲדָא, וְאַשְׁכַּח סֵפֶרָא חֹד, דְּהוּה נְעִיץ גוּ נּוֹקְבָא דְטַנְרָא, בְּסִיפֵי מַעֲרֵתָא, נִפְקָ בִּיה.

458. As he opened the book, he saw 72 forms of letters that were handed down to Adam. By these letters, Adam knew the entire Wisdom of the Holy Supernal Beings and all the Klipot that abide "behind the millstones," which revolve around behind the veil THAT COVERS the supernal Lights, together with all the things that are destined to come upon the world until the day when a cloud will rise from the west and the world will be darkened.

459. He called to Rabbi Yehuda and they both started to study the book. After examining only two or three pages, they were already contemplating the supernal Wisdom. As soon as they read further and spoke with each other, a flame and a strong wind struck their hands, and the book vanished. Rabbi Yosi wept and said: It could be that we have sinned, or we are not worthy of knowing this.

460. When they told Rabbi Shimon the story, he said: Maybe you delved into those letters that deal with the Days of Mashiach? They answered: We do not know, because we have forgotten everything. Rabbi Shimon continued: The Holy One, blessed be He, does not wish that too much be revealed to the world. But when the Days of Mashiach are near, even infants in the world will discover the secrets of Wisdom and, through them, know how to calculate THE TIME OF THE REDEMPTION and figure the End of Days. At that time, it will be revealed to everyone. Therefore, it is written: "For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language..." (Tzefanyah 3:9). What is meant by "then"? It means at the time when the Congregation of Yisrael shall rise from the dust, and the Holy One, blessed be He, shall raise Her up. Then, "I will turn to the peoples a pure language that they may all call upon Hashem and serve Him with one consent" (Ibid.).

461. Come and behold. Even though it is written of Avraham: "And he journeyed still toward the south," (Beresheet 12:9) and all his journeys were southward, WHICH IS THE RIGHT COLUMN, OR CHESSED, to which he was attached, he did not rise to his proper place until Yitzchak was born. As soon as Yitzchak was born, he immediately rose to his place, THAT IS, TO THE NORTH, THE LEFT COLUMN. And Avraham joined him, and they became united. THROUGH THEIR JOINING AND INCLUSION IN EACH OTHER, THEY BOTH REACHED COMPLETION.

462. This is why AVRAHAM called him Yitzchak, and not any other NAME, so as to join fire with water, AS THE ATTRIBUTE OF AVRAHAM IS WATER AND THAT OF YITZCHAK IS FIRE, as it is written: "And Avraham called the name of his son that was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Yitzchak" (Beresheet 21:3). AND HE ASKS: Why DOES THE VERSE EMPHASIZE "that was born to him?" AND HE REPLIES: Fire from water.

458. בִּינוֹן דִּפְתַּח לִיה, חֲמָא שְׁבַעִין וְתַרְיֵן גְּלִיפִין דְּאַתּוּן, דְּאַתְמָסְרוּ לְאָדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן, וּבְהוּ הָהּ יָרַע, כָּל חֲכָמָתָא דְעֵלָאִין קְדִישִׁין, וְכָל אֵינוֹן דְּבִתְרָא רִיחָא, דְּמִתְגַּלְגֵּל בְּתַר פְּרוּכְתָא, גּוּ טְהִירִין עֵלָאִין, וְכָל אֵינוֹן מְלִין, דְּזַמְיִנִין לְמִיתִי לְעֵלְמָא, עַד יוֹמָא, דִּיקוּם עֲנָא, דְּבִסְטָר מַעֲרַב, וְיַחֲשִׁיךְ עֵלְמָא.

459. קָרָא לְרַבֵּי יְהוּדָה, וְשָׂרוּ לְמַלְעִי, בַּהֲהוּא סֵפֶרָא, לֹא סָמִיקוּ לְמַלְעִי, תְּרִי אוּ תִלְתָּא סְטָרִין, דְּאֵינוֹן אַתּוּן, עַד דִּהּוּ מִסְתַּבְּלִין, בַּהֲהִיא חֲכָמָה עֵלְאָה, בִּינוֹן דְּמָטוּ, לְמַלְעִי בְּסִתְּרֵיהּ דְּסֵפֶרָא, וּמִשְׁתַּעוּ דָּא עִם דָּא, נִפְקַ שְׁבִיבָא דְאַשָּׁא, וְעֵלְעוּלָא דְרוּחָא, וּבְטָשׁ בִּידֵיהֶון, וְאַתְאָבִיד מְנוּיָהּ. בְּכָה ר' יוֹסִי וְאָמַר דִּילְמָא ח"ו, חוּבָה אִיהוּ גִבָּן, אוּ דִלָּאוּ אֲנִן זְכָאִין, לְמַנְדַּע לִיה.

460. בְּדִ אַתּוֹן לְגַבֵּי דְר' שְׁמַעוֹן, אֲשַׁתְּעוּ לִיה עוּבְרָא דָּא, אָמַר לוֹן, דִּילְמָא בְּקֶץ מְשִׁיחָא דְאֵינוֹן אַתּוּן, הֵוִיתוֹן מִשְׁתַּדְּלִין, אָמְרוּ לִיה, דָּא לֹא יָרַעִינוֹן, דָּהּא כָּלָא אַתְנָשִׁי מִינוֹן. אָמַר לוֹן רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן. לִית רַעוּתָא דְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּדָא, דִּיתְגַּלִּי כָּל כֶּךָ לְעֵלְמָא, וְכִד יִהְיֶה קָרִיב לְיוֹמֵי מְשִׁיחָא, אָפִילוּ רַבִּי דְעֵלְמָא, זְמִינִין לְאַשְׁכַּח טְמִירִין דְּחֲכָמָתָא, וְלַמְנַדַּע בִּיה קָצִין, וְחוּשְׁבָּנִין, וּבַהֲהוּא זְמָנָא, אַתְגַּלִּיא לְכָלָא, הַה"ד, כִּי אִזְ אַהֲפֵךְ אֶל עַמִּים וְגו'. מַהוּ אִזְ. בְּזְמָנָא דְתִיקוּם בְּנִסְתַּי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִעַמָּרָא, וְיוֹקִים לֵה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כְּדִין אַהֲפֵךְ אֶל עַמִּים שְׁפָה בְּרוּרָה לְקָרָא כָּלָם בְּשֵׁם יי' וְלַעֲבֹדוּ שְׁכֵם אַחַד.

461. תָּא חַיִּי, אֵף עַל גְּבֻדָּא בְּרָהֶם כְּתִיב בִּיה, וְיִסַּע אַבְרָם הַלּוֹךְ וְנִסּוּעַ הַנִּגְבָּה. וְכָל מְטַלְנוּי, הוּוּ לְדְרוּמָא, וְאַתְקִשֵׁר בִּיה, לֹא סָלִיק לְרוּכְתִּיהּ בְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, עַד דְּאַתִּילִיד יִצְחָק, בִּינוֹן דְּאַתִּילִיד יִצְחָק, אֲסַתְּלַק לְאַתְרִיהּ, וְאִיהוּ אֲשַׁתְּתַּף בַּהֲדִיָּה, וְאַתְקִשְׁרוּ דָּא בְּדָא.

462. בְּגִין כֶּךָ, אִיהוּ קָרִי לִיה יִצְחָק, וְלֹא אַחֲרָא, בְּגִין לְשַׁתְּפָא מִיָּא בְּאַשָּׁא, דְּכְתִיב וְיִקְרָא אַבְרָהָם אֶת שֵׁם בְּנוֹ הַנּוֹלָד לוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִלְדָה לוֹ שָׂרָה יִצְחָק, מֵאֵן הַנּוֹלָד לוֹ, אִשׁ מִמֵּיִם.

### 33. "The son of the Hagar the Egyptian"

Sarah, the wife of the patriarch Avraham, banishes one of her husband's concubines from her home, a woman called Hagar. Hagar is the mother of Yishmael, who signifies the force of negativity. The banishment of Hagar pertains to the removal of man's desire to receive for the self alone.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The first step in transformation involves a recognition and admittance of our self-indulgent desires. This self-acknowledgment is 90% of the battle. The Light of the Creator is then free to enter and eradicate the dark recesses of our nature. Towards that end, this passage arouses self-awareness, thus banishing our own Evil Inclinations and negative attributes from our character.

463. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born to Avraham, mocking." (Beresheet 21:9) Rabbi Chiya said: From that day when Yitzchak was born, Yishmael was not mentioned by his name as long as he was still present in the house of Avraham. This is because in the presence of gold, refuse cannot be mentioned. Why is it written: "the son of Hagar the Egyptian" AND NOT "YISHMAEL THE SON OF HAGAR"? Because his name should not be mentioned in the presence of Yitzchak.

464. Rabbi Yitzchak said: "And Sarah saw." She looked at him disdainfully, as she did not look at him as the son of Avraham, but rather as the son of Hagar the Egyptian. Thus, it is written: "And Sarah saw," because only Sarah saw him this way, not Avraham. So with Avraham, it is not written: 'the son of Hagar,' but "his son."

465. Come and behold. After this, it is written: "And the thing was very grievous in Avraham's eyes because of his son" (Beresheet 21:11). It is not written: 'because of the son of Hagar the Egyptian.' And in contrast to this, it is written: "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian," as she did not see him as the 'son of Avraham.'

466. Rabbi Shimon said: This passage shows that Sarah is praiseworthy. Because she saw him participating in idolatrous practices, she said: This boy is definitely not the son of Avraham, who shall follow the example of Avraham. Rather, he is the son of Hagar the Egyptian, as he has returned to his mother's way of life. Because of this, "she said to Avraham, 'Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, with Yitzchak'" (Ibid. 10).

467. Now Sarah was not jealous or envious of her or her son. If she were, the Holy One, blessed be He, would not have supported with the words, "in all that Sarah says to you, hearken to her voice" (Beresheet 21:12). In fact, it was only because she saw him indulging in idolatrous practices and his mother teaching him the laws of idol worshipping that she said, "for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir." I know that he shall never inherit a portion of the Faith, and he shall have no share with my son, not in this world and not in the world to come. And this is why the Holy One, blessed be He, supported her.

463 וַתֵּרָא שָׂרָה אֶת בֶּן הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְאַבְרָהָם מִצְחָק. אָמַר רַבִּי חֵיָא, מִיּוֹמָא דְאַתִּילִיד יִצְחָק, וְהוּא יִשְׁמַעֵאל בְּבֵיתָא דְאַבְרָהָם, לֹא אֶסְתַּלַּק יִשְׁמַעֵאל בְּשֵׁמָא, בְּאַתֵּר דְּדִהְבָּא שְׂרִיא, סוֹסְמִיתָא לֹא אֲדִכְרַר קָמִיָּה, וּבִגִּין כֵּךְ אֶת בֶּן הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית, גְּבַר דְּלֹא יִתְחַזִּי לְאַדְכְּרָא, קָמִיָּה דִּיִּצְחָק.

464. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, וַתֵּרָא שָׂרָה, בְּעֵינָא דְקָלָנָא, חֲמַת לִיה שָׂרָה דְּלֹא חֲמַת לִיה בְּעֵינָא, דְּאִיהּ בְּרָא דְאַבְרָהָם, אֶלֶּא דְאִיהּ בְּרָא, דְּהָגָר הַמִּצְרִית, וּבִגִּין כֵּךְ וַתֵּרָא שָׂרָה: דְּשָׂרָה חֲמַת לִיה בְּעֵינָא דָא, וְלֹא אַבְרָהָם, דְּאִילוּ בְּאַבְרָהָם, לֹא כְתִיב אֶת בֶּן הָגָר, אֶלֶּא אֶת בְּנוֹ.

465. תָּא חֲזִי לְבִתֵּר מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֵּרַע הַדְּבָר מֵאֵד בְּעֵינֵי אַבְרָהָם עַל אוֹדוֹת בְּנוֹ. וְלֹא כְתִיב, עַל אוֹדוֹת בֶּן הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית. בִּגִּין כֵּךְ, וַתֵּרָא שָׂרָה אֶת בֶּן הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית. וְלֹא חֲמַת דְּאִיהּ בְּרִיה דְאַבְרָהָם.

466. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אָמַר, הָאִי קָרָא, תּוֹשְׁבַחְתָּא דְּשָׂרָה אִיהּ, בִּגִּין דְּחֲמַת לִיה, דְּקָא מִצְחָק לְכוּ"ם, אָמְרָה, וְהָאִי לֹא בְרָא דָא, בְּרָא דְאַבְרָהָם, לְמַעַבְד עוֹבְדוֹי דְאַבְרָהָם, אֶלֶּא בְרָא דְהָגָר הַמִּצְרִית אִיהּ, אֶהְדֵּר לְחוּלְקָא דְאַמִּיָּה, בִּגִּין כֵּךְ, וַתֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָהָם גֵּרֶשׁ הָאִמָּה הַזֹּאת וְאֶת בְּנָהּ כִּי לֹא יִירָשׁ בֶּן הָאִמָּה הַזֹּאת עִם בְּנֵי עָם יִצְחָק.

467. וְכִי ס"ד, דְּקָנִי לָהּ שָׂרָה, אוֹ לְבָרָה, אִי הָכִי, לֹא אוֹדִי קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עָמָה, דְּכְתִיב כָּל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלֶיךָ שָׂרָה שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלָהּ. אֶלֶּא, בִּגִּין דְּחֲמַת לִיה בְּכוּ"ם, וְאַמִּיָּה אוֹלְמָא לִיה נְמוּסֵי דְכוּ"ם, בִּגִּין כֵּךְ, אָמַרְתָּ שָׂרָה, כִּי לֹא יִירָשׁ בֶּן הָאִמָּה הַזֹּאת, אֲנָא יִדְעָנָא, דְּלֹא יִרִית לְעֵלְמִין, חוּלְקָא דְמַהִימְנוּתָא, וְלֹא יְהֵא לִיה, עִם בְּרֵי חוּלְקָא, לֹא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּין, וְלֹא בְּעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי, וּבִגִּין כֵּךְ אוֹדִי עָמָה קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

468. And the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted the Holy Seed separated, for that was why He created the world. Yisrael was already in the mind of the Holy One, blessed be He, even before He created the world. This is why Avraham appeared in the world, which continued to exist because of him. So Avraham and Yitzchak remained insecurely in their places, until Ya'akov appeared in the world.

469. As soon as Ya'akov came into the world, Avraham and Yitzchak were established, as was the whole world. From there, FROM YA'AKOV, the Holy Nation was born in a holy way. This is why the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "in all that Sarah says to you, hearken to her voice, for in Yitzchak shall your seed be called"--and not in Yishmael.

470. After this, it is written: "and she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beer Sheva" (Beresheet 21:14). It is written here, "and wandered (Heb. vateta) in the wilderness," and elsewhere it is written: "They are vanity, and the works of delusion (Heb. ta'atu'im)" (Yirmeyah 10:15). FROM THIS WE LEARN BY ANALOGY THAT BECAUSE IT REFERS TO IDOL WORSHIPPING IN THE LATTER VERSE, SO IT REFERS TO IDOL WORSHIPPING IN THE FORMER. And for the sake of Avraham, the Holy One, blessed be He, did not abandon her and her son, BUT SAVED THEM FROM THIRST, EVEN THOUGH SHE INDULGED IN IDOL WORSHIPPING.

471. Come and behold. In the beginning, when she ran away from Sarah, it is written: "because Hashem has heard your affliction" (Beresheet 16:11). Now, however, that she went astray and followed idolatrous practices, even though it is written: "and she lifted up her voice, and wept" (Beresheet 21:16), "Elohim heard the voice of the lad" (Ibid. 17), instead of: 'And Elohim heard your voice.'

472. The words, "where he is" (Ibid.) have already been explained. YISHMAEL was not yet punishable by the heavenly Court of Judgment. At the earthly Court of Judgment, a person can be punished after the age of thirteen, but at the heavenly Court of Judgment, a person must be at least twenty years of age to be punished. AS A RESULT, even though he was wicked, he was too young to be punished. This is why it is written: "where he is," WHICH MEANS THAT BECAUSE HE WAS YOUNGER THAN TWENTY YEARS OF AGE, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SPARED HIS LIFE.

473. Rabbi Elazar asked: If this is so, then why punish anyone before he reaches the age of twenty? Under the age of thirteen years, even though he is not yet punishable, he can be sentenced to death because of the sins of his father, BECAUSE HE IS UNDER HIS FATHER'S AUTHORITY. But after the age of thirteen, why does this happen? AS HE IS NO LONGER SUBJECT TO HIS FATHER'S AUTHORITY, COULD IT BE THAT HE IS PUNISHED AND SENTENCED TO DEATH WHILE HE IS STILL TOO YOUNG AND THEREFORE UNPUNISHABLE? He replied: The Holy One, blessed be He, has Mercy on him, so that he may die as a righteous person. And He gives him a good reward in the World OF ETERNITY, so that he may not die as a wicked person and be punished in that world. This has already been explained.

468. וְקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּעַא לְאַפְרָשָׁא בְּלַחְדוּי, זֶרְעָא קְדִישָׁא בְּדָקָא יְאוּת, דְּבִגִּין כֶּךָ, בְּרָא עֲלָמָא, דְּהָא יִשְׂרָאֵל, סְלִיק בְּרַעוּתָא דְּקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, עַד לֹא יִבְרִי עֲלָמָא, וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ, נִפְק אַבְרָהָם לְעֲלָמָא, וְעֲלָמָא מִתְקַיִים בְּגִינִיהּ, וְאַבְרָהָם וַיִּצְחָק קִיּוּמוֹ, וְלֹא אֲתִישְׁבוּ בְּדוּכְתִּינְהוּ, עַד דְּנִפְק יַעֲקֹב לְעֲלָמָא.

469. בִּיּוֹן דְּנִפְק יַעֲקֹב לְעֲלָמָא אֲתִקְיִימוּ, אַבְרָהָם וַיִּצְחָק, וְאַתְקִיִּים כָּל עֲלָמָא, וּמִתְמֵן נִפְק עֲמָא קְדִישָׁא לְעֲלָמָא, וְאַתְקִיִּים כָּלָא, כְּגִוּוֹנָא קְדִישָׁא, בְּדָקָא יְאוּת, וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ, אָמַר לוֹ קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כָּל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלֶיךָ שְׂרָה שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלָהּ כִּי בִיִּצְחָק יִקְרָא לָךְ זֶרַע, וְלֹא בִישְׁמַעֲלָא.

470. מַה כְּתִיב לְבַתָּר, וְתִלְךָ וְתִתַּע בְּמִדְבַּר בְּאֶר שְׁבַע. כְּתִיב הֲכֵא וְתִתַּע וְכְתִיב הֵתָם הִבֵּל הִמָּה מַעֲשֵׂה תַעֲתוּעִים. וְקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִינִיהּ דְּאַבְרָהָם, לֹא שְׂבִיק לָהּ, וּלְבָרָהּ.

471. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּקִדְמִיתָא כִּד אֲזִלַת מִקְמָה דְּשְׂרָה, מַה כְּתִיב, כִּי שְׁמַע יוֹי אֶל עֲנִיָּךְ. וְהִשְׁתָּא דְּטַעֲתַת בְּתַר כּו"ם, אָף עַל גַּב דְּכְתִיב, וְתִשָּׂא אֶת קוֹלָהּ וְתִבְךָ. מַה כְּתִיב, כִּי שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל קוֹל הַנֶּעֱר. וְלֹא כְתִיב כִּי שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת קוֹלָךְ.

472. בְּאֲשֶׁר הוּא שָׁם. הָא אוֹקְמוּהּ, דְּלֹא בְּרַעוּתָא הוּא, לְגִבִּי בִּי דִינָא דְּלַעֲיִלָא, דְּהָא בִּי דִינָא דְּלַתְתָּא, עֲנִשִׁין מִתְּלִיסַר שָׁנִין וְלַעֲיִלָא, וּבִי דִינָא דְּלַעֲיִלָא, מַעֲשָׂרִים שָׁנִין וְלַהֲלָאָה. וְאָף עַל גַּבְדְּחִיבָא הוּא, לֹא בְּרַעוּתָא אִידֵּהּ. וְהָא אוֹקְמוּהּ, וְדָא הוּא דְּכְתִיב, בְּאֲשֶׁר הוּא שָׁם.

473. אָמַר רַבִּינָא לְעֶזְרָא, אִי הָכִי, מֵאֵן דְּאַסְתִּילֵק מִעֲלָמָא, עַד לֹא מָטוֹן יוּמוֹי, לְעֶשְׂרִין שָׁנִין, מֵאֵן אֲתֵר אֲתַעֲנֵשׁ, בְּגִין דְּהָא מִתְּלִיסַר שָׁנִין וְלַתְתָּא, לֹא בְּרַעוּתָא אִידֵּהּ, אֶלָּא בְּחִטָּאוֹי דְּאָבוֹי, אֲבָל מִתְּלִיסַר שָׁנִין וְלַעֲיִלָא מַהוּ. אָמַר לוֹ, קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא חָס עֲלֵיהּ, דְּלִימוּת זָכָאִי, וְיַהֲיִיב לֵיהּ אֲגַר טַב, בְּהֵוָה עֲלָמָא, וְלֹא לִימוּת חֲיִיב, דִּיתַעֲנֵשׁ בְּהֵוָה עֲלָמָא, וְאוֹקְמוּהּ.

474. He said to him: If he is a wicked person who has not yet reached the age of twenty years, how is this resolved? If he departs from this world, where is he punished? YOU CAN NOT SAY THAT HE MAY DIE A RIGHTEOUS PERSON, BECAUSE HE IS A WICKED PERSON AND A NOT RIGHTEOUS ONE. He responded: In this case THE VERSE, "But sometimes ruin comes for want of judgment" (Mishlei 13:23) is fulfilled. HE IS PUNISHED WITHOUT JUDGMENT, because when a punishment descends into the world, he, REFERRING TO THE PERSON UNDER TWENTY YEARS OF AGE, meets the Angel of Destruction, WHO PUNISHES HIM without it being intended from above or below. THIS MEANS THAT WITHOUT ANY EXPRESS INTENTION FROM THE HEAVENLY COURT OF JUDGMENT above or EARTHLY COURT OF JUDGMENT below, he is punished, for the sole reason that he was not protected FROM THE ANGEL OF DESTRUCTION from above. ONCE HE MEETS THE ANGEL OF DESTRUCTION, HE NO LONGER DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN GOOD AND BAD.

475. Of him it is written: "His own iniquities shall trap the wicked man" (Mishlei 5:22). Here, the particle Et ('the') is written to include those who are not of punishable age. "His own iniquities shall trap the wicked man," and not the heavenly Court of Judgment; "and he shall be caught fast in the cords of his sins," and not by the earthly Court of Judgment. This is why it is written: "For Elohim has heard the voice of the lad where he is," AS HE WAS NOT YET OLD ENOUGH TO BE PUNISHED FOR HIS SINS. THEREFORE, ELOHIM HEARD HIS VOICE, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS EVIL.

#### 34. The signs heralding Mashiach

There are various windows of opportunity during a 6000-year period of transformation where we can bring about world peace through a proactive change of our nature. The Zohar expounds upon these opportunities and the signs that signal their arrival.

##### The Relevance of this Passage

Often times, hardships and obstacles appear to provide us with an opportunity to grow and evolve spiritually. If we are not cognizant of this truth, our tendency is to react in despair and with distress. Consciousness creates our reality; therefore, our negative thoughts and doubts become akin to self-fulfilling prophecies. The Light of this passage helps us recognize and connect to positive transformational opportunities when they appear throughout our life. This ensures a life filled with meaning, as opposed to the illusion of random chaos.

476. Rabbi Shimon opened the discourse with the verse: "And I will remember my covenant with Ya'akov" (Vayikra 26:42). THE NAME YA'AKOV IS WRITTEN in full; it includes the Vav. HE ASKS: Why? AND HE ANSWERS: It appears from two sides. The first is the secret of Wisdom, NAMELY THE VAV, which is the secret of the grade of Chochmah where Ya'akov dwells. THE SECOND IS BECAUSE this passage refers to the exile of the children of Yisrael. While in captivity, they will be visited (also: 'redeemed') by the power of the letter Vav, which symbolizes the sixth millennium. Through the letter Vav, their exile is ended. THIS IS WHY YA'AKOV IS SPELLED WITH VAV. THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL SHALL BE REDEEMED FROM EXILE BY THE VAV (= SIX), WHICH REPRESENTS THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM.

477. And the visitation, according to the secret of the Vav, occurs at six and one half moments. After the sixtieth year to the bar on the door of the sixth millenium--THE VAV, NAMELY TIFERET, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE MIDDLE BAR (OF THE TABERNACLE) THAT RUNS THROUGH THE BOARDS FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER, AND IS THEREFORE DESCRIBED AS THE "BAR OF THE DOOR"--shall Elohim of heaven visit the "Daughter of Ya'akov." And after six and a half years have passed, she shall be remembered. THIS IS THE DURATION OF THE VISITATION. And from that time, another six years shall pass, WHICH IS THE DURATION OF THE REMEMBRANCE. This totals 72 and a half years.

474. אָמַר לוֹ אִי חַיִּיבָא הוּא, וְלֹא מִטּוֹן יוֹמוֹי, לַעֲשֹׂרִין שָׁנִין, מֵהוּ, בֵּינָן דְּאַסְתָּלַק מֵעֲלָמָא, בְּמֵאֵי הוּא עוֹנֵשִׁיהּ. אָמַר לוֹ בְּדָא אֲתֵקִיִּים וְיֵשׁ נִסְפָּה בְּלֹא מִשְׁפָּט. דְּכֵד עוֹנֵשָׁא נְחִית לַעֲלָמָא, אִיהוּ אֶעְרַע בְּלֹא בּוֹנָה, לַעֲיֹלָא וְתַתָּא, בְּהוּא מַחְבֵּלָא, וְיִתְעַנֵּשׁ, כֵּד לֹא אֲשַׁחֲזוּ עָלֵיהּ מְלַעֲיֹלָא.

475. וְעָלִיהּ כְּתִיב עוֹנוֹתָיו יִלְבְּדֵנוּ אֶת הָרָשָׁע. א"ת לְאַסְגָּאָה, מֵאֵן דְּלֹא מִטּוֹן יוֹמוֹי, לַאֲתַעֲנֵשָׁא, עוֹנוֹתָיו יִלְבְּדֵנוּ וְלֹא בִּי דִינָא דְלַעֲיֹלָא, וּבַחְבְּלֵי חֲטָאתוֹ יִתְמַךְ, וְלֹא בִּי דִינָא דְלַתַּתָּא בְּגִין כֶּךָ כְּתִיב בִּי שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל קוֹל הַנֶּעֱר בְּאֶשֶׁר הוּא שָׁם.

476. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן פָּתַח וְאָמַר וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב, מֵלֹא בּוֹא"ו, אִמְאֵי. אָלָא, בְּתָרִין סְטָרִין אִיהוּ, רְזָא דְחֻכְמָתָא, חֲדָא, דְּאִיהוּ רְזָא דְרִגָּא דְחֻכְמָתָא אֲתֵר דְּשָׂרִי בֵיהּ יַעֲקֹב. אֲבָל הָאִי קָרָא, עַל גְּלוּתָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל אֲתָמַר, דְּכֵד אֵינוֹן גּוֹ גְּלוּתָא, הָהוּא זְמַנָּא דִּיתְפַּקְדוֹן, יִתְפַּקְדוֹן בְּרִזָּא דּוֹא"ו. וְאִיהוּ בְּאַלְף שְׁתִּיתָאָה.

477. וּמִקִּידָה בְּרִזָּא דּוֹא"ו, שִׁית רַגְעֵי, וּפְלַג עֵידָן. וּבְזְמַנָּא דְשִׁתִּין שָׁנִין, לַעְבוּרָא דְרָשָׁא, בְּאַלְף שְׁתִּיתָאָה, יָקִים אֱלֹהִים שְׁמֵיָא, פְּקִידוֹ לְבִרְתִּיהּ דִּיעֲקֹב. וּמֵהוּא זְמַנָּא, עַד דִּיהָא לָהּ זְכִירָה, שִׁית שָׁנִין וּפְלַגָּא. וּמֵהוּא זְמַנָּא, שִׁית שָׁנִין אַחֲרָנִין, וְאֵינוֹן שְׁבַעִין וְתָרִין וּפְלַגָּא.

478. In the year 66, the King Mashiach will appear in the land of Galilee, AND HE IS CALLED MASHIACH BEN YOSEF (MESSIAH, THE SON OF YOSEF) HE WILL THEREFORE APPEAR IN THE GALILEE, IN THE POSSESSION OF YOSEF. A star from the east will swallow up seven stars from the north, and a flame of black fire will be suspended from the heavens for sixty days. Wars will be begun in the world from the north, and two kings will fall in these wars.

479. And all the nations will be united against the Daughter of Ya'akov, in order to drive her out of this world. And of that time it is written: "And it is a time of trouble for Ya'akov, but out of it he shall be saved" (Yirmeyah 30:7). Then all the souls shall be gone from the body; they will have to come back and be renewed. And your proof is the verse: "All the souls of the house of Ya'akov that came into Egypt...were 66" (Bereshheet 46:26).

480. In the 73rd year, THAT IS, SEVEN YEARS AFTER MASHIACH BEN YOSEF WAS REVEALED, all the kings of the world shall assemble in the great city of Rome. And the Holy One, blessed be He, will shower fire and hail and meteoric stones upon them, until they are wiped out from the world. And only those kings who did not go to Rome will remain in the world. And they shall return and wage other wars. During this time, the King Mashiach will declare himself throughout the whole world, and many nations will gather around him together with many armies from all corners of the world. And all the children of Yisrael will assemble together in their places.

481. When the century is completed, the Vav will join the Hei. And "they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an offering to Hashem" (Yeshayah 66:20). THIS IS WHEN THEY SHALL BE GATHERED FROM THE DIASPORA. The children of Yishmael--WHO ARE THE HEAD (ALSO: LEADERS) OF ALL THE FORCES OF THE KLIPAH FROM THE RIGHT, AS ROME IS FOR THE LEFT--shall join together at that time with all the nations of the world WHO HAVE NOT GONE TO ROME and come to Jerusalem to wage war, as it is written: "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle" (Zechariah 14:2); "The kings of the earth stand up and the rulers take counsel together, against Hashem and against his anointed" (Tehilim 2:2); and, "He that sits in heaven laughs, Hashem has them in derision" (Tehilim 2:4)

482. After ALL THE FORCES OF THE OTHER SIDE, THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT, ARE WIPED OUT OF THE WORLD, the small Vav, WHICH IS YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, will join THE HEI and renew old souls--NAMESLY ALL THE SOULS THAT WERE IN A BODY SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD--in order to renew the world, WHICH IS MALCHUT. As it is written: "let Hashem rejoice in His works," and: "May the glory of Hashem endure forever," (Tehilim 104:31) WHICH MEANS THAT in order FOR THE HEI to join THE VAV properly, "let Hashem rejoice in His works." Let Him bring HIS WORKS down, REFERRING TO THE RENEWED SOULS, into the world, so they all become new creatures and all the worlds are united.

478. בְּשִׁיתִין וְשִׁית, יִתְגַּלִּי מֶלֶכָא מְשִׁיחָא בְּאַרְעָא דְגָלִיל, וְכֵד כִּכְבָּא דְּבִסְטָר מְזֻרְחָ, יִבְלַע שְׁבַע כִּכְבֵּי מִסְטָר צָפוֹן, וְשִׁלְהוּבָא דְּאַשָּׁא אוֹכְמָא, תְּהֵא תִּלְיָא בְּרָקִיעָא שִׁיתִין יוֹמִין, וְקָרְבִין יִתְעָרוֹן בְּעֵלְמָא, לְסִטָּר צָפוֹן, וְתָרִין מַלְכִין יִפְלוּן, בְּאִינוֹן קָרְבִין.

479. וְיִזְדְּוֹגוֹן כְּלָהוֹן עַמְמֵיָא, עַל בְּרִיתָהּ דִּיעֵקֵב, לְאַדְחִיָּא לָהּ מִעֵלְמָא. וְעַל הָהוּא זְמַנָּא כְּתִיב, וְעַתְּ צָרָה הִיא לְיַעֲקֹב וּמִמֶּנָּה יוֹשַׁע, וּכְדִין, יִסְתַּיִמוֹן נַפְשֵׁין מְגוּפָא, וּבְעֵינִין לְאַתְחַדְשָׁא, וְסִימְנִין כָּל הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַבָּאָה לְיַעֲקֹב מִצְרִימָה וְגו', כָּל נֶפֶשׁ, שְׁשִׁים וְשֵׁשׁ.

480. בְּשִׁבְעִין וְתֵלֶת, כָּל מַלְכֵי עֵלְמָא, יִתְכַנְשׁוֹן לְגוֹ קְרִתָּא רַבְתָּא דְּרוּמֵי, וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, יִתְעַרְ עֲלִיָּהּ, אֶשָּׁא וּבִרְדָּא, וְאַבְנֵי אֶלְגָּבִישׁ, וְיִתְאַבְדּוֹן מִעֵלְמָא, בְּרֵי אִינוֹן מַלְכִין, דְּלֹא יִמְטוֹן לְתַמּוֹן, וְיִהְיֶה לְאַגָּחָא קָרְבִין אַחֲרָנִין. וּמֵהָהוּא זְמַנָּא, מֶלֶכָא מְשִׁיחָא, יִתְעַר בְּכָל עֵלְמָא, וְיִתְכַנְשׁוֹן עֲמִיהּ, בְּמָה עַמּוּן, וּכְמָה חֲיוּלִין, מְכָל סִימְנֵי עֵלְמָא, וְכָל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, יִתְכַנְשׁוֹן בְּכָל אִינוֹן אַתְרֵי.

481. עַד דְּאַשְׁתַּלִּימוּ אִינוֹן שְׁנִין לְמָאָה, בְּדִין, וְאִ"ו יִתְחַבֵּר בֵּה"א, וּכְדִין וְהִבִּיאוּ אֶת כָּל אַחֵיכֶם מִכָּל הַגּוֹיִם מִנְּחָה לַי"ו וְגו'. וּבְנֵי יִשְׁמַעֵאל זְמִינִין בְּהָהוּא זְמַנָּא לְאַתְעָרָא עִם כָּל עַמּוּן דְּעֵלְמָא, לְמִיתִי עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם, דְּכְתִיב וְאַסְפַּתִּי אֶת כָּל הַגּוֹיִם אֶל יְרוּשָׁלַם לְמִלְחָמָה וְגו'. וּכְתִיב יִתְיַצְּבוּ מַלְכֵי אֶרֶץ וְרוֹזְנִים נֹסְדֵי יַחַד עַל י"ו וְעַל מְשִׁיחוֹ. וּכְתִיב יוֹשֵׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁחַק י"ו וְלַעֲג לָמוֹ.

482. לְבִתְרֵי וְאִ"ו זְעִירָא, יִתְעַר, לְאַתְחַבְרָא, וְלִחְדָּשָׁא נִשְׁמַתִּין, דְּהוּ עֲתִיקִין, בְּגִין לְחִדְתָּא עֵלְמָא, בְּמָה דְּכְתִיב, יִשְׁמַח י"ו בְּמַעֲשָׂיו. וּכְתִיב יְהִי כְבוֹד י"ו לְעוֹלָם. לְאַתְחַבְרָא בְּרָקָא יְאוֹת. יִשְׁמַח י"ו בְּמַעֲשָׂיו, לְנַחְתָּא לֹון לְעֵלְמָא, וְלִמְהוּי כְּלָהוֹן בְּרִין חֲדָתִין, לְחַבְרָא עֲלָמִין כְּלָהוֹ בְּחֵד.

483. Happy are all those who shall remain in the world at the end of the sixth millennium and enter the Shabbat, WHICH IS THE SEVENTH MILLENNIUM--Because that is a "day" for Hashem alone to join THE HEI properly, and cull new souls IN ORDER TO BRING THEM into the world. THIS REFERS TO THE SOULS THAT HAVE NOT YET COME INTO THE WORLD, together with THE RENEWED SOULS that have been there from the beginning, 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, everyone that is written for life in Jerusalem" (Yeshayah 4:3).

483. זָכָאִין אֵינוֹן, כָּל אֵינוֹן, דִּישְׁתַּאֲרוֹן בְּעֶלְמָא בְּסִיּוּמֵי אֶלְף שְׁתִּיתָא, לְמִיעַל בְּשַׁבְּתָא, דְּהָא בְּרִין, אִיהוּ יוֹמָא חַד לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא בְּלַחוּדוּי לְאַזְדָּוָגָא כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, וּלְמַלְקֻט נִשְׁמָתִין חֲדָתִין, לְמַהּוּי בְּעֶלְמָא, עִם אֵינוֹן דְּאַשְׁתַּאֲרוּ בְּקַדְמִיתָא, דְּכִתְיָב וְהִיָּה הַנֶּשֶׁאֶר בְּצִיּוֹן וְהַנּוֹתָר בִּירוּשָׁלַם קְדוֹשׁ יֵאמֹר לוֹ כָּל הַכְּתוּב לַחַיִּים בִּירוּשָׁלַם.

### 35. "And Elohim tested Avraham"

The Zohar explores the story of the binding of Isaac. The biblical character of Isaac is a code referring to the Left Column energy, our reactive, self-centered nature. Avraham corresponds to the Right Column, our positive sharing attributes. The story is a metaphor for man's spiritual work, which is to bind and transform his selfish, reactive desires into positive and sharing qualities that embody care and concern for others.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Repeatedly, something in our nature provokes us to indulge in negative behavior, even though it goes against our very will. Likewise, we're compelled to forsake positive actions despite our best intentions to follow through. This uniquely human idiosyncrasy is a depiction of the ongoing conflict between the body's desire to receive and the soul's desire to share. We arouse the inner strength and willpower to bind our own Evil Inclination and negative impulses, known Kabbalistically, as the desire to receive for the self alone.

484. "And it came to pass after these things, that Elohim tested Avraham and said to him, 'Avraham,' and he replied, 'Behold, here I am'" (Beresheet 22:1). Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse: "You are my king, Elohim" (Tehilim 44:5). This symbolizes the complete unification of all the grades as one; they ARE ATTACHED to one another. THIS IS BECAUSE IN THIS VERSE ARE THE SFIROT--CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT--WHICH REPRESENT ALL THE GRADES, BECAUSE "YOU" ALLUDES TO CHESED, ACCORDING TO THE MYSTERY OF THE VERSE, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOR EVER" (TEHILIM 110:4); "ELOHIM" IS GVURAH; "ARE" IS TIFERET; AND "MY KING" IS MALCHUT.

484. וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהָאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, פֶּתַח וְאָמַר, אֵתָה הוּא מַלְכִּי וְגו' דָּא הוּא שְׁלִימוֹ, דְּכָל דְּרָגִין בְּחֵדָא, דָּא בְּדָא.

485. "...command deliverances for Ya'akov..." (Tehilim 44:5) MEANS THAT all the messengers who accomplish their missions in the world shall be from the side of Mercy and not from the side of Judgment. There are emissaries from both sides--some from the side of Mercy and some from the side of harsh Judgment. Those messengers who come from the side of Mercy never take on themselves a mission of Judgment in the world.

485. צִוָּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב, כָּל אֵינוֹן שְׁלִיחִין, דְּעֵבְדֵי שְׁלִיחוּתָא בְּעֶלְמָא דְּלִיָּהּוּי בְּלָהוּ, מְסַטְרָא דְּרַחֲמֵי, וְלֹא לְהוּוּ מְסַטְרָא דְּדִינָא, בְּגִין דְּאִית מְאִרֵי שְׁלִיחִין, מְסַטְרָא דְּרַחֲמֵי, וּמְסַטְרָא דְּדִינָא קְשִׁיָּא. אֵינוֹן שְׁלִיחִין, דְּאִתִּיין מְסַטְרָא דְּרַחֲמֵי, לֹא עֵבְדֵי שְׁלִיחוּתָא דְּדִינָא בְּעֶלְמָא כָּלָל.

486. You might say: But we have learned that the angel that was revealed to Bilaam was a messenger of Mercy who changed to a messenger of Judgment, THEREBY SHOWING THAT A MESSENGER OF MERCY CAN EXECUTE JUDGMENT. HOWEVER, THE ANSWER IS no. He never changed TO EXECUTE JUDGMENT. Rather, he was a messenger of Mercy who came to protect Yisrael and to be in their favor. But toward Bila'am, he was a messenger of Judgment. So these are the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, when He does good to someone. We can see that this benefit to one person may be a punishment for another person. And so first, he was a messenger of Mercy for Yisrael. But for Bilaam he was a messenger of Judgment. Because of this, HE PLEADED, "Command deliverances for Ya'akov." Thus, David said, "Command this for the world so that when a messenger will be sent, he will be from the side of Mercy."

486. וְאִי תִימָא, הָא מְלֹאכָא, דְּאִתְגַּלִּי לִיהּ לְבַלְעָם, הָא תְנִינִן, שְׁלִיחָא דְּרַחֲמֵי הוּא, וְאִתְהַפֵּךְ לְדִינָא. לֹא. לְעוֹלָם לֹא אֲשַׁתְּנִי, אֲלֹא שְׁלִיחָא דְּרַחֲמֵי הוּא, לְאַגָּנָא עֲלִיָּהּוּ דִּישְׂרָאֵל, וּלְמַהּוּי סְנִיגוּרִיא עֲלִיָּהּוּ, וּלְקַבְּלִיהּ, הוּא דִינָא, וְכֵן אֲוֹרְחוּי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, בְּדִ אֲוִטִיב לְדָא, הֵוּא טִיב, דִּינָא לְדָא. כֵּן הָא שְׁלִיחָא דְּרַחֲמֵי, הוּא לְהוּ לִישְׂרָאֵל, וּלְבַלְעָם אִתְהַפֵּךְ לְדִינָא. בְּגִין כֵּן צִוָּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב, אֵמַר דּוֹד, פְּקִיד עַל עֶלְמָא, בְּדִ יִשְׁתַּלְחוֹן שְׁלִיחָא, דִּי לְהוּיין מְסַטְרָא דְּרַחֲמֵי.

487. Rabbi Aba said: "command deliverances for Ya'akov" MEANS THAT HE PRAYED FOR YA'AKOV, prayed for those in exile, that they might receive salvation. Come and behold: Ya'akov was the glory of the Patriarchs. Had it not been for Yitzchak, Ya'akov would not have appeared in the world. For this reason, "command deliverances for Ya'akov" alludes to Yitzchak, WHO IS THE DELIVERER OF YA'AKOV, because when Yitzchak was saved DURING THE BINDING OF YITZCHAK, this was the deliverance of Ya'akov.

488. "And it came to pass after these things..." Rabbi Shimon said: We have learned that the words "And it came to pass (Heb. vayehi) in the days" are said concerning trouble. Thus, even though it is not written 'in the days of,' there is still a certain tinge of distress, as it says, "Vayehi." "And it came to pass after" MEANS that it happened after the lowest of the supernal grades OF ATZILUT. And what is it? IT IS "these things (Heb. d'varim)," NAMELY MALCHUT, as it is written: "I am not a man of words (Heb. d'varim)" (Shemot 4:10).

489. And what is "after" this grade, THAT IS, AFTER MALCHUT? THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THE WORDS, "that Elohim tested Avraham," which mean that the Evil Inclination came from there to lay accusations before the Holy One, blessed be He. THEREFORE, "ELOHIM TESTED AVRAHAM."

This phrase should be studied carefully. It should have been written, 'tested Yitzchak,' because Yitzchak was already 37 years old and his father could no longer be punished for his sins. So if Yitzchak had said, 'I refuse to obey,' his father would not have been punished because of him. So then why is it written: "that Elohim tested Avraham," rather than, 'tested Yitzchak?'

490. AND HE REPLIES: IT SHOULD definitely BE WRITTEN: "tested Avraham," because he was supposed to be included within Judgment, as there was no judgment in Avraham previously--HE HAD CONSISTED ENTIRELY OF CHESD. Now water was mixed with fire; CHESD WAS MIXED WITH JUDGMENT. So Avraham did not achieve perfection until he crowned (prepared) himself to execute Judgment and establish it in its place.

491. So all his life, he did not reach perfection until now, until water mixed with fire--RIGHT MIXED WITH LEFT--and fire with water--LEFT WITH RIGHT. This is why: "Elohim tested Avraham" and not Yitzchak. Because THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, invited Avraham to be included with Judgment ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE LEFT. So when he performed THE ACT OF BINDING YITZCHAK, the fire entered the water, THAT IS, JUDGMENT ENTERED CHESD, and they were perfected by each other, AS WAS SAID BEFORE. This is what the act of Judgment accomplished: it included one within the other. This is also the reason why the Evil Inclination came and accused Avraham of not being properly perfected until he performed the act of Judgment by BINDING Yitzchak. THE PLACE of the Evil Inclination is "after" (beyond) these "things," WHICH ALLUDES TO MALCHUT ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "SIN CROUCHES AT THE DOOR" (BERESHEET 4:7). And so he came to persecute.

487. רבי אבא אמר, צוה ישועות יעקב, דאינון גו גלותא, וישתבח מורקנא להון, גו גלותהון. תא חזי, תושבחן דאבהן, יעקב הוה, ואלמלא יצחק, לא אתא יעקב לעלמא, ובגין כך, צוה ישועות יעקב דא יצחק, דכיון דאשתויב יצחק, ישועות יעקב הוו.

488. ויהי אחר הדברים האלה, ר' שמעון אמר, הא תנינן, ויהי בימי, על צערא אתמר, ויהי אף על גב דלא כתיב בימי, טפסי דצערא אית ביה. ויהי אחר, בתר דרגא תתאה, דכל דרגין עלאין, ומאן איהו, דברים, בדבר אחר, לא איש דברים אנכי.

489. ומאן הוה בתר דרגא דא, והאלהים נסה את אברהם. דאתיא יצר הרע, לקטרגא קמי קודשא בריך הוא. הכא אית לאסתכלא, והאלהים נסה את אברהם. את יצחק מבעי ליה. דהא יצחק, בר תלתין ושבע שנין הוה, והא אבוי, לאו בר עונשא דיליה הוה, דאלמלא אמר יצחק, לא בעינא, לא אתענש אבוי עליה, מאי טעמא, והאלהים נסה את אברהם, ולא כתיב נסה את יצחק.

490. אלא, את אברהם ודאי, דבעי לאתכללא בדינא, דהא אברהם, לא הוה ביה דינא כלל, מקדמת דנא, והשתא אתכליל מיו"א באש"א. ואברהם, לא הוה שלים, עד השתא, דאתעטר למעבד דינא, ולאתקנא ליה באתריה.

491. וכל יומיו, לא הוה שלים, עד השתא דאתכליל מיו"א באש"א, ואש"א במיו"א, ובגין כך והאלהים נסה את אברהם, ולא את יצחק, דאזמין אברהם, לאתכללא בדינא, וכד עביר דא, עאל אש"א במיו"א, ואשתלים דא עם דא. ודא עביר דינא, לאתכללא דא בדא, וכדין יצר הרע, אתא לקטרגא עליה דאברהם, דלא אשתלים בדקא יאות, עד דיעביר דינא ביצחק, דיצר הרע, אחר הדברים איהו, ואתא לקטרגא.

492. Come and behold: observe the mystery behind this issue. Even though it is written: "Avraham" and not Yitzchak, Yitzchak is still included in the passage. It is written: "Elohim tested (et) Avraham," rather than 'tested Avraham.' Instead of a dative particle, it uses Et. Et is accurate and ALLUDES TO Yitzchak, because at that time YITZCHAK resided in lower Gvurah, WHICH REFERS TO THE NUKVA. And as he was bound and underwent the trial of Judgment performed by Avraham, YITZCHAK was crowned in his place together with Avraham, and the fire combined with the water and rose upward. AND AVRAHAM WITH CHESED ROSE UP TO CHOCHMAH, AND YITZCHAK WITH GVURAH ROSE UP TO BINAH. Then the dispute was settled properly, BECAUSE THEY MADE PEACE BETWEEN THEMSELVES, AS fire and water WERE COMBINED AND BECAME INCLUSIVE OF EACH OTHER.

493. Who has ever seen a merciful father do a cruel thing TO HIS SON? It is only to settle the dispute and combine water with fire. THIS REFERS TO THE ATTRIBUTE OF CHESED OF AVRAHAM WITH THE FIRE OF YITZCHAK, and each one is properly crowned in its place. AND THIS REMAINED SO until Ya'akov appeared, WHO WAS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Then, everything was properly established, and all three Patriarchs achieved perfection, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY BECAME A CHARIOT FOR THE UPPER THREE COLUMNS, and so the upper and lower beings were properly established.

494. Of the verse, "And He said, Take now your son," (Beresheet 22:2) HE ASKS: How could Avraham HAVE TAKEN YITZCHAK, HIS SON, by force, when he was old? If you say THAT Yitzchak was still under his authority AND THEREFORE HAD TO OBEY HIS FATHER'S COMMANDMENTS, IT WOULD BE a good explanation. But this is similar to: "take Aharon and Elazar his son," (Bemidbar 20:25) WHERE THE MEANING IS only to convince them with words and remind them THAT THEY SHOULD FULFILL the will of the Holy One, blessed be He. So here as well, WITH AVRAHAM, THE MEANING IS to "take," by verbal persuasion, "your son, your only son, whom you love, Yitzchak, and go to the land of Moriah," as it is written: "I will go to the mountain of myrrh (Heb. mor)," (Shir Hashirim 4:6) to be established in a proper place.

492. וְתָא חַיִּי, רָזָא דְּמַלְהָ, אִף עַל גַּב דְּקֶאֱמָרָן  
דְּאַבְרָהָם כְּתִיב, וְלֹא יִצְחָק, יִצְחָק נִמְי אֲתַכְלִיל בֵּיהּ,  
בְּהָאֵי קְרָא, רָזָא דְּכְתִיב, וְהָאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם.  
נִסָּה לְאַבְרָהָם, לֹא כְתִיב, אֶלָּא אֶת אַבְרָהָם, אֶת  
דִּיִּיקָא, וְדָא יִצְחָק. דְּהָא בְּהָאֵי שְׁעָתָא, בְּגִבּוּרָה  
תַּתָּא שְׂרִיָא, כִּיּוֹן דִּאֲתַעְקֵד, וְאִזְדַּמֵּן בְּדִינָא, עַל  
יְדָא דְּאַבְרָהָם, כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, כְּדִין אֲתַעְטֵר בְּאַתְרֵיהּ,  
בְּהִרְיָה דְּאַבְרָהָם, וְאֲתַכְלִילוּ אִשׁ"א בְּמִי"א, וְסְלִיקוּ  
לְעִילָא, וְכִדִּין אֲשַׁתְּכַח מַחְלֻקַּת כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, מִיָּא  
בְּאִשָּׁא.

493. מֵאֵן חֲמָא אַבָּא רַחֲמָנָא, דִּאֲתַעְבִּיר אֲכוּר.  
אֶלָּא, בְּגִין לְאַשְׁתְּכַח מַחְלֻקַּת מִיָּא בְּאִשָּׁא,  
וְלִאֲתַעְטֵר בְּאַתְרֵיהּ, עַד דִּאֲתָא יַעֲקֹב, וְאֲתַתְּקַן  
כָּלָא, כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, וְאֲתַעְבִּירוּ תַלְתָּא אַבְהָן שְׁלָמִין,  
וְאֲתַתְּקִנוּ עֲלָאֵי וְתַתָּאֵי.

494. וְיֹאמַר קַח נָא אֶת בְּנֶךָ. וְכִי הָיָךְ יָכִיל אַבְרָהָם,  
דְּאִיהּ סָבָא. אִי תִימָא, בְּגִין דִּיִּצְחָק, לֹא נִמְי  
מְרְשׁוּתֵיהּ כָּלִל, יָאוּת. אֲבָל, כְּדָבָר אַחֵר קַח אֶת  
אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת אֶלְעָזָר בְּנוֹ. אֶלָּא, בְּגִין לְאַמְשַׁכָּא לוֹן  
בְּמַלִּין, וְלִאֲדַבְּרָא לוֹן, לְרַעוּתָא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא,  
אוּף הָכָא קַח בְּמַלִּין. אֶת בְּנֶךָ אֶת יִחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר  
אַהֲבָתָּ. הָא אוֹקְמוּהּ. וְלָךְ לָךְ אֶל אֶרֶץ הַמּוֹרִיָּה,  
כְּדָבָר אַחֵר אֵלְךָ לִי אֶל הַר הַמּוֹר. לְאַתְקְנָא בְּאַתְרָא  
דִּיתְחַיִּי.

36. "And he saw the place afar off"

As Avraham walks with Isaac to the place of sacrifice, Avraham is granted a crystal clear vision of his future grandson, Jacob, the predestined son of Isaac. Avraham perceives the important role that Jacob will play in the world; nonetheless, he remains true to his commitment to sacrifice his son, despite his compelling vision. Avraham surrenders total control, placing all his trust in the Creator's words.

The Relevance of this Passage

Man's nature is to succumb to the temptations of the material world, to give in to the lure of immediate gratification at the expense of long-term fulfillment. The wisdom and strength to place our trust in the spiritual laws of life and relinquish control to the Creator are granted to our soul. This portion allows the radiance of the Creator to enlighten and direct us along the darkened corridors of life.

495. "On the third day, Avraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off" (Beresheet 22:4). The meaning of "on the third day" has already been explained, but since it has already been stated: "and he rose up and went to the place of which the Elohim had told him," (Ibid. 3) ONE SHOULD ASK why does it then say, "On the third day...and he saw the place afar off"? WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS REPETITION? HE REPLIES: It is written, "for in Yitzchak shall your seed be called," (Beresheet 21:12) because Ya'akov came from him. YITZCHAK IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT COLUMN, WHICH HAS NO EXISTENCE WITHOUT THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS YA'AKOV. And, he is called "the third day," BECAUSE AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, AND YA'AKOV ARE THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, WHICH ARE CALLED 'THREE DAYS.' THUS, YA'AKOV, WHO IS TIFERET, IS EQUIVALENT TO THE THIRD DAY. THIS IS WHY HE LOOKED FOR YA'AKOV, WHO IS THE CAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF YITZCHAK.

496. The words, "and saw the place afar off," are similar to: "from afar off has Hashem appeared to me," (Yirmeyah 31:3) WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. The phrase, "and he saw the place" refers to Ya'akov, of whom it is written: "and he took of the stones of that place" (Beresheet 28:11). SO Avraham looked into the "third day," which is the third grade, NAMELY TIFERET, and there he saw Ya'akov, who was to issue from him. BUT "afar off" MEANS at some distant time, as we have already explained, rather than in the near future.

497. Rabbi Elazar said to him: What is Avraham praised for, as he already saw that Ya'akov was destined to issue from him? Since he was on his way to sacrifice Yitzchak, this cannot be such a great praise for him. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE BECAUSE THIS MUST HAVE BROUGHT SOME DOUBT INTO HIS MIND ABOUT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. IF HE IS ABOUT TO OFFER HIM AS A SACRIFICE, HOW THEN WILL YA'AKOV BE BORN?

498. He said to him: It is certain that he saw Ya'akov, because even before THE SACRIFICE, Avraham had knowledge of wisdom. THIS MEANS THAT HE HAD ALREADY ATTAINED THE SUPERNAL MOCHIN THAT FLOW OVER THE THREE COLUMNS, THE THIRD COLUMN OF WHICH IS YA'AKOV. So now he looked into the "third day," which is the third grade, TIFERET, to draw perfection from it- THAT IS, TO COMPLETE HIS MOCHIN, BECAUSE PERFECTION CANNOT BE REACHED EXCEPT THROUGH THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Then THE SCRIPTURES SAY THAT he saw Ya'akov, as it is written: "and he saw the place," MEANING HE SAW THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS CALLED YA'AKOV. But this still remained "afar off" from him, AS HE COULD NOT ACHIEVE IT NOW. He was on his way to bind Yitzchak and did not wish to have any doubts about the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO TOLD HIM TO OFFER YITZCHAK AS A SACRIFICE. AND THEREFORE, HE DID NOT ACHIEVE THE CENTRAL COLUMN COMPLETELY, AS IS FURTHER EXPLAINED.

499. The words "afar off" MEAN THAT he only saw him through a clouded mirror, which is why he did not see him clearly. If the illuminating mirror had been over the opaque mirror, then Avraham would have grasped him properly, BUT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. THUS, AVRAHAM SAW HIM only from "afar off."

495. בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת הַמָּקוֹם מֵרְחוֹק. בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, הָאֵל אוֹקְמוּהָ, אֵלָא, בֵּינוֹן דְּאַתְמָר, וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים, מֵאִי טַעְמָא, בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּרְא אֶת הַמָּקוֹם מֵרְחוֹק. אֵלָא, בְּגִין דְּכְתִיב, כִּי בַיִצְחָק יִקְרָא לְךָ זָרַע. וְדָא הוּא יַעֲקֹב, דְּנִפְק מִנִּיהּ. וְהָאִי הוּא בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי.

496. וַיִּרְא אֶת הַמָּקוֹם מֵרְחוֹק. כְּדָבָר אַחֵר מֵרְחוֹק וַיִּרְא לִי. וַיִּרְא אֶת הַמָּקוֹם. דָּא הוּא יַעֲקֹב, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבֵנֵי הַמָּקוֹם. אֶסְתַּכַּל אַבְרָהָם, בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי דְּאִיהוּ דְּרָגָא תְּלִיתָא, וְחָמָא לִיהּ לַיַּעֲקֹב, דְּזִמִּין לְמִיפְק מִנִּיהּ. מֵרְחוֹק, כְּמָה דְּאִמְרֵן, מֵרְחוֹק, וְלֹא לְזִמִּין קָרִיב.

497. אָמַר לִיהּ רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, מֵאִי שְׂבַחָא אִיהוּ לְאַבְרָהָם, כִּד אֶסְתַּכַּל, וְחָמָא דְּזִמִּין לְמִיפְק, מִנִּיהּ יַעֲקֹב. דְּהָא כִּד אָזִיל לְמִיעֵקֶר לִיהּ לַיִצְחָק, לֹא שְׂבַחָא כָּל כֵּךְ אִיהוּ דִּילִיהּ.

498. אָמַר לוֹ וְדָאִי חָמָא לִיהּ לַיַּעֲקֹב, דְּהָא מִקְדָּמָת דִּנָּא, יָדַע אַבְרָהָם חֲכָמְתָא, וְאֶסְתַּכַּל הִשְׁתָּא, בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, דְּאִיהוּ דְּרָגָא תְּלִיתָא, לְמַעַבְד שְׁלִימוֹ, וְכַדִּין חָמָא לִיהּ לַיַּעֲקֹב, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּרְא אֶת הַמָּקוֹם. אֲבָל הִשְׁתָּא, קִינְמָא לִיהּ מְלָה מֵרְחוֹק, בְּגִין דְּאָזִיל לְמִיעֵקֶר לִיהּ לַיִצְחָק, וְלֹא בָּעָא לְהַרְהֵר אֲבַתְרִיהּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא.

499. מֵרְחוֹק: חָמָא לִיהּ, גּוֹ אֶסְפַּקְלָרִיָּא דְּלֹא נִהְרָא בְּלַחוּדוֹי, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, חָמָא לִיהּ, וְלֹא אֶתְגַּלִּי כְּלָא, דְּאֵלּוֹ אֶסְפַּקְלָרִיָּא דְּנִהְרָא, הוּא שְׂכִיחַ, עַל הָאִי אֶסְפַּקְלָרִיָּא דְּלֹא נִהְרָא, אֶתְקִיָּים עֲלֵיהּ אַבְרָהָם, כְּדָקָא יָאוּת, אֲבָל מֵרְחוֹק בְּלַחוּדוֹי הוּא, מֵרְחוֹק.

500. AND HE ASKS: Why did the clear shining mirror disappear? AND HE REPLIES: Because this is the grade of Ya'akov, and as Ya'akov was not yet born, his aspect was not yet present over this grade. Furthermore, it disappeared so that Avraham could go AND BIND HIS SON and receive his reward. SO ACCORDINGLY, "he saw the place afar off" MEANS THAT HE SAW Ya'akov, as is explained, "afar off," MEANING THAT he did not reach him.

501. The verse: "And they came to the place which the Elohim had told him of" (Beresheet 22:9) implies that even though he had the ability to "see" Ya'akov, Avraham said that the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO TOLD HIM TO BIND YITZCHAK, certainly knows another way to achieve this end. So immediately, "Avraham built an altar there," WHICH MEANS THAT EVEN THOUGH HE SAW THAT YITZCHAK WOULD BEAR YA'AKOV, HE HAD NO DOUBTS ABOUT THE COMMANDS OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. AND BECAUSE OF HIS TRUST IN THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, HE BUILT AN ALTAR.

502. But before this, it is written: "And Yitzchak spoke to Avraham his father, and said, 'My father...'" (Ibid. 7) which has already been explained. But why did he not reply to him at all? AND HE REPLIED: Because Avraham ceased to have the mercy of a father towards his son. INSTEAD, THE ATTRIBUTE OF JUDGMENT CAME UPON HIM. THIS IS THE REASON WHY HE DID NOT ANSWER HIM THE FIRST TIME. Thus, it is written: "Here I am, my son." "Here I am," AS IF TO SAY--the Mercy has gone and changed into Judgment.

503. Note that it is written: "And Avraham said," rather than 'And his father said.' This is because he was no longer like a father; but had become an adversary. Of the verse: "Elohim will provide himself a lamb," HE SAID: It should have been written, 'will provide us' and not "Himself." AND HE REPLIES THAT he said to him: Elohim will provide for His own needs at the time when He shall need it. But now my son, and not the lamb, IS THE OFFERING. Immediately, it is written: "they went both of them together," WHICH MEANS THAT YITZCHAK FOLLOWED THE WILL OF HIS FATHER.

504. Rabbi Shimon began with the verse: "Behold, the mighty ones shall cry outside, ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly" (Yeshayah 33:7). In this verse, "the mighty ones (also: 'angels')" are the celestial angels who cried out at the time WHEN YITZCHAK WAS BOUND UPON THE ALTAR and wanted the Holy One, blessed be He, to remember and fulfill the promise in the verse, "And He took him outside," (Beresheet 15:5) WHICH ALLUDES TO THE BLESSING OF HIS OFFSPRING. Therefore, they "shall cry outside" IS WRITTEN.

505. "...ambassadors of peace" are other angels, who were destined to walk in front of Ya'akov. For Ya'akov's sake, the Holy One, blessed be He, promised them perfection, as it is written: "And Ya'akov went on his way, and the angels of Elohim met him" (Beresheet 32:2). These are called the 'Angels of Peace,' and they all wept as they saw Avraham binding Yitzchak. The upper and lower beings trembled and shook for the sake of Yitzchak.

500. מאי טעמא אסתלק, מהאי מלה, אספקלריא דנהרא בגין דהאי, דרגא דיעקב הוה, ובגין דיעקב עד לא אתיליד, לא אשתכח השתא על האי דרגא. ותו, בגין דיהך ויקבל אגרא. וירא את המקום מרחוק. דא יעקב, כמה דאתמר מרחוק, דלא זכה ביה.

501. ויבאו אל המקום אשר אמר לו האלהים וגו'. רמיז הכא, דאף על גב דאתו ללהוא ראיה, וחמא ליעקב, אמר אברהם, ודאי קודשא בריך הוא ידע בגוונא אחרא דאתחזי, מיד ויבן שם אברהם את המזבח וגו'.

502. מה כתיב לעילא, ויאמר יצחק אל אברהם אביו ויאמר אבי, הא אוקמוה. אבל מאי טעמא, לא אתיב ליה מיד. אלא, בגין דהא אסתלק, מרחמי דאבא על ברא, ובגין כך, כתיב הנני בני, הנני דאסתלקו רחמי, ואתהפך לדינא.

503. ויאמר אברהם, ולא כתיב, ויאמר אביו. דהא לא קאים עליה כאבא, אלא בעל מחלוקת, הוה ביה. אלהים יראה לו השם. יראה לנו מבעי ליה, מאי יראה לו. אלא, אמר לו אלהים יראה לו לגרמיה, בד איהו יצטריך, אבל השתא בני, ולא אמרא. מיד וילכו שניהם יחדו.

504. רבי שמעון, פתח ואמר, הן אראלם צעקו חוצה מלאכי שלום מר ובכיון. הן אראלם, אליו מלאכי עלאי. צעקו בההיא שעתא, ובעו לקוימא, על ההיא מלה, דכתיב, ויוצא אותו החוצה. בגין כך, צעקו חוצה.

505. מלאכי שלום. אליו אינון מלאכין אחרנין, דהוו זמינין, למיהך קמיה דיעקב, ובגיניה דיעקב, אבטח לון שלימו קודשא בריך הוא, דכתיב ויעקב הלך לדרך ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלהים. ואליו אקרון מלאכי שלום, בלהו בכו, בד חמו ליה לאברהם, דעקיד ליה ליצחק, ואדעזעו עלאי ותתאי, וכלהו עליה דיצחק.

### 37. "Avraham, Avraham"

During the binding of Yitzchak, an angel calls out the name of Avraham twice. Kabbalistically, Isaac corresponds to man's negative and selfish desire to receive, the root of all egotistic and self-centered behavior. Avraham is a metaphor for the positive sharing attributes of man. Avraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac, is a code signifying the complete subjugation of Avraham's negative desire to receive. The second utterance of Avraham's name by the angel indicates the complete transformation of Avraham's nature into the desire to share.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

Avraham's extraordinary actions and faith created a reservoir of spiritual energy for all future generations to draw upon in their effort to completely transform their nature. The change in Avraham's name and its appearance in this text of Zohar is the portal through which the energy flows. These metaphysical forces arouse an awareness of our own negative attributes and generates the desire and strength to subjugate our ego, transforming all our wanton desires into positive attributes that embody care and compassion for others.

506. "And the angel of Hashem called to him...AVRAHAM, AVRAHAM" (Beresheet 22:11). There is a disjunctive mark between the two Avrahams, WHICH MEANS THAT the second "Avraham" is not the same as the first. Avraham AFTER THE BINDING has achieved perfection, BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN INCLUDED WITH YITZCHAK, while the first "AVRAHAM" HAS not yet achieved perfection, BECAUSE HE WAS NOT YET INCLUDED WITHIN YITZCHAK. Similarly, "Shmuel, Shmuel" (I Shmuel 3:10) ALSO HAS A DISJUNCTIVE MARK BETWEEN THE TWO NAMES, WHICH MEANS THAT the latter is perfected while the first is not. WHY? BECAUSE the latter was already a prophet, while the former had not yet achieved that grade. But in "Moshe Moshe," (Shemot 3:4) there is no pause BETWEEN THE NAMES, because ever since the day Moshe was born, the Shechinah never left him. THUS, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LATTER AND THE FORMER. "Avraham, Avraham," Rabbi Chiya said. The reason WHY HE CALLED HIS NAME TWICE was to arouse him with a different spirit, a different action, and a different heart.

507. Rabbi Yehuda said: Yitzchak was purified and elevated properly before the Holy One, blessed be He, BY BEING BOUND UPON THE ALTAR, like the odor of the incense of spices which the priests offered before Him twice a day. Thus, the sacrifice was perfected AS IF IT WERE OFFERED AND BURNED AS A SWEET SAVOR BEFORE HASHEM. Avraham felt sorry when he was told: "Lay not your hand upon the lad, neither do anything to him," (Beresheet 22:12) BECAUSE he thought it meant that his offering was not perfect--that all his preparations and the building of the altar were in vain. But immediately, it is written: "And Avraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket" (Ibid. 13); AND HE OFFERED IT INSTEAD OF YITZCHAK, AND SO ACHIEVED PERFECTION.

508. We have learned that this ram was the one that was created at twilight (on Friday of Creation). But he was one year old, as it is written: "one he-lamb a year old" (Bemidbar 7:63). It was required FOR HIM TO BE ONE YEAR OLD, JUST AS THE DAILY OFFERING. If so, how can you say that the ram was born at twilight? AND HE REPLIES: It was predestined THEN, AT TWILIGHT ON SHABBAT EVE, that the ram would be at hand for Avraham when he should be in need of it. SO IT WAS REALLY BORN AT TWILIGHT, AND WHEN IT WAS ONE YEAR OLD, IT CHANCED UPON AVRAHAM. It was like all the other things created on Shabbat eve at twilight, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY WERE predestined to actually appear at the time of need. And so was that ram, which was sacrificed instead of Yitzchak.

506. וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו מֵלֶאךָ יי' וְגו', פָּסִיק טַעמָא בְּגוּוֹהוּ, דְּלֹא אַבְרָהָם בְּתִרְאָה, כְּדִמְאָה, בְּתִרְאָה שְׁלִים, קְדִמְאָה לֹא שְׁלִים, כְּגוּוֹנָא דָא, שְׁמוּאֵל שְׁמוּאֵל, בְּתִרְאָה שְׁלִים, קְדִמְאָה לֹא שְׁלִים. בְּתִרְאָה נְבִיא, קְדִמְאָה לֹא נְבִיא. אֲבָל מֹשֶׁה מֹשֶׁה, לֹא פָּסִיק, בְּגִין דְּמִיּוּמָא דִּאֲתִיּוּלִיד, לֹא אַעֲרִי מְנִיָּה שְׂכִינְתָא. אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם: רַבִּי חֵיָא אָמַר, בְּגִין לֹאֲתַעֲרָא לֵיהּ, בְּרוּחָא אַחֲרָא, בְּעוֹבְדָא אַחֲרָא, בְּלִבָּא אַחֲרָא.

507. ר' יְהוּדָה אָמַר, אֲתַבְרִיר יִצְחָק, וְאִסְתַּלִּיק בְּרַעוּתָא, קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּרִיחָא דְקִטְרֶת בּוֹסְמִין, דְּקִרְבִּין כְּהִנְיָא קָמִיָּה, תְּרִין זְמָנִין בְּיוּמָא, וְאִשְׁתַּלִּים קִרְבָּנָא. דִּהָא צַעֲרָא דִּאֲבְרָהָם הוּא, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דִּאֲתַמָּר לֵיהּ, אֵל תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ אֶל הַנֶּעֱר וְאַל תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאוּמָה. חָשִׁיב דְּקִרְבְּנִיָּה לֹא אִשְׁתַּלִּים, וְלִמְנָא עֵבֶד וְסֹדֶר כָּלָא, וּבְנָה מִזְבֵּחַ. מִיָּד וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה אֵיל אַחֵר וְגו'.

508. הָא תְּנִינָן הוּא אֵין דִּאֲתַבְרִי בִּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת הוּא. וְכֵן שְׁנָתוֹ הִיָּה, כְּדַבֵּר אַחֵר כְּבֶשׂ אֶחָד בֶּן שְׁנָתוֹ. וְהָכִי אֲצַטְרִיךְ, וְאֵת אִמְרֵת בִּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת. אֶלָּא אֲתַפְקֵד חֵילָא, לֹאֲדַמְנָא הֵהוּא אִימְרָא, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דִּאֲצַטְרִיךְ לֵיהּ לֹאֲבְרָהָם. כִּמָּה דְּכָל אֵינּוֹן מַלְכִּין, דִּהּוּ בִּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת, אֲתַמְנָא חֵילָא, לֹאֲדַמְנָא הֵהוּא מְלָה בְּשַׁעֲתָא דִּאֲצַטְרִיךְ לֵיהּ. הָכִי נָמִי, הָאִי אֵיל, דִּאֲתַקְרִיב תַּחֲוִיתִיה דִּיִּצְחָק.

### 38. "In all their affliction He was afflicted"

In the same way that a parent suffers when his or her child is hurting, the Zohar reveals that the Creator equally suffers when anyone in this world undergoes pain.

#### The Relevance of this Passage

The conventional religious view of the Creator is of a deity who metes out punishments and rewards. In reality, the Creator is an infinite force of sharing whose essence is only goodness, whose sole desire is to bestow unending pleasure upon the souls of man. The Creator neither punishes nor rewards. It is man's actions that determine which path to endless fulfillment he will journey. The gifts of the Torah and the Zohar were revealed so that man could choose the path of mercy and fulfillment. When we suffer or hurt, it is the inherent nature of the Creator to feel and experience this pain along with us. Awareness of this profound truth connects our soul to the Creator helping to quickly dissipate any darkness that is causing

pain in our life. We create the consciousness that the Creator is always with us, feeling our pain whenever we hurt.

509. He opened the discussion with the verse: "In all their affliction He was (Heb. lo) afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them" (Yeshayah 63:9). Come and behold: during the time when Yisrael are afflicted with troubles, "lo ('not') is spelled with the letter Aleph, but pronounced "LO ('HE WAS') with the letter Vav, because the Holy One, blessed be He, is distressed by their affliction. So lo with an Aleph, WHICH MEANS THAT HE WAS NOT DISTRESSED, refers to a higher place. Even though there is no sorrow or grief up there at the place DESCRIBED BY THE WORDS, "STRENGTH AND GLADNESS ARE IN HIS PLACE," (I DIVREI HAYAMIM 16:27) NEVERTHELESS, the afflictions of Yisrael reach this high place. The term "lo" with an Aleph is used similarly in "it is He that has made us and not (Heb. lo) ourselves," (Tehilim 100:3) where "lo" is written with an Aleph, but pronounced with a Vav, WHICH LITERALLY MEANS 'AND WE BELONG TO HIM (Heb. LO).'

510. Of the verse, "and the angel of His presence saved them," (Yeshayah 63:9) HE ASKED: But He is together with them in their affliction, AS THE BEGINNING OF THE VERSE STATES. Now you are saying that He "saved them." IF HE IS STILL TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THEIR AFFLICTION, THEN HE HAS NOT YET "SAVED THEM." AND HE REPLIES: It is not written, 'saves them,' but "saved them," IN THE PAST TENSE, meaning that they had already been saved. THIS MEANS THAT HE "SAVED THEM" by staying together with them in the same affliction and suffering with them. Come and behold: every time the children of Yisrael are in exile, the Shechinah is with them; this has already been explained, as it is written: "Then Hashem your Elohim will return your captivity, and have compassion upon you" (Devarim 30:3). THE VERSE 'WILL RETURN YOUR CAPTIVITY,' LITERALLY MEANS 'WILL RETURN' USING THE INTRANSITIVE, MEANING TO INFORM US THAT THE SHECHINAH IS WITH THEM IN EXILE NAMLY 'WILL SIT'.

511. A different explanation of the verse: "and the angel of His presence saved them" is that it refers to the Shechinah, which is with them in exile, AS IS STATED IN THE BEGINNING OF THE VERSE. You claim that He "saved them," BUT IF HE IS TOGETHER WITH THEM IN EXILE, THEN HE HAS NOT YET "SAVED THEM." AND HE REPLIES: IT is certainly true that the residing places of the Holy One, blessed be He, in exile are WHEREVER THE AFFLICTIONS OF YISRAEL ARE--MEANING THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, IS PRESENT IN EVERY SINGLE AFFLICTION AND SORROW BROUGHT UPON YISRAEL. And because the Shechinah resides with them, the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers to benefit them and draw them out of exile, as it is first written: "and I have remembered my covenant," (Shemot 6:5) WHICH REFERS TO THE SHECHINAH. Later, it is written: "and now, behold, the cry of the children of Yisrael has come to me" (Shemot 3:9). SO HE ACTUALLY "SAVED THEM" BY BEING WITH THEM IN THEIR AFFLICTION. AND EVEN THOUGH THE FORMER VERSE APPEARS AFTER THE LATTER, THERE IS NO CONTRADICTION HERE, BECAUSE THERE IS NO CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE IN THE TORAH.

509. פֶּתַח וְאָמַר בְּכָל צָרָתָם לֹא צָר וּמִלָּאךְ פָּנָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵם וְגו'. תָּא חַיִּי, בְּכָל צָרָתָם דִּישְׂרָאֵל, בְּדִ אֲדָמָן לֹון עֶאקָן, כְּתִיב לֹא בְּאֵל"ף, וְקָרִי בּוֹא"ו, בְּגִין דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עִמָּהוֹן בְּעָקוֹ. לֹא בְּאֵל"ף, אֲתֵר עֲלָאָה יִתִּיר, אֵף עַל גַּב, דְּלֹאוּ בְּהֵוּא אֲתֵר, רֹגְזָא וְעָקוֹ, לְהֵתָם לְעִילָא, מָטָא עֲקֵתָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל. לֹא בְּאֵל"ף, כְּדָבָר אַחֵר הוּא עֲשָׂנוּ וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ. כְּתִיב בְּאֵל"ף, וְקָרִי בּוֹא"ו.

510. וּמִלָּאךְ פָּנָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵם. וְהָא אִיהוּ עִמָּהוֹן, בְּהֵוּא עָקוֹ, וְאֵת אֲמַרְתָּ הוֹשִׁיעֵם. אֵלָא מוֹשִׁיעֵם לֹא כְּתִיב אֵלָא הוֹשִׁיעֵם, מְקַדְּמַת דְּנָא, דְּאִיהוּ זְמִין, בְּהֵוּא עָקוֹ, לְמַסְכַּל עִמָּהוֹן. תָּא חַיִּי, בְּכָל זְמָנָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל אֵינוֹן בְּגִלוּתָא, שְׂכִינְתָא עִמָּהוֹן בְּגִלוּתָא, וְהָא אוֹקְמוּהָ, דְּכְתִיב וְשָׁב יי' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ וְרַחֲמֶיךָ וְגו'.

511. דְּבַר אַחֵר וּמִלָּאךְ פָּנָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵם, דָּא שְׂכִינְתָא, דְּאִיהוּ עִמָּהוֹן בְּגִלוּתָא וְאֵת אֲמַרְתָּ דְּאִיהוּ הוֹשִׁיעֵם. אֵלָא הֵכִי הוּא וְדָאִי, דְּאֵלִין אֵינוֹן, מְשַׁכְּנוּתִיו דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּגִלוּתָא, וּבְגִין דְּשְׂכִינְתָא עִמָּהוֹן, קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲדָבָר לֹון, לְאוּטְבָא לֹון, וְלֹאֲמָקָא לֹון מִן גִּלוּתָא, דְּכְתִיב וְאֶזְכֹּר אֶת בְּרִיתִי, בְּקִדְמִיתָא, וּלְבַתֵּר וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה צִעֲקַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָה אֵלַי.

512. The phrase, "moreover I have seen" includes another 'seeing,' which is the first among all, as it is written: "And Elohim remembered His covenant," (Shemot 2:24) which is the Shechinah. THIS VERSE APPEARS BEFORE THE VERSE: "AND I HAVE REMEMBERED MY COVENANT...with (et) Avraham." HE ASKS: It should have been written 'REMEMBERED HIS COVENANT for Avraham's sake'? AND HE ANSWERS: "with Avraham" alludes to the unison and joining OF THE SHECHINAH with the Patriarchs, BECAUSE THE PARTICLE "ET", WRITTEN BEFORE "AVRAHAM", IS THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH. SO "with Avraham" means the Southwest, THAT IS, THE "EMBRACING" OF THE RIGHT, BECAUSE THE SOUTH IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT AND OF CHESD, WHICH IS AVRAHAM. THE WEST IS THE SECRET OF THE SHECHINAH, WHICH IS CALLED ET AND WHICH AVRAHAM 'EMBRACES' WITH CHASSADIM. "...with Yitzchak..." refers to the Northwest, NAMELY THE 'EMBRACING' OF THE LEFT, BECAUSE THE NORTH IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT AND OF GVURAH, WHICH IS CALLED YITZCHAK. AND THE WEST IS THE SECRET OF THE SHECHINAH, WHICH IS CALLED "ET" AND WHICH YITZCHAK 'EMBRACES' WITH HIS GEVUROT. "...and with Ya'akov..." means One Union, One Whole--a perfect and complete union, as should properly be. THIS ALLUDES TO THE MATING OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS CALLED YA'AKOV, WITH THE SHECHINAH, WHICH IS CALLED "ET." AND THE MATING CANNOT BE COMPLETED WITHOUT THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS YA'AKOV. SO WITH AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, THERE WAS ONLY 'EMBRACING'. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN OF YA'AKOV: ONE UNION. THUS THE PHRASE "AND WITH (HEB. VE-ET) YA'AKOV" CONSISTS OF THEM BOTH, AS ONE WHOLE. SO THE EXTRA LETTER VAV IN "VE-ET" ALLUDES TO THE PERFECTION OF THIS MATING, WHICH IS A PERFECT AND COMPLETE MATING.

513. Similarly, IT IS WRITTEN: "(et) the heavens" (Beresheet 1:1), which is the quality of the night, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, with day, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. "...and the (ve-et) earth..." refers to the union of the quality of the day with THE QUALITY OF the night as one. THIS REFERS TO THE INCLUSION OF ZEIR ANPIN IN THE NUKVA, BECAUSE THE LETTER VAV IN "VE-ET ('AND THE') ALLUDES TO UNION OF THE MALE WITH THE FEMALE. So the term "et" ('the')" appears in them all, AS IN WITH (ET) AVRAHAM AND WITH (ET) YITZCHAK. However, in reference to Ya'akov it is written: "and with (ve-et)," WHICH SHOWS THAT they are in complete unison, for the Male and Female never depart from each other. And the Holy One, blessed be He, in the future shall make His voice heard and announce to all the world, "For He said, Surely, they are My people, children that will not deal falsely; so He was their savior" (Yeshayah 63:8).

Blessed be Hashem for evermore. Amen and Amen.

512. וגם ראיתי. לאִסְגָּאָה רֵאִיָּה אַחֲרָא, דְּאִיָּהוּ קְדָמָא דְּכָלָא, וּכְתִיב וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת בְּרִיתוֹ, דָּא שְׂכִינָתָא. אֶת אַבְרָהָם, לְאַבְרָהָם מִבְּעֵי לִיָּה, אֱלָא אֶת אַבְרָהָם, דָּא הוּא, חֲבֻרָתָא וְזוּגָא דִּילָהּ, בְּאַבְהָן. אֶת אַבְרָהָם, דָּא הוּא, מְעַרְבִית דְּרוּמִית. אֶת יִצְחָק, דָּא הוּא, צְפוֹנִית מְעַרְבִית. וְאֶת יַעֲקֹב, דָּא הוּא, זוּגָא חָדָא, כָּלְלָא חָדָא, זוּגָא שְׁלִים, כְּדָקָא יְאוּת.

513. כְּגוּוֹנָא דָּא, אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם, דָּא הוּא, כָּלְלָא מִדָּת לִילָה בַּיּוֹם. וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ, דָּא מִדָּת יוֹם בְּלִילָה כְּחָדָא. אוּף הָכָא, בְּכֻלָּהּ אֶת, וּבִיעָקֵב וְאֶת, לְמַהוּ כָּלָא, זוּגָא חָדָא, דִּלָּא מִתְפָּרְשִׁין דְּכַר וְנוקְבָא לְעֵלְמִין. וְחִמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא, לְאַכְרִזָּא בְּכָל עֲלָמָא, וּלְאַשְׁמַעָא קַל, דִּיּוּמָא, וַיֹּאמֶר אַךְ עַמִּי הֵמָּה בְּנִים לֹא יִשְׁקְרוּ וַיְהִי לָהֶם לְמוֹשִׁיעַ. בְּרוּךְ י' לְעוֹלָם אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.