

1. "So they took up Yonah, and cast him into the sea"

Here Rabbi Yosi explains the hidden meaning of the biblical story of Yonah and the whale, and the nature of the symbols used in the story. We learn that the soul is judged each night while we sleep, and that this judgment is twofold. People are not judged according to the evil that they are destined to commit, but rather for the good that they have done and will go on to do. The question of whether The Creator takes pleasure in punishing the wicked is then raised. In answer, it is pointed out that all human beings have a predetermined amount of evil they are allowed to commit. Once this limit passed, there is pleasure at their demise.

The Relevance of this Passage

The universal law of cause and effect is deeply embedded into our reality. For every negative action there is an equal negative reaction. The concept of time, however, creates a separation between cause and effect in our physical world. When man commits a negative deed, time delays the inevitable consequences. Repercussions from wrongful actions appear at a later date, creating the illusion that these repercussions are random events. Our negative inclination then tempts us to point the finger of blame at God because the original cause--our negative action--is forgotten and hidden somewhere in the past. A reading of this section makes us more keenly aware of our actions and the judgments they invariably bring, arousing a stronger intention to ardently walk the path of righteousness.

1. "And Sarah's life was a hundred year and twenty year and seven years" (Beresheet 23:1). Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse, "So they took up Yonah, and cast him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging" (Yonah 1:15). We have to examine this text carefully. Why did the sea rage upon Yonah and not the earth, NAMELY THE NUKVA CALLED EARTH? He was leaving the land, so that the Shechinah would not hover above him. IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS RUNNING AWAY FROM THE LAND OF YISRAEL-FROM THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. If so, why did the sea seize him when he went away, AND NOT THE LAND FROM WHICH HE RAN?

1. וַיְהִי חַיִּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעֵי שָׁנִים. רַבִּי יוֹסִי, פָּתַח וַאֲמַר, וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת יוֹנָה וַיִּטְלֻהוּ אֶל הַיָּם וַיַּעֲמֵד הַיָּם מִזְעָפוֹ. הֲבֵא אֵיךְ לְאַסְתָּבֵּלָהּ, מִ"ט, אֶרְעִישָׁתָּ יָמָא, עָלֶיהָ דִּיּוֹנָה, וְלֹא אֶרְעִישָׁתָּ עָלֶיהָ אֶרְעָא, בֵּינָן דִּהוּהָ אַזִּיל, בְּגִין דְּלֹא תִשְׁרִי עָלֶיהָ שְׂכִינְתָּא, יָמָא אַמְאִי אַחִיד בֵּיהּ, כִּד הוּהָ אַזִּיל.

2. RABBI YOSI ANSWERS THAT the verse was accurate, for the sea resembles the firmament, and the firmament resembles the throne of glory. For that reason, the sea grabbed him and received him in its midst. He was fleeing from the sea, NAMELY FROM THE PROPHECY THAT IS DRAWN FROM THE MOCHIN OF THE NUKVA, WHICH IS AN ASPECT OF THE SEA. THUS, THE SEA RAGED UPON HIM, NOT THE LAND. HE WAS CAST INTO THE SEA TO RETURN HIM TO THE PROPHECY FROM WHICH HE WAS FLEEING.

2. אֵלָא, וְדַאי מְלָה בְּאַתְרֵיהּ הוּהּ. יָם, תַּנּוּ, יָם דְּמִיָּא לְרַקִּיעַ, וְרַקִּיעַ לְכִסֵּא הַכְּבוֹד, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, יָמָא אַחִיד בֵּיהּ וְנִטַּל לֵיהּ, מִקְמִי יָמָא עֵרָק.

3. "So they took up Yonah, and cast him into the sea." We learned that when they cast him into the sea and immersed him to his knees, the sea calmed. When they lifted him, the sea raged. The deeper they immersed him, the calmer the sea became, until he said, "Take me up, and cast me into the sea" (Yonah 1:12). Immediately, "they took up Yonah, and cast him into the sea."

3. וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת יוֹנָה וַיִּטְלֻהוּ אֶל הַיָּם. אוֹלִיפְנָא, כִּד הוּהָ נִטְלִי לֵיהּ וְטַבְעֵי וִרְכוּיָא בִּימָא, הוּהָ יָמָא שְׂכִינָךְ, זְקָמִין לֵיהּ, אֶתְרַעִישׁ יָמָא, כֹּל מַה דְּטַבְעֵי לֵיהּ, הָכִי אֶשְׁתַּכִּיךְ יָמָא, עַד דְּאִיהוּ אָמַר, שְׂאוּנִי וְהִטִּילְנִי אֶל הַיָּם, מִיָּד וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת יוֹנָה וַיִּטְלֻהוּ אֶל הַיָּם.

4. When he was thrown into the sea, his soul soared and ascended to the King's throne to be judged. When his soul was returned to him, he entered the mouth of that fish, which died and later came back to life.

4. בֵּינָן דְּאַתְרֵמִי בִּים פְּרַחָה מְנִיָּה נִשְׁמַתִּיהּ וְסִלְקָא עַד בְּרִסְיָא דְּמַלְכָּא, וְאַתְדַּנָּת קְמִיָּה, וְאַתְדַּרְתָּ לֵיהּ נִשְׁמַתִּיהּ, וְעָאֵל בְּפֻמָּא דִּהוּהָ נֻנָּא, וּמִית נֻנָּא לְבַתֵּר אֶתְקִיָּים הוּהָ נֻנָּא, וְאוֹקְמוּהָ.

5. Come and behold: When a man goes to sleep each night, his soul leaves him to be judged before the King's court. If it merits life, his soul is returned to this world.

5. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּבֵר נֶשׁ סְלִיק בְּעַרְסִיָּה, כֹּל לִילִיא וְלִילִיא נִשְׁמַתִּיהּ נִפְקַת מְנִיָּה, וְאַתְדַּנָּת קְמִי בִּי דִּינָא דְּמַלְכָּא, אִי זָבָא לְאַתְקִיָּימָא, אֶתְדַּרְתָּ לְהָאִי עֲלֵמָא.

6. The judgement is twofold, for man is not judged for the evil he is destined to commit. "For Elohim has heard the voice of the lad where he is" (Beresheet 21:17) is written, NOT IN THE FUTURE TENSE. You should not say that man is judged only for the good he has already done, rather he is rewarded for his present good as was said above, and he is also judged for the good he will do in the future. He is saved for their sake, as they said, even though he is now wicked. The Holy One, blessed be He, does good with all people and does everything to benefit all, therefore He does not sentence man for the evil he is about to do. Hence, man is judged before the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO KNOWS THE FUTURE.

7. Come and behold. Once they cast Yonah into the sea, it is written: "And the sea ceased (lit. 'stood') from its raging." THIS IS the supernal sea, THE NUKVA. It stood where it was, for when anger calms down, it stands. When judgement is passed upon the world, that court, NAMELY THE NUKVA, is like a pregnant woman experiencing severe labor pains. When she gives birth, the panic ceases. Similarly, when judgement is passed upon the world, it does not calm or rest until justice is administered to the wicked. Then it rests, wholly standing in its place and perfectly maintained. This is what the verse meant by the words: "But when the wicked perish, there is jubilation" (Mishlei 11:10). This has already been explained.

8. HE THEN ASKS ABOUT THE VERSE, "But when the wicked perish, there is jubilation." Is it not written, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die" (Yechezkel 18:23)? This would mean that there is no pleasure for the Holy One, blessed be He, when judgement is administered to the wicked. HE ANSWERS, Before their measure was filled, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, DID NOT HAVE PLEASURE THAT THE WICKED SHOULD DIE. But now, after the measure is full, "WHEN THE WICKED PERISH, THERE IS JUBILATION."

6. וְדִינָא הוּא בְּתָרִין גּוֹוִנִין, דְּהָא לֹא דִינִין לִיה לְבַר נֶשׁ, עַל בּוֹשִׁין דְּאִיהוּ עֲתִיד וְזִמִּין לְמַעְבַּד, דְּכִתִּיב בִּי שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וְגו' בְּאִשְׁרֵי הוּא שָׁם. וְלֹא תִימָא, דְּדִנִין לִיה עַל טְבִין דְּעֵבִיד לְחוּד, אֲלֵא לְאוֹטְבָא לִיה עַל אִינוֹן טְבִין דְּהִשְׁתָּא, כְּמָה דְּאִתְמַר, וְדִנִין לִיה עַל זְכוּיִן דְּאִיהוּ זִמִּין לְמַעְבַּד, וּבְגִינִיָּהּ אֲשֶׁתִּיב, אַע"ג דְּאִיהוּ הִשְׁתָּא חַיִּיבָא. בְּגִין דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֵבִיד טִיבּוּ, עִם כָּל בְּרִינִין, וְכָל אֲרַחוּי דְּאִיהוּ עֵבִיד, לְאוֹטְבָא לְכָלֵּא, וְלֹא דְאִין לִב"נ, עַל בּוֹשִׁין דְּאִיהוּ זִמִּין לְמַעְבַּד, וּבְגִין כֵּן אִתְדִין בַּר נֶשׁ, קִמֵּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

7. תָּא חַזִּי, בִּינוֹן דְּאִטְלוּ לִיה לִיוֹנָה בִּימָא, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיַּעֲמֵד הָיִם מִזְעָפּוּ. הָיִם עֲלָא, מֵאִי וַיַּעֲמֵד, דְּקָאִים בְּקִיּוּמִיָּה, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, בְּעֵמִידָהּ אִיהוּ, בְּדִּינָא רּוֹגְזָא שְׂכִיךְ, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּדִינָא שְׂרִיא בְּעֵלְמָא, הָהוּא בִּי דִינָא, אִיהוּ בְּאִתְתָּא דְּמִתְעַבְרָא, וְקִשְׁיָא לְאוֹלְדָא, וְכִד אֻלְיִדְתָּ שְׂכִיךְ רּוֹגְזָא. הֵכִי נִמֵּי, בְּדִינָא שְׂרִיא בְּעֵלְמָא לֹא שְׂכִיךְ וְלֹא נַח, עַד דְּאִתְעֵבִיד דִּינָא בְּחַיִּיבָא, בְּדִין הוּא נִיּוּחָא דִּילִיָּה, לְמִיקָם בְּרוּכְתָּא שְׁלִים, וְלְמִיקָם בְּקִיּוּמִיָּה, הֵה"ר וּבְאַבְדִּי רְשָׁעִים רְנָה. וְהָא אוֹקְמוּהָ.

8. בְּאַבְדִּי רְשָׁעִים רְנָה. וְהִכְתִּיב הִחְפֵּץ אֲחַפֵּץ מוֹת הָרָשָׁע. וְהָא לִית נִיּוּחָא קִמֵּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּדִינָא אִתְעֵבִיד דִּינָא בְּרִשְׁוִיעֵיָּא. אֲלֵא, כָּאן קוּדְשָׁא דְּאִשְׁתָּלִים קִיסְטָא, כָּאן לְבַתֵּר דְּאִשְׁתָּלִים קִיסְטָא.

2. And Dumah rises, and receives the reckoning

The Zohar describes disturbing details concerning the fate awaiting the wicked at the time of the Resurrection of the Dead, emphasizing the urgent need for all of us to replace our bad deeds with good ones immediately.

The Relevance of this Passage

Intellectual blockages in our consciousness prevent us from completely accepting and beholding the truth of the World To Come and the gravity of our erring actions. Though we might accept the notion of a Creator and other spiritual principles on a purely intellectual level, internalizing and living these truths is a much more difficult task, and the basis of our spiritual work. The intent of this passage is to remove impediments and doubts, opening our eyes to spiritual truths and stimulating greater awareness. As we become more devout in our pursuit of righteousness, replacing the bad we have done in this world becomes an intrinsic part of our nature. And this process is furthered by the Light emanating from this portion.

Tosefta (Addendum)

9. "And Sarah's life was..." The body of the Mishnah, NAMELY ITS ESSENCE, WAS LONG AND IS NOW ABRIDGED. We, WHO ARE VERSED IN THE MISHNAH, were close TO THE INNER SIDE OF THE GRADE and heard a voice that travels down from above and expands throughout the world. This voice uproots mountains and smashes strong rocks, NAMELY ITS ILLUMINATION UPROOTS AND SMASHES ALL THE KLIPOT. Great spirits rise, and ears are open.

10. As THE VOICE TRAVELS TO THREE PLACES, it says: cut off a portion, how the still ones, who are still sleeping, maintain their guard and stand in position. The king, NUKVA, guards the gates, as the ruler over many armies stands by his post.

11. Nobody notices or knows that the book is open, and is written in by a name, and Dumah rises to receive the reckoning. The dwellers of dust, NAMELY THE WICKED, go back outside. The good part, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, THAT IS YESOD, WHICH IS CALLED GOOD APPROCHES, to be counted among them, but they do not wish for rolling and reversing.

12. BECAUSE THEY DO NOT WANT THE ROLLING AND REVERSING, they fall and do not come back to life. THUS, the wicked are wiped from the book of Dumah. Who then shall claim them AT THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, AS IT IS SAID THAT AT THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION, THE ANGEL MATATRON WILL RECEIVE A NOTE AT THE CEMETERIES FROM DUMAH. BUT WHO WILL CLAIM THOSE WICKED WHO ARE NOT ACCOUNTED FOR IN THE RECKONING OF DUMAH AT THE RESURRECTION? And who will care for their accounts? THIS ALLUDES TO THE HARSH KLIPAH NAMED "SICHON," WHO DOES THE RECKONING AND CORRESPONDS TO "DUMAH", FOR "DUMAH" MEANS SILENCE, WHILE "SICHON" MEANS CONVERSATION OR TALKING. Woe to them, woe to their lives, woe to their pains. For them, the verse says: "Let them be blotted out of the Book of the Living" (Tehilim 69:29).

End of Tosefta (Addendum)

תוספתא

9. ויהיו חיי שרה. גופא דמתניתין, אנו קריבין הוינא, שמענא קלא מתהפך מעילא לתתא, אתפשט בעלמא, קל מתבר טורין, ומתבר טורין תקיפין, עלעולין רברבין סלקין, אורנא פתיחין.

10. הוה אמר במטלנוי קוץ קוציתא, דמיכן דמימין דשינתא בחוריהון, קיימין בקיומיהון. מלכא דממללא, נטרי תרעין, שליטא דחילין סגיאין, קם בקיומיה.

11. בלהו לא מרגשן, ולא ידעי דספרא פתיח, ובשמא אכתוב, ודומה קאים, ונטיל בחושבנא, ודיירי עפרא תיבין לבר, וקריב טב לאתמנא בהו, לא תאיבין, גלגולא והפוך.

12. נפלין ולא קיימין, אתמחון חייבין מספרא דדומה, מאן יתבע לון, ומאן יתיב בחושבנהון, ווי לון, ווי לחיהון, ווי לרגשיהון, בגינהון אתקרי, ימחו מספר חיים וגו'.
(ער כאן תוספתא)

3. "He who tills a field is a king"

There is a hidden meaning in the mention of Sarah's exact life span in the Torah, for such details are given for no other women--nor does any other woman have a portion of the scriptures devoted to her name, as Sarah does. The symbols employed by passages concerning Sarah are pointed out and explained, along with the meaning of various statements that cannot be unlocked without the key of Kabbalah. We learn that, like Avraham, Sarah did not in any way cling to negative inclinations. This earned supernal life for herself, her husband, and later, her son.

The Relevance of this Passage

Man, on his own, does not possess the inner power necessary to eradicate the dark side of his nature. Scriptural giants like Avraham and Sarah, however, are generators of such spiritual forces. Their existence in this physical realm and their presence in the Torah, serve as a wellspring of this energy, from which all generations can draw. Sarah's grace and godliness, together with the energy of supernal life, reach us through the medium of the Aramaic words comprising this passage.

13. "And Sarah's life was...": HE ASKS: Of all the women in the world, Why is Sarah the only one whose death is mentioned in Torah? Rabbi Chiya answered, This is not so, for it is written: "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Efrat" (Beresheet 35:19), "and Miriam died there" (Bemidbar 20:1), "and D'vorah, Rivkah's nurse, died" (Beresheet 35:8), and "the daughter of Shua, Yehuda's wife died" (Beresheet 38:12). THE DEATH OF MANY WOMEN IS MENTIONED IN THE TORAH.

13. ויהיו חיי שרה. מאי שנא הכא שרה, דכתיב מיתתה באורייתא, מכל נשי דעלמא, דלא כתיב הכי מיתתהון באורייתא. אמר רבי חייא, ולא, והכתיב ותמת רחל ותקבר בדרך אפרתה. וכתיב ותמת שם מרים וגו'. וכתיב, ותמת דבורה מינקת רבקה. וכתיב ותמת בת שוע אשת יהודה.

14. Rabbi Yosi responded: But it is not written of them as it is written of Sarah, of whom it is said, "And Sarah's life was a hundred and twenty seven years old: these were the years of Sarah's life" (Beresheet 23:1). No other woman's days and years were specified as they were for Sarah. Furthermore, none of them has a portion of the scriptures devoted to them, as does Sarah. There is an esoteric reason for this. IN THE SCRIPTURES, SARAH'S DAYS AND YEARS ARE SPECIFIED, but the secret is that the days and years of all men depend on this grade. THIS MEANS THAT THE MOCHIN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE LIFE SPAN OF SARAH, IS ALLUDED TO IN THE NUMBER "127 YEARS." FROM THIS, THE LIFE SPAN OF MAN IS ALSO DRAWN.

15. He opened with the verse, "Moreover, land has an advantage for everyone: he who tills a field is a king" (Kohelet 5:8). "Moreover, land has an advantage" IS THE NUKVA "for everyone." Certainly, THIS IS THE SECRET OF YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED "All" (Heb. kol). Because FROM YESOD emanate spirits and souls and goods to the world. Of the verse, "He who tills a field is a king," IT IS ASKED, Who is the king? He is the Holy One, blessed be He, who "tills a field" when it is properly cultivated. The King is the supernal King, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, who is joined to the field when it is tilled. IT IS ASKED, What is the field? This is a field which Hashem has blessed, NAMELY THE NUKVA, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "Like the smell of a field which Hashem has blessed" (Beresheet 27:27). For when it is tilled and cultivated properly, the supernal King, ZEIR ANPIN, unites with it.

16. Rabbi Elazar asks: How many mysteries are alluded to in the verse, "He who tills a field is a king"! A king is the Shechinah, which only dwells in a man's house when he is married and mates with his wife to beget children and bear fruit. And she, THE SHECHINAH, brings out souls to dwell in her, which is why THE SHECHINAH IS CONNECTED only to a tilled field.

17. Another explanation: A king is "a woman who fears Hashem," as it is written: "A woman who fears Hashem, she shall be praised" (Mishlei 31:30). THIS IS THE SHECHINAH. A tilled field is a strange woman, NAMELY THE OTHER SIDE, as it is written: "That they may keep you from the strange woman" (Mishlei 7:5). For there is a field, and there is a field. There is a field in which all blessings and holiness dwell, as it is written: "Like the smell of a field which Hashem has blessed," NAMELY THE SHECHINAH. And there is a field, in which destruction and defilement, extinction, killings and war reside, NAMELY THE OTHER SIDE. This king, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH, sometimes tills the second field, THE OTHER SIDE, as it is written: "For three things the earth is disquieted...and a handmaid that is heir to her mistress" (Mishlei 30:21). IN THIS CASE, HEAVEN FORBID, THE FIELD OF THE OTHER SIDE INHERITS THE SHECHINAH, AND THE LIGHT OF THE SHECHINAH is covered and darkened until it is purified and joins ZEIR ANPIN above.

14. אָמַר ר' יוֹסִי, בְּכֻלָּהוּ לֹא כָתִיב, כִּמְה דְּכָתִיב בְּשָׂרָה, דְּאַתְמַר, וַיְהִי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה. דְּהָא בְּכֻלָּהוּ, לֹא אֶתְמַנּוּן יוֹמִין וְשָׁנִין, כְּמוֹ לְשָׂרָה. בְּכֻלָּהוּ לֹא כָתִיב פְּרִשְׁתָּא חֲדָא בְּלַחְדָּהָא, כְּמוֹ לְשָׂרָה. אֲלֵא, רָזָא אִיהוּ, בְּגִין הָהוּא דְרָגָא, דְּכָל יוֹמִין וְשָׁנִין דְּבִר נֶשׁ, בֵּיה תְלִין.

15. פִּתַּח וְאָמַר, וַיִּתְּרוֹן אֶרֶץ כָּל הָיָא מֶלֶךְ לְשָׂרָה נַעֲבָד. וַיִּתְּרוֹן אֶרֶץ כָּל הָיָא וְדָאִי, דְּהָא מִתְּמַן נִמְקִין רוּחִין וְנִשְׁמָתִין, וְתוֹעֵלְתָא לְעֵלְמָא. מֶלֶךְ לְשָׂרָה נַעֲבָד, מֵאֵן מֶלֶךְ, דָּא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא. לְשָׂרָה נַעֲבָד, כִּד אִיהוּ אֶתְתֵּקֶן בְּדָקָא יָאוּת. וּמֶלֶךְ, דָּא מֶלֶךְ עֲלָאָה, דְּאַתְחַבֵּר לְשָׂרָה, כִּד אִיהוּ נַעֲבָד. מֵאֵן שָׂרָה, דָּא שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּרָכּוּ ה'. דְּכָתִיב בְּרִיחַ שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּרָכּוּ ה'. דְּכִד אִיהוּ נַעֲבָד וְאַתְתֵּקֶן, כָּל מַה דְּאַצְטְרִין לִיה, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, כְּדִין מֶלֶךְ עֲלָאָה אֶתְחַבֵּר עִמֶּיהָ.

16. רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אָמַר, מֶלֶךְ לְשָׂרָה נַעֲבָד. כִּמְה גּוֹוִי, רִזִּין עֲלָאִין הָכָא. מֶלֶךְ: דָּא שְׂכִינְתָּא, דְּלֹא שְׂרִיא בְּבִיתָא, לְאַתְתֵּקְנָא בֵּיה, אֲלֵא בְּזִמְנָא דְּאַתְנָסִיב בִּר נֶשׁ, וְאַזְדָּוָג בְּאַנְתִּיתָהּ, לְאוּלְדָּא וּלְמַעֲבָד אִיבִין, וְאִיהִי אִמִּיקַת נִשְׁמָתִין, לְאַשְׂרָאָה בֵּיה, וּבְגִין כִּן לְשָׂרָה נַעֲבָד, וְלֹא לְאַחֲרָא.

17. דְּבִר אַחֵר, מֶלֶךְ: דָּא אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת ה', כִּדְבִר אַחֵר אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת ה' הִיא תִתְהַלֵּל. לְשָׂרָה נַעֲבָד, דָּא אִשָּׁה זָרָה, כִּדְבִר אַחֵר לְשִׁמְרִין מֵאִשָּׁה זָרָה. בְּגִין דְּאִית שָׂרָה, וְאִית שָׂרָה. אִית שָׂרָה, דְּכָל בְּרָכָאן וְקוּדְשִׁין, בֵּיה שְׂרִיין, כִּמְה דָּאֵת אָמַר, בְּרִיחַ שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּרָכּוּ ה'. וְאִית שָׂרָה, דְּכָל חִירוּב וּמִסָּאָבוּ, וְשִׁינְעָאָה, וְקִטּוּלִין, וְקִרְבִּין, בֵּיה שְׂרִיין. וְהִיא מֶלֶךְ, זְמַנִּין דְּאִיהוּ נַעֲבָד לְהֵאֵי שָׂרָה, דְּכָתִיב, תַּחַת שְׁלֹשׁ רִגְזָה אֶרֶץ וְגו', תַּחַת עֶבֶד כִּי יִמְלֹךְ, וְגו', וְשִׁפְחָה כִּי תִירֶשׁ גְּבִירָתָהּ. וְהִיא מֶלֶךְ, אֶתְכַסִּיא נְהוּרִיָּה וְאַתְחַשֵּׁךְ עַד דְּאַתְדַּבֵּי, וְאַתְחַבֵּר לְעִילָא.

18. This is the purpose of offering the goat on the first day of the month, when no blessings dwell upon the second field, THE OTHER SIDE, as it is separated from the holy king, THE SHECHINAH. When that field is tilled FOR THE OTHER SIDE, then it is written: "For he found her in the field, AND THE BETROTHED MAIDEN CRIED OUT, BUT THERE WAS NONE TO SAVE HER" (Devarim 22:27), the field is THE OTHER SIDE, as has been explained.

19. Come and behold: Chavah came into the world and clung to the serpent. He injected impurities into her, and she brought death to the world and to her husband. Sarah then came and went down INTO THE PLACE OF THE OTHER SIDE, BUT she rose again without any KLIPOT clinging to her, as it is written: "And Avram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had" (Beresheet 13:1). When Noach came to the world, it is written that "he drank of the wine, and was drunk, and he was uncovered within his tent" (Beresheet 9:21).

20. Because Avraham and Sarah did not cling to THE OTHER SIDE, Sarah earned supernal life for herself, her husband, and her son after her. This is the meaning of the verse: "Look at the rock whence you are hewn [AVRAHAM], and to the hole of the pit from which you were dug out [SARAH]" (Yeshayah 51:1). Therefore, it is written: "And Sarah's life was...", for she merited all THE YEARS. It is not so for the rest of the women, FOR IT IS NOT WRITTEN: "And Chavah's life was..." and so on. Sarah clung to life. Therefore, her life was her own.

4. He who is small and he who is great

The inner meaning of Sarah's age, as cited in the Torah, relates to the importance of approaching life with reverence and humility--for The Creator delights in those who transcend pride and self-interest, raising them in stature, whereas He diminishes those who inflate themselves with self-importance and vanity. Greatness in the world above is attained by behaving with humility and selflessness here in the physical realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

When people succumb to the demands of their ego, preoccupying themselves with affairs in the material world, they receive immediate, but short-lived gratification and rewards. Their self-love deepens and their hearts harden. In contrast, spiritual accomplishments do not gratify the ego. For this reason, humility and selflessness are more difficult to kindle, though their rewards are far greater and long-lasting. Kabbalah teaches that the eternal World To Come is not somewhere in the future, but is readily attainable here and now, according to our degree of spiritual transformation. A reading of this section helps us to resist pride and arrogance by raising our awareness of their consequences in the physical and spiritual realms. Tosefta (Addendum)

21. Happy is he who makes less of himself in this world. How great and high he is in the eternal world. The head of the Yeshivah spoke to that effect, saying that whoever is small IN THIS WORLD is great IN THE ETERNAL WORLD. He who is great IN THIS WORLD is small IN THE ETERNAL WORLD, as it is written: "And Sarah's life was a hundred year..." A hundred, which is a large number, is followed by the word "year", FOR IT IS LESSENER TO A YEAR. Seven, WHICH IS A SMALL NUMBER, was greatly increased, for it is followed by the word "years." Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, only makes greater the person who lessens himself. He diminishes only the person who makes himself great. Happy is he who diminishes himself in this world. How great he is above in the eternal world. End of Tosefta (Addendum)

18. וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ שְׁעִיר דֶּרֶחַ, בִּגִּין דְּאֶתְמַרְשׁ הָהוּא שָׂרָה מִמֶּלֶכָא קְדִישָׁא, וְלֹא שְׂרִיין בִּהְיָ שָׂרָה בִּרְכָאן, מֵהָאֵי מֶלֶךְ. וְכֵר אִיהוּ נֶעְבֵּד לֵהָאֵי שָׂרָה, כְּדִין כְּתִיב, כִּי בִשְׂדֵה מִצָּאָה וְגו'. כִּי בִשְׂדֵה כְּמָה דְּאֶתְמַר.

19. תָּא חֲזִי, אֶתְתַּ חָדָה לְעֵלְמָא, אֶתְדַבְּקַת בִּהְיָ חֲוָיָא, וְאִטִּיל בֵּה זִהְמָא. וְגִרְמָא מוֹתָא לְעֵלְמָא, וְלִבְעֵלָה. אֶתְתַּ שָׂרָה, וְנִחַתַּת וְסִלְקַת, וְלֹא אֶתְדַבְּקַת בִּיָּה, כְּדָא וְיַעֲלֵ אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוּ וְכָל אֲשֵׁר לֹו. אֶתְא נַח לְעֵלְמָא, מֵה כְּתִיב, וַיִּשֶׁת מִן הַיַּיִן וַיִּשְׁכַּר וַיִּתְּגַל וְגו'.

20. וּבִגִּין דְּאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה, לֹא אֶתְדַבְּקוּ בִּיָּה, בִּגִּין כֶּךָ שָׂרָה זְכָתָה לְחִיין עֲלָאין, לֵה, וְלִבְעֵלָה, וְלִבְנֵהָא בִּתְרָאָה, הֵה"ד הִבִּיטוּ אֶל צוּר חוּצִיבָתָם וְאֵל מִקְבַּת בּוֹר נּוֹקְרָתָם. וְעַל דָּא, וַיְהִי חֲזִי שָׂרָה, דְּזָכָתָה בֵּהוּ בְּכֵלָהוּ, וְלֹא כְּתִיב בְּכֵלָהוּ נָשִׁי, וַיְהִי חֲזִי חָוָה, וְכֵן בְּכֵלָא, הִיא אֶתְדַבְּקַת בְּחִיין, וְעַל דָּא דִּילָה הוּוּ חִיין.

תּוֹסֶפֶת

21. זָכָאָה אִיהוּ, מֵאֵן דְּאִזְעִיר גְּרַמְיָה, בִּהְיָ עֵלְמָא, כְּמָה אִיהוּ רַב וְעֵלְאָה, בִּהְיָ עֵלְמָא. וְהִכִּי פִתַּח רַב מְתִיבָתָא, מֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ זְעִיר, אִיהוּ רַב. מֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ רַב, אִיהוּ זְעִיר. דְּכְתִיב וַיְהִי חֲזִי שָׂרָה וְגו'. מֵאָה, דְּאִיהוּ חוּשְׁבָן רַב, כְּתִיב בִּיָּה שְׁנָה, זְעִירוּ דְּשָׁנִין, חֵד, אִזְעִיר לִיָּה. שְׁבַע דְּאִיהוּ חוּשְׁבָן זְעִיר, אִסְגִּי לִיָּה וְרַבִּי לִיָּה, דְּכְתִיב שְׁנִים. תָּא חֲזִי, דְּלֹא רַבִּי קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֵלָא לְדֹאֲעִיר, וְלֹא אִזְעִיר, אֵלָא לְדֶרְבִּי, זָכָאָה אִיהוּ, מֵאֵן דְּאִזְעִיר גְּרַמְיָה בִּהְיָ עֵלְמָא, כְּמָה אִיהוּ רַב בְּעֵלּוּיָא. לֵהְיָ עֵלְמָא (עַד כֹּאן).

22. This paragraph does not belong here. It belongs to another portion, where it is explained.

22. מֵאֵן דִּפְסֵק וּתְפִסֵּק. מֵאֵן דִּקְצֹר, וּתְקַצֹּר. מֵאֵן
דִּקְצֹר, וּתְאָרֵךְ. ר"ל, מֵאֵן דִּפְסֵק מְלִין דְּאֹרִייתָא, עַל
מְלִין בְּטָלִין, וּתְפִסְקֹן חֲזוּהִי מִהֲאִי עֲלָמָא, וְדִינִיָּה
קִיּוּמָא בְּהֵוּא עֲלָמָא. מֵאֵן דִּקְצֹר אָמֵן, וְלֹא מְאָרִיךְ
גּוֹ נִיחָא, וּתְקַצֹּר מַחֲוִין דִּהֲאִי עֲלָמָא. מֵאֵן דְּאָמַר
אַחֵר, אֶצְטְרִיךְ לַחֲטָפָא אֶל"ף, וְלִקְצֹר קְרִיאָה דִּילִיָּה,
וְלֹא יַעֲבֹב בְּהֲאִי אוֹת כָּלֵל, וּמֵאֵן דִּיעֲבִיד דָּא
יִתְאֲרֻכוֹן חֲזִיו.

• "And Sarah's life"

Sarah's life is connected to the Mochin [another term for Spiritual Light] and the secret of Ten Sfirot that are contained within the dimension of Binah. The number 37 appears frequently here. This was Yitzchak's age at the time of his binding, for example, and it was because of his binding that Sarah died. The Angel of Death appeared before Sarah and told her that Avraham was about to sacrifice their son. These events convey the various levels of spiritual Light that Sarah's life revealed in this world.

The Relevance of this Passage

The metaphysical forces embodied by Sarah are instilled within us through thoughtful meditation upon these verses.

23. "And Sarah's life was..." All this life is above IN BINAH. A hundred year REFERS TO KETER above. "Twenty year" IS CHOCHMAH AND BINAH above. The seven years ARE THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT above. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE FIRST THREE AND THE LOWER SEVEN SFIROT OF BINAH, WHERE SARAH RECEIVED LIFE, WHICH IS MOCHIN. Rabbi Shimon said, Come and look at the secret of all this. Why is the number seven followed by the word "years", while all other numbers are followed by the word "year"?

23. וַיְהִי חַי שָׂרָה. אֵינוֹן חַיִּין, בְּלֶהוּ לַעֲיֹלָא, מֵאָה שָׁנָה לַעֲיֹלָא. וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה לַעֲיֹלָא, וּשְׁבַע שָׁנִים לַעֲיֹלָא, בְּלֶהוּ הוּא בְּדָקָא זָאוֹת. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, תָּא חַי, רְזָא דְמַלְהָ, מְאִי שָׁנָא בְּכֻלָּהּ, דְּאָמַר שָׁנָה שָׁנָה, וּבְאֵינוֹן שְׁבַע, דְּאָמַר שָׁנִים. דְּכִתְיִב מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּלְבַתֵּר שְׁבַע שָׁנִים.

24. The "hundred year" includes everything, NAMELY KETER, WHICH INCLUDES ALL TEN SFIROT. EACH SFIRAH COMPRISES TEN, AND TOGETHER THEY COMPRISE ONE HUNDRED. For there is included the highest and most secret place of all, WHICH IS ARICH ANPIN, with the hundred daily benedictions, MEANING THAT IT DAILY GIVES THE ABUNDANCE OF A HUNDRED BENEDICTIONS UPON MALCHUT FROM THE HUNDRED SFIROT IN IT. ARICH ANPIN IS THE SECRET OF KETER OF ATZILUT. Also, the "twenty year," WHICH ARE CHOCHMAH AND BINAH, INCLUDE ARICH ANPIN, the most concealed of all. For that reason, it is written "year" IN THE SINGULAR, which is the secret of unison, for a thought and a jubilee (Heb. yovel). THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH AND BINAH never separate from each other, AS THE FIRST THREE SFIROT ARE JOINED TO EACH OTHER AS ONE.

24. אֵלֶּא מֵאָה שָׁנָה, בְּלֵלָא דְכָלֵּא תַמּוֹן, דְּאַתְבָּלִיל
אַתְרַ עֲלֵאָה, כְּלֵא בְּחֻדָּא, בְּרִזָּא דְמֵאָה בְּרַכָּאן, בְּכָל
יוֹמָא. וְכֵן עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה, דְּאַתְבָּלִיל עֲלֵאָה סְתִימָא
דְּכָל סְתִימִין, וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ בְּתִיב שָׁנָה רִזָּא דִּיחֻדָּא,
דְּלֵא אַתְפַּרֶשׁ מִחֻשְׁבָּה וּיֻזְבֵּל לְעֵלְמִין.

25. But the seven years, WHICH ARE THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT OF BINAH, are separated from each other and from that which is hidden above, ARICH ANPIN. Although everything is united and all are equal, THE LOWER SEVEN pertain to Judgement and Mercy in many aspects and paths. This is not so IN THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF BINAH, FOR ARICH ANPIN IS ENCLOSED IN THEM above THE CHEST, WHERE THERE IS NO JUDGEMENT AT ALL. For that reason, it is WRITTEN "SEVEN YEARS" AND NOT 'SEVEN year', AS WITH THE FIRST THREE SFIROT. THE WHOLE TEN SFIROT, THE FIRST THREE AND LOWER SEVEN, are called life. Therefore it is written: "And Sarah's life was...", for it existed. It was created substantively and existed above, IN THE TEN SFIROT OF BINAH.

25. שְׁבַע שָׁנִים: אֵלֶּיךָ אֶתְפָּרֵשׁ, וְנִמְקָאן מִכָּלֵלָא
סְתִימָאָה דְלַעִילָא. וְאַף עַל גַּבְדִּכְלָא יַחְדָּא חֲדָא,
אַבְל מִתְפָּרֵשׁ, בְּדִינָא וְרַחֲמֵי, בְּכַמָּה סְטְרִין וְאוֹרְחִין,
מַה דְּלֹא הוּי הָכִי לַעִילָא. וּבִגִּין כִּךְ כְּתִיב שָׁנָה, רָזָא
דְּיַחְדָּא, דְּלֹא אֶתְפָּרֵשׁ לַעֲלָמִין. וְכִלְהוּ אֶקְרֹן חַיִּים,
וַיְהִי חַי שְׂרָה, דְּהוּ מִמֶּשׁ, דְּאֶתְבְּרִיא וְאֶתְקַיָּמוּ
לַעִילָא.

26. Rabbi Chiya said that it has been explained WHY THE DEATH OF SARAH IS WRITTEN RATHER THAN THAT OF THE OTHER WOMEN. Yitzchak was 37 years old when he was bound, and because he was bound, Sarah died, as is written: "And Avraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her" (Beresheet 23:2). From where did he come? From mount Moriyah, where he was binding Yitzchak. The 37 years from the time that Yitzchak was born until the time he was bound were the life of Sarah, for "vayihyu (was)" is 37 years in numerical value--the years from Yitzchak's birth to his binding. IN ORDER TO MENTION THIS, SARAH'S DEATH IS MENTIONED IN THE TORAH.

26. אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא, הָא אֻקְמוּהָ, דְּהָא כִּד אֲתַעְקֵד יִצְחָק, בַּר תְּלָתִין וְשִׁבְעַ שָׁנִין הָוָה, וְכִיּוֹן דִּאֲתַעְקֵד יִצְחָק, מִיתָת שָׂרָה, דְּכִתְיִב וַיָּבֹא אַבְרָהָם לִסְפֹּד לְשָׂרָה וּלְבִכְתָּהּ. מֵאִין בָּא, מֵהַר הַמּוֹרְיָה, בָּא מִלְמַעְקֵד לִיָּה לִיִּצְחָק, וְאִינוּן תְּלָתִין וְשִׁבְעַ שָׁנִין, מִיּוֹמָא דִּאֲתִיּוּלִיד יִצְחָק, עַד שַׁעְתָּא דִּאֲתַעְקֵד, אִינוּן הָוּ חֵי שָׂרָה וְדָאִי, כְּחוּשְׁבָן וַיְהִי, בְּגִימְטְרִי"א תְּלָתִין וְשִׁבְעַ שָׁנִין הָוּ, כְּמָה דִּאֲתַמֵּר, מִדִּאֲתִיּוּלִיד יִצְחָק עַד דִּאֲתַעְקֵד.

6. "And the cows took the straight way"

The meaning of this difficult scriptural passage is expounded by Rabbi Yosi. We learn that while they carried the Ark, the cows were able to sing--although this gift vanished as soon as they no longer performed this work. Rabbi Chiya explains that a psalm of David referring to a "new song", refers to a time when the psalm or Holy Spirit or Nukva--that is, our physical world, also known as Malchut--will glow with the light of the sun, which itself is a coded reference to the concept of Mashiach. It is after this that the Resurrection of the Dead takes place, a time when the world will be renewed and set free from death's rule.

The Relevance of this Passage

A cow is both a metaphor and physical expression of an intense desire to receive. In view of this, cows are seen as powerful tools for attracting spiritual energy. Thus, red meat is a recommended dish for the first meal of the Shabbat, since the internal energy of the meat serves to draw down the Light of the Creator. The Torah's parchment, which functions as an antenna to arouse metaphysical forces, is produced from the skin of a calf. The Zohar, therefore, uses the cow as a symbol for man's own insatiable desire to receive for the self alone--and the image of a singing cow reveals a creature rising above its inborn nature. This power emerged the moment the cows began transporting the Ark and the scrolls contained inside. Here the Zohar alludes to the Torah's ability to help overcome innate immoral tendencies and self-seeking desires. When mankind has completely removed all his Evil Inclinations, death will be removed from the landscape of human existence. World peace and fulfillment will be eternally achieved, signified by the Zohar's reference to the light of the sun, which represents Mashiach. An ability to hasten a personal and global redemption is awarded to us by means of these verses and their corresponding spiritual influences. We remove the force of death from our lives. Bear in mind the fact that "death" can refer to the demise of a business, the end of an important relationship, or the collapse of our emotional well-being.

27. Rabbi Yosi began with the verse, "A psalm, O sing (Heb. shiru) to Hashem a new song; for He has done marvelous things: His right hand, and his holy arm have gained Him the victory" (Tehilim 98:1). The friends explained that this was said by cows, as it is written: "And the cows took the straight way (Heb. vayisharnah)" (I Shmuel 6:12). The word "vayisharnah" also means that they sang (Heb. sharu) a new song. What new song? "A psalm. O sing to Hashem a new song."

27. רַבִּי יוֹסִי פָתַח, מִזְמוֹר שִׁירוּ לַה' שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ בִּי נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה הוֹשִׁיעָה לּוֹ וּמִינוּ וְזָרַע קִדְשׁוֹ. הָאִי קָרָא, אֻקְמוּהָ חֲבֵרָא, דְּפָרוֹת אִמְרוּהָ. כְּמָה דְּכִתְיִב וַיִּשְׁרְנָה הַפָּרוֹת בְּדֶרֶךְ. מֵאִי וַיִּשְׁרְנָה, דְּהָוּ אִמְרֵי שִׁירָתָא חֲדָתָא. וּמֵאִי שִׁירָה אִמְרוּ. מִזְמוֹר שִׁירוּ לַה' שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ בִּי נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה.

28. We should examine this verse carefully. Everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created in the world offers praises and songs to Him, either above or below. If you thus say THAT THE COWS sang this song, it is assuredly so, for there is a deep secret here. When they carried the Ark, they sang, but once the Ark was taken from them, they again behaved like other cows in the world and did not sing. Surely, the Ark above them made them sing.

28. הֵכָא אֵיִת לְאַסְתַּפְלָא, דְּכָל מַה דְּבָרָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בַּעֲלָמָא, כְּלָהּ אִמְרֵי תוֹשְׁבָחַן וְשִׁירָתָא קָמִיָּה, בֵּין לַעִילָא בֵּין לַתַּתָּא, וְאִי תִימָא, דְּאִינְהוּ מִגְרַמִּיָּהוּ אִמְרֵי שִׁירָתָא דָּא, הֵכִי הוּא וְדָאִי, דְּרָזָא עֲלָאָה אִיָּהוּ, אֲבָל הֵינִי, אֲרוּנָא הָוָה עַל גְּבִיָּהוּ, וְכִיּוֹן דְּאֲרוּנָא אֲשַׁתְּקִיל עֲלֵיהוּ, וְשׁוּיָה לַעִילָא, אִינוּן שְׁרִירוּ שִׁירָתָא, דְּהָא בֵּין דִּאֲתַנְטִיל מְנִיָּהוּ אֲרוּנָא, הָוּ גַּעְאן, כְּאוֹרַח שְׁאָר פְּרוֹת דְּעֵלְמָא, וְלֹא אִמְרוּ שִׁירָתָא, וְדָאִי אֲרוּנָא דְּעַל גְּבִיָּהוּ עֲבִיד לוֹן לְזַמְרָא.

29. IT IS WRITTEN: "A psalm" unlike other places, where it is written: 'A psalm of David' or 'David's psalm.' Here David is not mentioned at all, just "a psalm." This is because the Holy Spirit is destined to sing it, when the Holy One, blessed be He, raises the children of Yisrael from the dust. THEREFORE, DAVID IS NOT MENTIONED HERE. Then "O sing to Hashem a new song", for this is a new song that has not been sung since the world was created.

30. Rabbi Chiya said that it is written: "There is nothing new under the sun" (Kohelet 1:9), but lo, this song is new and under the sun, for it will be under the sun. What is this NEW SONG? It is the moon, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. For then the moon will be new under the sun, MEANING THAT ITS LIGHT WILL BECOME AGAIN LIKE THE LIGHT OF THE SUN, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. What is meant by the phrase: "IT WILL BE NEW UNDER THE SUN?" IT IS THE MEANING OF THE VERSE: "For He has done marvelous things." What are these marvelous things? They are "His right hand, and His holy arm have gained Him the victory." THIS IS THE SECRET OF HIS RIGHT AND LEFT HANDS, CHESED AND GVURAH, "have gained Him the victory." For whom did they gain victory? For the grade that sang this song, THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. THE NUKVA was supported by right and left, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "HAVE GAINED HIM THE VICTORY." Therefore "His right hand...gained Him victory," the grade called psalm, NAMELY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, WHOSE LIGHT WILL BE AS THE LIGHT OF THE SUN. When will that be? When the dead of the world rise from the dust, then what has not yet been done in the world will be new.

31. Rabbi Yosi said, When the Holy One, blessed be He, takes revenge on the world for Yisrael, He will sing this new song, NAMELY AT THE COMING OF MASHIACH, WHICH IS NOT THE TIME OF RESURRECTION. For after THE COMING OF MASHIACH, the dead of the world will rise from the dust and the world will be completely renewed. It will be different in that death will not rule the world, as it had since the serpent brought death to all, defiled the world, and darkened the faces of men.

7. "And I will put enmity between you and the woman"

This troublesome phrase, uttered by The Creator in the Garden of Eden, refers to the unbridgeable gulf between the godly and the godless of this world, which will never be made whole as long as the serpent of death retains his power. We also learn how seven of the Sfirot create and sustain the days of man. In spite of all the misery they cause, the wicked are ultimately erased, as if they never existed, while the righteous enjoy eternal life. The Relevance of this Passage

Without the Light of the Zohar, the inner meaning of the Torah remains obscured by confusion and misunderstanding. The work of deciphering the language of the Torah is itself a step toward spiritual growth. By endeavoring to comprehend the Torah's mysteries, we earn spiritual Light and fulfillment. In particular, the Zohar clarifies the significance of women in Torah, whose meaning is always spiritual and never merely literal. Thus, the term man refers to the upper spiritual realm and the desire to share, while woman denotes our physical realm and the desire to receive. Spiritual Light arising from the upper world can only illuminate our lower world when our Evil Inclination--termed 'the serpent of death'--is conquered and our character transformed. Man's evil tendencies are the lifeblood of the serpent. As long as our negative aspects remain within us, the Angel of Death will prevail over our physical existence. We must learn to loathe our Evil Inclination; to have enmity for our own desire to receive for the self alone. In this particular passage we acquire strength for building a deep aversion toward these negative traits.

32. Come and behold: It is written, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman..." (Beresheet 3:15). HE ASKS, What is enmity (Heb. eyvah)? He replied that it is as written: "They pass away with swift (Heb. eveh) ships" (Iyov 9:26), for among the ships sailing in the great sea, some, called enemy ships, are the ships of the serpent sailing amongst them.

29. מְזִמּוֹר. הָא אֹקִימָנָא וְאִתְמַר בְּכָלָא כְּתִיב, מְזִמּוֹר לְדֹד, אוּ לְדֹד מְזִמּוֹר, וְהִכָּא לֹא אָמַר דֹּד כָּלָל, אֲלֵא מְזִמּוֹר. דְּרוּחַ קוּדְשָׁא, זְמִין לְזַמְרָא לֵיהּ לְזַמְנָא דְיוֹקִים קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מַעְפְּרָא, וּכְדִין שִׁירָא לֵה' שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ, בְּדִין אִיהוּ חֲדָשׁ, דְּהָא שִׁירְתָּא בְּהָא, לֹא אִתְמַר מִיּוֹמָא דְאִתְבְּרִי עָלְמָא.

30. אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא, כְּתִיב אִין כָּל חֲדָשׁ תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ. וְהִכָּא שִׁירְתָּא דָּא, אִיהוּ חֲדָשׁ, וְאִיהוּ תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, דְּהָא תַּחַת שְׁמַשׁ לֵהוּי, וּמַאי אִיהוּ, דָּא סִיְהֵרָא, וּכְדִין הוּי חֲדָשׁ תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ. מַאי טַעְמָא, בְּגִין כִּי נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה. וּמַאן אֵינּוּן נִפְלְאוֹת, הָאִי דְכְּתִיב הוֹשִׁיעָה לוֹ יְמִינוֹ וְזִרְעָ קִדְשׁוֹ. הוֹשִׁיעָה לוֹ, לְמַאן לֵהוּוּא דְרָגָא, דְּאָמַר שִׁירְתָּא דָּא, בְּגִין דְּבָהוּ אֶסְתַּמִּיךְ בְּיְמִינָא וּבְשְׁמַאלָא. הוֹשִׁיעָה לוֹ יְמִינוֹ וְדָאִי, לֵהוּוּא דְרָגָא, דְּהָאִי מְזִמּוֹר, אִימְתִּי, בְּזַמְנָא דִּיקוּמוֹן מִתִּי עָלְמָא, וְיִתְעֲרוֹן מַעְפְּרָא, בְּדִין יְהָ חֲדָשׁ, מַה דְּלֹא אִתְעֲבִיד בְּהָאִי עָלְמָא.

31. רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר, בְּזַמְנָא דִּיעֲבִיד קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא נֹקְמִין בְּעָלְמָא, בְּגִינֵיהּ דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּדִין יִתְאַמֵּר שִׁירְתָּא, דְּהָא לְבָתֵּר יִתְעֲרוֹן מַעְפְּרָא מִתִּי עָלְמָא, וְיִתְחַדַּשׁ עָלְמָא, בְּקִיּוֹם שְׁלִים, דְּלֹא לִיהוּ בְּקַדְמִיתָא דְּשְׁלִיט מוֹתָא בְּעָלְמָא בְּגִין דְּחֻיָּא גְרִים מוֹתָא בְּעָלְמָא לְכָלָא, וְאֶסְתַּאב עָלְמָא, וְאִתְחַשִּׁיךְ אֲנָפּוּי.

32. תָּא חֲזִי, כְּתִיב וְאִיבָה אֲשִׁית בֵּינִךְ וּבֵין הָאֲשָׁה, מַאי וְאִיבָה, כְּדְכְּתִיב חָלְפוּ עִם אֲנִיּוֹת אֲבָה. דְּהָא כְּמַה אֲרַבִּין שְׁטָאן גּוֹ יְמָא רַבָּא, וְאִית אֲרַבִּין וּסְפִינִן, מִתְפַּרְשֵׁן דָּא מִן דָּא, וְאֵינּוּן אֲרַבִּין דְּהָאִי נַחֲשׁ שְׂאֵט בְּגִוּוּיָהּ, אֲקֵרוּן אֲנִיּוֹת אֲבָה.

33. The phrase "between you and the woman" refers to "the woman who fears Hashem" (Mishlei 31:30), MALCHUT. The words "and between your seed" refer to the rest of the heathen nations, THE SEED OF THE SERPENT, WHILE "and her seed", namely Yisrael, MEANS THE SEED OF MALCHUT. "He shall bruise your head" is a reference to the Holy One, blessed be He, who will remove the serpent from the world, as it is written: "He will destroy death forever" (Yeshayah: 25:8) and "also I will cause...the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zecharyah 13:2).

34. The word "head" means in the future when the dead will live, for then the world will be maintained by the head. THAT MEANS THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, THE SUPERNAL WORLD, WILL SHINE UPON IT. "and you shall bruise his heel" means now in this world, before all is perfected. The world is not whole as long as the serpent bites the world and darkens the faces of the people.

35. Come and behold: The days of man were created and sustained by the supernal grades, NAMELY THE SEVEN SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT. Once they do not exist by these grades, as it is written: "The days of our years are seventy" (Tehilim 90:10), there is no other grade by which to be maintained. THE NUMBER 70 CORRESPONDS TO THE SEVEN SFIROT, EACH COMPRISING TEN. For this reason, "their pride is but trouble and wretchedness" (Zecharyah 13:2.), and then it is as if they never existed.

36. But the days of the righteous are eternal. THEY LIVE LONGER THAN SEVENTY YEARS BECAUSE THEY RECEIVE FROM THE SUPERNAL MAZAL, WHICH ADDS LIFE OVER SEVENTY YEARS, AS MUCH AS THEY WANT. This is as written: "And Sarah's life was..." and "these are the days of the years of Avraham's life which he lived" (Beresheet 25:7). If you say it is also written of Yishmael: "And these are the years of the life of Yishmael" (Zecharyah 13:17), ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT RIGHTEOUS this is only because he repented. Therefore, it is written "these are" of his days AS OF AVRAHAM.

33. בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה. דָּא אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת ה'. וּבֵין זֶרַעְךָ, אֵלֶּיךָ שְׂאֵר עַמּוּיִן עֵבֹו"ם. וּבֵין זֶרַעָהּ, אֵלֶּיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל. הוּא יְשׁוּפֵךְ רֹאשׁ, דָּא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, דְּזִמְיִן לְבַעֲרָא לִיהּ מַעֲלָמָא, דְּכֹתִיב בְּלַע הַמּוֹת לְנִצָּחַ. וּכְתִיב וְאֵת רוּחַ הַטְּמֵאָה אֶעֱבִיר מִן הָאָרֶץ.

34. רֹאשׁ, דָּא לְזִמְנָא דְּאֵתִי דִּיתְעָרוֹן מִתְּיָא, דְּהָא בְּדִין לְהוּי עֲלָמָא רָא"שׁ, דִּיתְקִינִים פְּרָא"שׁ, דְּאִיהוּ עֲלָמָא עֲלָאָה. וְאִתָּה תְּשׁוּפְנוּ עָקֵב. דָּא בְּהָאֵי עֲלָמָא, הִשְׁתָּא דְּאִיהוּ עָקֵב, וְלֹאֵו אִיהוּ בְּקִיּוּמָא, וְהָהוּא חֻיָּא נָשִׁיךְ לְעֲלָמָא, וְאַחֲשִׁיךְ אֲנָפוּי בְּרִיּוֹן.

35. תָּא חֲזִי, יוֹמִין דְּבֵר נֶשׁ אֶתְבְּרִיָּא, וְקִיּוּמוֹ בְּאִינוֹן דְּרִגִּין עֲלָאִין, בִּינוֹן דְּמַסִּיּוּמוֹ לְאֶתְקִיּוּמָא בְּאִינוֹן דְּרִגִּין, דְּכֹתִיב יָמֵי שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ בָּהֶם שְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה וְגו', מִכָּאֵן וְלֵהֲלָאָה, לִית דְּרָגָא לְאֶתְקִיּוּמָא. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, וְרַבִּי"ם עֲמַל וְאָוֶן. וְאִינוֹן כֹּלָא הוּא.

36. אֲבָל אִינוֹן יוֹמִין דְּצְדִיקָא הוּא וְאֶתְקִיּוּמוֹ, כְּדָבָר אַחֵר, וְהָיוּ חֲזִי שְׂרָה. וְכֵן וְאֵלָה יָמֵי שְׁנֵי חֲזִי אַבְרָהָם. וְאִי תִימָא, הֵכִי נִמְי כְּתִיב בִּישְׁמַעְאֵל, דְּכֹתִיב שְׁנֵי חֲזִי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל. אֵלָא בְּתִשְׁבָּה אַהֲדָר, וְעַל דָּא קְרִי בִּיּוּמוֹי, וְהָיוּ.

8. "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh"

Here we learn how the three prayers recited by a traveler can be embodied in one blessing. Then Rabbi Yehuda teaches that all of our deeds--good and bad--are recorded in a heavenly book. Knowing this reveals the importance of praying before embarking on any action. Rabbi Bo and Rabbi Yitzchak next debate the meaning of "unshaped flesh" and how this bestial state applies respectively to David and Adam. Unshaped flesh refers to the desire to receive for the self alone, which is akin to an animal's primal desires. We learn why no one was left who bore a resemblance, even vaguely, to the original Adam. Before the sin, Adam was a being of untold spiritual and physical beauty, which man later attempted to use for negative purposes.

Rabbi Yehuda goes on to explain that the gifts of The Creator are given solely to support spiritual goals. If a man takes pride in his wealth or his children, instead of using them in divine service, he will ultimately be destroyed by them. So it is with the beauty of Adam, which the Creator gives in order that a man can become still more devout and connected to the Law. Those who fail to keep pure what the Creator has given, are soon driven from the world. We are told that each night is divided into three 'shifts', when the soul of man leaves the 'unshaped flesh' of his body to be examined by the Holy One on three separate issues. If the soul fails this test, Rabbi Shimon is quoted by Rabbi Yehuda as saying, it is ejected from this divine realm. Great emphasis is placed on the fact that every single one of our actions is seen and recorded. Therefore, nothing should be done without due care for its consequences.

The Relevance of this Passage

Man's nature is to regard wealth and luxury as prized attributes. All of us are inclined to place more value on physical beauty and external appearances than on the intangible inner qualities of life. Intellectually, we might accept the ideal that the only possessions worth having are those that cannot be bought and sold. But living a life that truly embodies this ideal is a formidable task, for the ego holds sway over all our thoughts and actions. The spiritual intent of this segment is to keep our consciousness focused on the Light of Creator, even during sleep. The spiritual Light that emerges here makes us more cognizant of our actions and their repercussions, and helps us value and appreciate life's real treasures.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

37. "And...was" (Beresheet 23:1). Our sages began with the verse, "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages" (Shir Hashirim 7:13). The sages have taught that a person who is traveling should recite three prayers: the obligatory daily prayer; the prayer for protection on the way; and a prayer to return home in peace. THE RECITATION OF THESE PRAYERS does not require three BLESSINGS, for it can be done in one BLESSING, as we have learned that everything a man asks can be included within the blessing: "Blessed are you, O Eternal, who hears our prayers."

38. Rabbi Yehuda said that all of man's deeds-both good and evil-are written in a book IN THE SUPERNAL WORLD, and that each man will be judged according to them. For we have learned from Rav Yehuda who quoted Rav that the verse suffices which reads, "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh" (Tehilim 139:16). It means that the shapeless flesh REFERS TO THE BODY, which does not care about the world to come. "Your eyes did see" everything it did, since You have looked carefully at it. "For in Your book all things are written" (Ibid.) to be judged in the world to come. Therefore, it behooves man to hasten to pray before he acts, which may bring him good.

39. Rabbi Yitzchak said that a man does not transgress; only he who is a shapeless matter and is not a man transgresses. This is a man who cares not for THE NEEDS OF the holy soul. He behaves like a beast, which does not care or know. Rabbi Bo asked RABBI YITZCHAK, Was David called a shapeless matter, NAMELY HE WHO CARES NOT FOR THE SOUL, BECAUSE it was he who wrote the verse? Rabbi Yitzchak replied that Adam said, "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh," FOR "UNSHAPED FLESH" MEANS MATTER WHOSE SHAPE IS NOT YET FINISHED. He said that before You gave me my soul, WHEN I WAS STILL UNSHAPED FLESH, Your eyes sought to create men in my image. "For in Your book all things are written," FOR IT WILL BE WRITTEN DOWN who they are IN NAME. "The days also in which they are to be fashioned" (Tehilim 139:16) means that they will be created in his image. The phrase: "And not one of them" means that none survived.

40. Rabbi Bo ASKS: Why WAS NO ONE LEFT OF THOSE WHO BORE A RESEMBLANCE TO THE IMAGE OF ADAM? He answers, Come and behold: Those who resembled Adam even slightly, THAT IS, VAGUELY, did not die a natural death. All were struck FOR RESEMBLING ADAM. SHIMSHON'S FORCE FAILED HIM, AS DID SHAUL'S NECK, AND SO ON. Come and behold: Rabbi Yehuda said that the image of Adam and his beauty were as the splendor of the supreme firmament above all the firmaments, as the light that the Holy One, blessed be He, saved for the righteous in the world to come. Therefore, all who had something of Adam's image were stricken by it and died, AS WILL BE EXPLAINED.

מדרש הנעלם

37. ויהיו, רבנן פתחי ביהאי קרא, לכה דורי נצא השדה נלינה בבכרים. ת"ר, היוצא לדרך, יתפלל שלש תפלות: תפלה שהיא חובה של יום. ותפלת הדרך, על הדרך שהוא עושה. ותפלה, שיחזור לביתו לשלום. ולימא להו להגי שלשה, אפלו באחד, וכול למעבדיה, דתנינן כל שאלותיו של אדם, וכול למכללינהו, בשומע תפלה.

38. אמר רבי יהודה, כל עובדיו דבר נש, בתיבין בספרא, הן טב, הן ביש, ועל בלהון, עתיד למיתן דינא, דתנינן, אמר רב יהודה אמר רב, מאי דכתיב, גלמי ראו עיניך, אותם הדברים שעשה הגולם, שאינו משגיח בעולם הבא, כולם ראו עיניך, שעיינת בהם. ועל ספרך כולם יכתבו, לתן עליהם דין וחשבון, לעולם הבא, הלכך, יקדים אדם תפלתו תמיד, ויועיל ליה.

39. אמר רבי יצחק אין אדם עושה עברות אלא מי שהוא גולם ולא אדם, והיינו ההוא דלא מסתכל בגשמתא קדישא, אלא כל עובדיו, ביהאי בעירא, דלא משגחת ולא ידעת. אמר רבי בא, וכי גולם, מתקרי דוד, דאמר האי פסוקא. אמר לו רבי יצחק, אדם הראשון אמרו, גלמי ראו עיניך, קודם שזרקת בי נשמה, ראו עיניך, למעבד בדיוקני, בני נשא דרמו לי. ועל ספרך כלם יכתבו, מאן אינון. ימים יוצרו, ביהאי צורה דידי. ולא אחד בהם, דלא אשתאר חד מנהון.

40. אמר רבי בא, למא. אמר ליה תא חזי, בלהו דרמי ליה, או ברמיזא דיליה, לא מתו במיתת נפשהון, וכלהו לקו, בההוא עניינא ממש. תא חזי, אמר רבי יהודה, דיוקניה דאדם הראשון, ושמירותיה, הוה כזהרא דרקיעא עלאה, דעל גבי שאר רקיעי, וכההוא נהורא, דגניז קודשא בריך הוא, לצדיקניא לעלמא דאתי, וכל אינון דהוו רמיזא ביה מדיוקניה דאדם הראשון, ביה לקו ומיתו.

41. These are the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He. If He gives a man wealth, it is for the purpose of sustaining the world and performing His commandments. If man does not do so, but instead takes pride in his wealth, he will be destroyed by it, as it is written: "Riches kept for their owner to his hurt" (Kohelet 5:12). If the Holy One, blessed be He, gives him children, He gives them so they can learn the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, and to keep His commandments. It is written of Avraham: "For I have known him, that he shall command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Hashem, to do justice and judgement" (Beresheet 18:19). If he does not do so, but instead takes pride in them, he is hurt by them, as it is written: "No great grandchild has he and no grandchild among his people" (Iyov 18:19). Similarly, when the Holy One, blessed be He, gives the good and supernal beauty of Adam, He gives it to them so they will keep His commandments and abide by His wishes. If they instead take pride in it, they will be hurt by the beauty with which they were blessed.

42. Rabbi Yehuda said that when the Holy One, blessed be He, first created Adam-while he still was unshaped flesh and had no soul-He said to the angel who was assigned over the images of men, "Look, and shape in this form six men: SHIMSHON, SHAUL, ASael, YOSHIYAHU, TZIDKIYAHU, AND AVSHALOM. This is the meaning of the verse: "And begot a son in his own likeness, after his image and called his name Shet" (Beresheet 5:3). The Aramaic word shet means six AND REFERS TO THE SIX PEOPLE MENTIONED.

43. Rabbi Yitzchak said that the Holy One, blessed be He, created these six men from the same dust that was used to create Adam. The words: "And called his name Shet" is derived from the Aramaic word "sheeta," which translates as six. IT MEANS THAT HE CREATED SIX MEN. This is the meaning of: "And begot...in his own likeness, after his image" (Ibid.)-from the same dough that his unshaped flesh was created. Therefore, it is written: "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh," WHICH MEANS that You looked well to create in his image. "For in Your book all are written" means that those who did not keep what the Holy One, blessed be He, gave them were driven from the world.

44. In relation to this, Rabbi Yehuda quoted Rav as saying that the night is divided into three shifts OF FOUR HOURS EACH. During each shift, the Holy One, blessed be He, has a special matter of interest with man. It is when the soul leaves him and the unshaped flesh, NAMELY THE BODY, remains asleep in his bed. The soul ascends each night before the Holy One, blessed be He, AND HE DEALS WITH IT EVERY SHIFT. Rabbi Yitzchak said those above are happy with it if it has merit; if not, it is pushed out.

9. "To mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her"

Through the rabbis' Kabbalistic discussion of the relationship between soul and body, we explore the allegorical nature of the Torah's stories and characters. For example, Avraham represents the righteous soul after it has departed this world, while Sarah represents the physical body left behind. Next we are informed of what occurs immediately after death: the soul usually revisits and mourns its body for seven days before ascending to the higher world. In the case of a wicked person, however, the soul may find itself bound to the earth and the discarded body for up to a year. But at the death of spiritually advanced people, such as Avraham, the holiness of the body itself merits special protection until the time when all the dead shall rise from their dust. This phenomenon, we discover, explains several otherwise baffling passages of scripture.

41. דָּכַךְ אֹרְחוֹי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, יְהִיב עוֹתְרָא לְבַר אִינִישׁ, לְמָה, לְמִיזֵן עֲנִיין, וּלְמַעַבְד פְּקוּדוֹי. לֹא עֲבִיד הָאִי, וְאַתְגָּאִי בַּהֲוָא עוֹתְרָא, בִּיה יִלְקִי, דְּכִתִּיב עֲשֵׂר שְׁמוֹר לְבַעְלֵיו לְרַעְתּוֹ. יְהִיב לִיה בְּנִין, לְמָה, לְמִילָף לְהוּ אֹרְחוֹי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּלְמִיטֵר פְּקוּדוֹי, כְּדָאמֹר בְּאַבְרָהָם, כִּי יִדְעָתּוּ לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יַצִּיחַ אֶת בָּנָיו וְאֶת בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשְׁמֹרוּ דְרַךְ ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וְגו'. לֹא עֲבִיד הָאִי וּמִתְגָּאֵה בְּהוּ, בְּהוּ לְקִי, דְּכִתִּיב לֹא נִין לוֹ וְלֹא נֶכֶד בְּעַמּוֹ וְגו'. וְכֵן כְּהָאִי גִוּנָא, כִּד יְהִיב קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מְשִׁפִּירוֹתָא טְבָא עֲלָאָה דְאֲדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן לְהוּ, לְמָה, בְּגִין לְמִיטֵר פְּקוּדוֹי, וּלְמַעַבְד רַעוּתִיָּה, לֹא עֲבָדוּ כְדִין, אֶלָּא אֲתַגָּאוּ בִּיה. בִּיה לְקו, בְּהָאִי שְׁפִירוֹתָא.

42. אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה, כִּד בְּרָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אֲדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן, הָוָה גּוֹלָם, עַד לֹא זָרִיק בִּיה נִשְׁמַתָּא, וְקָרָא לְהָוָה מְלָאכָא, דְּהוּא מְמוּנָה עַל דְּיוֹקְנָא דְּבָנֵי נָשָׂא, וְאָמַר לוֹ, עֵינִין, וְצַר בְּדִיוֹקְנָא דְרִין, שִׁיתָא בְּנֵי נָשָׂא, הָה"ד וְיוֹלֵד בְּדַמּוּתָא כְּצִלְמוֹ וְיִקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת, כְּלוּמַר שִׁיתָא.

43. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מִהָּוָה עֲפָרָא מִמֶּשׁ, דְּאַתְבָּרִי אֲדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן, נָסִיב קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְאַתְבָּרָאָה אֱלִין שִׁיתָא, וְקָרָא לִיה שֵׁת, שִׁיתָא, הָה"ד וְיוֹלֵד בְּדַמּוּתוֹ כְּצִלְמוֹ, מֵאוֹתָהּ הָעִיסָה, שְׁנַבְרָא הַגּוֹלָם שְׁלוֹ, וְעַל כֵּךְ נֶאֱמַר, גִּלְמֵי רָאוּ עֵינֵיךְ, וְעֵינֵיךְ בּוֹ, לַעֲשׂוֹת דְּדָאמוּ לִיה. וְעַל סַפְרָךְ כָּלָם יִכְתְּבוּ, מֵאֵן אִינּוֹן, כְּלָהוּ דְלֹא נִטְרוּ, מֵאִי דִּיהִב קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לֹון, וְאַתְטַרְדּוּ מִן עֲלָמָא.

44. תֵּנִן הֵתָם, אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב אֲשֶׁכְּחָנָא, דְּתִלַּת מִטְרָן הָיוּ לִילִיָּא, וְכָל חַד וְחַד, אֵית עֲנִינָא, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּבַר נֶשׁ. כִּד נָפִיק נִשְׁמַתִּיָּה מִנִּיה, וְאַשְׁתָּאֵר הָוָה גּוֹלְמָא נָאִים עַל עַרְסִיָּה, וְנִשְׁמַתִּיָּה סִלְקָא בְּכָל לִילִיָּא, קִמֵּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, אִי זָכָאָה הִיא, חֲדָאן עֲמָה, וְאִי לֹא דְחִינִן לָה לְבַר.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Torah's message and the Zohar's mystical insights are intended for the here and now, so that our future may be peaceful and secure. By gathering the forces released through the name Avraham and these revered words of wisdom, we elevate our physical body to a higher level of spiritual purity.

45. Rav Yehuda stated that Rav asked, Why is it written, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I am sick with love" (Shir Hashirim 5:8)? Rabbi Pinchas said that Rabbi Yehuda responded, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem" is what the soul says to the souls who are worthy of entering Jerusalem above. They are called daughters of Jerusalem for having the merit to enter. Therefore, the soul says to them, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved", which is a reference to the Holy One, blessed be He. Rav said that this is the splendor of the upper mirror. Tell him that I am sick with love" to rejoice in His splendor and to sit often in His shadow. Rav Huna said, "I am sick with love" because of the passion, the longing I feel for everything in the world, therefore I am sick.

46. Rabbi Yehuda said that this is the love the soul has for the body. When the body dies, as when "Sarah's life was..." it is written: "And Avraham stood up from before his dead" (Beresheet 23:3). Rav Yehuda said that according to the Rav, it is written in the previous verse: "And Sarah died in Kiryat Arba, that is Chevron, in the land of Cna'an" (Ibid. 2).

47. Rabbi Yitzchak referred to Rabbi Yochanan as stating that the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam and then inserted in him four things that are divided in the body. Rabbi Yehuda said, "That are connected to the body," while Rabbi Yitzchak said, "That are divided in the body. Each is separated to its element when man leaves this world." Rabbi Yehuda said, They are connected to the body during its life, namely as it is written: "And Sarah died", which refers to the body. "In Kiryat Arba (lit. 'city of the four')," these are the four elements. The words: "that is Chevron" mean that they were connected in the body during a person's lifetime (Chevron is derived from the word chibur, connected). "In the land of Cna'an" means in this world, the world in which man dwells for a short period of time.

48. "And Avraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her" (Beresheet 23:2.). We are taught that the soul of man visits the body for seven days and mourns for it. This is the meaning of: "Only when his flesh is upon him does he feel pain, and while his soul is within him does he mourn" (Iyov 14:22). Similarly, "Avraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." "Avraham came" refers to the soul, while "to mourn for Sarah" refers to the body.

45. אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב, מֵאִי דְכָתִיב הַשְּׂפַעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם אִם תִּמְצְאוּ אֶת דּוּדֵי מַה תִּגִּידוּ לוֹ שְׁחוּלַת אֶהְבָּה אָנִי. אָמַר רַבִּי פִנְחָס אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, הַשְּׂפַעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם, הַנִּשְׁמָה אוֹמֶרֶת לְאוֹתָם הַנִּשְׁמוֹת, הַזּוֹכוֹת לִיבְנֵס לִירוּשָׁלַם שֶׁל מַעְלָה, וְהֵם הַנִּקְרְאוֹת בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם, עַל שְׁזוֹכוֹת לִיבְנֵס שָׁם, וּלְפִיכֵךְ הַנִּשְׁמָה אוֹמֶרֶת לָהֶם, הַשְּׂפַעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם אִם תִּמְצְאוּ אֶת דּוּדֵי, דָּא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. רַב אָמַר, זֶה זִיו אֶסְפְּקִלְרִינָא שֶׁל מַעְלָה. מַה תִּגִּידוּ לוֹ שְׁחוּלַת אֶהְבָּה אָנִי, לִיהֲנוֹת מִזִּיו שְׁלוֹ, וּלְהִסְתַּוֵּף בְּצִלוֹ. רַב הוּנָא אָמַר, שְׁחוּלַת אֶהְבָּה אָנִי, אוֹתָהּ הַתְּשׁוּקָה, וְהַכְּסוּף שֶׁבְּסַפְּתִי בְּעוֹלָם עַל הַכֹּל, לְפִיכֵךְ אָנִי חוֹלָה.

46. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר, זֶה אֶהְבָּה, שְׁאוֹהֶבֶת הַנִּשְׁמָה לַגּוּף, דְּכִיּוֹן שְׁנִשְׁלֵם קִצּוֹ שֶׁל גּוּף, אוֹתָם הַיָּמִים שְׁנִגְזְרוּ עָלָיו, כְּמָה דָּאֵת אָמַר וַיְהִי חַיִּי שָׂרָה, מַה בְּתִיב, וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם מֵעַל פָּנָיו מִתּוֹ וְגו'. אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב, מַה בְּתִיב בְּפֶסוּק קוֹדֶם זֶה, דְּכָתִיב וַתָּמָת שָׂרָה בְּקִרְיַת אֲרָבַע הִיא חִבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן.

47. רַבִּי יִצְחָק אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, בְּרָא קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאָדָם, וְהִכְנִיס בּוֹ אַרְבַּעָה דְּבָרִים, הַנִּחְלָקִים בְּגוּף. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, הַמְּחוּבָּרִים בְּגוּף. רַבִּי יִצְחָק אָמַר, הַנִּחְלָקִים בְּגוּף, שֶׁהֵם חוֹלְקִים לְהַתְּפָרֵשׁ, כֹּל אֶחָד לִיסוּדוֹ, בְּשִׁוּצֵא הָאָדָם מִן הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר, הַמְּחוּבָּרִים בְּגוּף, בְּחַיּוֹ, מִשְׁמַע מִקְרָא דְּכָתִיב, וַתָּמָת שָׂרָה, זֶה הַגּוּף. בְּקִרְיַת אֲרָבַע, אֵלּוּ הָאֲרָבַע יְסוּדוֹת. הִיא חִבְרוֹן, שֶׁהִיוּ מְחוּבָּרִים בְּגוּפּוֹ, בְּחַיּוֹ. בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, הַבּוֹחֵר אָדָם בְּזִמָּן מוֹעֵט.

48. וַיָּבֹא אַבְרָהָם לְסַפֵּד לְשָׂרָה וּלְבַכָּתָהּ. הֵייוּ דִתְנֵן, כֹּל שְׂבַעַת הַיָּמִים, נִמְשׁוּ שֶׁל אָדָם, פּוֹקֶדֶת לְגוּפּוֹ, וּמִתְאַבֵּלֶת עָלָיו, הִדָּא הוּא דְכָתִיב, אַךְ בְּשָׂרוֹ עָלָיו יִכָּאֵב וְנִמְשׁוּ עָלָיו תְּאֵבֵל. כִּהָּיִי גּוֹוֵנָא, וַיָּבֹא אַבְרָהָם לְסַפֵּד לְשָׂרָה וּלְבַכָּתָהּ. וַיָּבֹא אַבְרָהָם, זֶה הוּא הַנִּשְׁמָה. לְסַפֵּד לְשָׂרָה, זֶה הַגּוּף.

49. Rabbi Yitzchak said that the body rests in peace and lies in its grave when the soul has merit and rises to its high place. This is referred to in the verse: "He that walks in his uprightness shall enter in peace to them that rest in their graves" (Yeshayah 57:2). Who is it that "walks in his uprightness"? Rabbi Yitzchak says that it is the soul that goes upright to Eden that lies concealed in wait for it. What does this mean? Rabbi Yehuda says: This is why NECHOCHOH (his uprightness) is written with the letter Hei. If it has no merit and deserves punishment, it walks about desolately and visits the body and the grave daily.

50. Rabbi Yosi said that the hard bone, NAMELY THE FEMUR THAT WAS HIT AND DISLOCATED, moves here and there with its stench, coming and visiting its place for twelve months. So does the soul that is worthy of punishment. It goes out in the world, visiting its place in the world and the graveyard for twelve months.

51. Rabbi Yehuda said, Come and behold the verse: "And Avraham stood up from before his dead." Rabbi Aba raised A DIFFICULT POINT. We learned that when the soul is in supernal complement, NAMELY IN BINAH, the letter Hei joins it, and it is called Avraham in supernal wholeness. Now you hint that he is not that righteous, as it is written: "And Avraham stood up." You cause the one who sits in the great throne to come down to sit in the small and lower THRONE.

52. But I reach a decision WHEN I EXPLAIN THE VERSE: "And Avraham stood up from before his dead." As Rabbi Bo said, Rabbi Zrika said that the soul first protects the holy body from which it came when it is worthy of ascending to Eden. Then it ascends to its elevated place. This is the meaning of: "And Avraham stood up from before his dead," namely the body.

53. The phrase: "And spoke to the sons of Chet" (Yeshayah 57:2) refers to the rest of the bodies of the righteous, who are frightened and beaten in the world for the fear of their Possessor. They are afraid and in terror (Heb. chat) for being dwellers of the dust. HE ASKS: Why does THE SOUL need THE BODIES OF THE RIGHTEOUS? Rabbi Yehuda responded, Because they are all written down in the reckoning, THAT IS, THEY ARE PUT INTO THE ACCOUNTS AND ARE MADE TO COME OUT ACCORDING TO THE RECKONING AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. THUS, THE SOUL SPOKE WITH THEM so that the body would be numbered in their lists. THIS IS THE MEANING OF: "AND SPOKE TO THE SONS OF CHET."

49. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה זֹכָה, וְעוֹלָה לְמָקוֹם מַעְלָתָהּ, הַגּוֹף שׁוֹכֵב בְּשָׁלוֹם, וְיוֹנוֹחַ עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ, הִדָּא הוּא דְכָתִיב, יָבֵא שָׁלוֹם וְנִחוּי עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם הַלֵּךְ נִכְחָה. מֵאֵי הוֹלֵךְ נִכְחָה. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, הַנֶּשְׁמָה הוֹלֵךְ נִכְחָה, לְמָקוֹם הָעֶדֶן, הַגָּנוֹז לָהּ. מֵאֵי מִשְׁמַע. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, מֵהָאֵי מִשְׁמַע, נִכְחָה כָּתִיב, בָּהּ א. וּבְשָׁעָה שֶׁאֵינָה זֹכָה, וְהִיא רְאוּיָה לְקַבֵּל עוֹנָשָׁה, הוֹלֶכֶת מְשׁוּמָמֶת, וּמִבְקָרֶת בְּכָל יוֹם לְגוֹף, וּלְקָבֶר.

50. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָאֵי קוֹלִיתָא דְקַרְדִּינוֹתָא, בְּדִ אֲזִיל בְּסַרְיָחוֹתָא לְכָאן וּלְכָאן, אֲזִיל וּמִבְקָר לָהּ לְאַתְרָהּ, תְּרִיסָר יָרְחֵי. כֵּךְ נִשְׁמָתָא, הֵיאֵא דְאַתְחֲזִינָא לְקַבְלָא עֲנָשָׁא, אֲזִילָה לְבֵר בְּעֵלְמָא, וּמִסְקֶדֶת לָהּ לְאַתְרָהּ, תְּרִיסָר יָרְחֵי, בְּבֵיתִי קְבֵרִי וּבְעֵלְמָא.

51. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, תָּא חֲזִי דְכָתִיב וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם מֵעַל פְּנֵי מֵתוֹ וְגו', אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, וְהָא תִּנֵּן, דְּכִד נִשְׁמָתָא הִיא בְּתַשְׁלוּמָא עֲלָאָה, נְתוּסָף בָּהּ ה' וְנִקְרָאת אַבְרָהָם, בְּתַשְׁלוּמָא עֲלָאָה. וְהִכָּא אֵת אָמַר, דְּכִד לִיתָא זַכָּאָה כָּל כֵּךְ, דְּכָתִיב וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם. עֲבֶדֶת מֵאֵן דִּיתִיב בְּכַרְסֵּינָא, נְחִית בְּגוֹ זוּטָר תַּתָּאָה.

52. אֵלָּא הֵכִי גִזְרָנָא, וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם מֵעַל פְּנֵי מֵתוֹ, דְּאָמַר ר' בּוֹ אָמַר רַבִּי זְרִיקָא, בְּשָׁהֲנִשְׁמָה רְאוּיָה לְעֵלוֹת לְמָקוֹם עֲדָנָה, קוֹדֵם מְגִינָה עַל הַגּוֹף הַקָּדוֹשׁ, שְׂיוּצָאת מִשָּׁם, וְאַחֲרַכְךָ עוֹלָה, לְמָקוֹם מַעְלָתָהּ, הֵה"ד וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם מֵעַל פְּנֵי מֵתוֹ, זֶהוּ הַגּוֹף.

53. וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי חֵת, אֵלּוּ שָׂאֵר גּוֹפּוֹת הַצְּדִיקִים, שֶׁהֵם חֲתָחָתִים וְנִהְלָמִים בְּעוֹלָם, לְמַעַן יִרְאֵת קוֹנָם, חָתִים עַל שֶׁהֵם שׁוֹכְנֵי עֶפְרָא, וְאִמָּאֵי צְרִיכָה לָהּ, אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, כֹּלָא בְּמַנְיִנָא בְּתִיבִין, וְעַל דִּהּוּי גּוֹפָא בְּמַנְיִנָא עֲמֵהוּן.

54. What did THE SOUL CALLED AVRAHAM say to them? It said in a conciliatory and respectful manner, "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you" (Beresheet 23:3), MEANING this body will be counted with you in one quorum by this union. Rabbi said, Look at what is written: "And the children of Chet answered Avraham..." (Yeshayah 57:4). They also answered him in a respectful and conciliatory manner. This is the meaning of: "Hear us, my lord, you are a mighty prince among us."

54. ומהאמרלו, בדרך פיוס ובדרך כבוד, גר ותושב אנכי עמכם וגו', דהאי גופא, יהוי במנינא חד עמכון בחבורא דא. אמר רבי, ראה מה כתיב ויענו בני חת את אברהם וגו'. כמו כן, בדרך כבוד, בדרך פיוס דא הוא דכתיב שמענו אדוני נשיא אלהים אתה בתוכנו.

10. Dumah brings them into and out of reckoning

The role of Dumah, angel in charge of graveyards, is discussed. The rabbis agree that he is in charge of all bodies--good and wicked--sorting them into graves according to merit, until the Day of Reckoning. Torah interpretation tells us that Avraham's body was granted a special "treasure of peace and great rest." Also, according to various rabbis, those who have kept the Law, studied Torah, and performed acts of great piety, may inherit either 200 or 400 "worlds in the World to Come."

The Relevance of this Passage

A righteous person is not necessarily one who has attained the same level of spirituality and wisdom as the eminent sages of antiquity or the great Kabbalists cited in the Zohar. We are not expected to reach their level, but we are expected to at least strive for it. Therefore, an individual who consistently endeavors toward high spiritual goals is defined as righteous. More important than the level attained is the degree of change that we achieve through spiritual growth. Hence, we need to awaken loftier aspirations and goals. Moreover, we require inner strength and determination to pursue higher levels of righteousness. These qualities take root within us as we meditatively study this section of Zohar.

55. What is meant by the phrase: "You are a mighty prince (or: a prince of Elohim)" (Beresheet 23:5)? Rabbi Pinchas responded that, before the righteous leave the world, a divine voice echoes every day among the righteous in the Garden of Eden to 'prepare a place for so-and-so who will come here'. Therefore, they say, from Elohim above, "You are a prince" every day among us: "in the choicest of our graves" (Ibid.): among the choicest company of the righteous he should be counted. No one will prevent fulfillment of the quorum, for we all rejoice in him and hasten to greet him.

55. מאי נשיא אלהים אתה. אמר ר' פנחס, קודם שיצא הצדיק מן העולם, בת קול יוצאת בכל יום, על אותם הצדיקים בגן עדן, הכינו מקום לפלוני שיבא לכאן. ועל כן הם אומרים, מאת אלהים מלמעלה, אתה נשיא, בכל יום בתוכנו, במבחר קברינו, במבחר הצדיקים, בחבורת הצדיקים המובחרים, מנה אותו, הכניסו בחשבון עמנו, ואיש ממנו לא ימנע, את המנין, כי כולנו שמחים בו, ומקדימים לו שלום.

56. Rabbi Yosi ben Pazi said, Come and behold: after the soul meets them, it is sentenced. It meets the angel appointed over them, the angel in charge of the graveyards, named Dumah. He announces among them, every day, the names of the righteous who are about to come among them. It immediately entreats him to lodge the body in tranquillity, safety, rest, and pleasure. This is the meaning of: "And he spoke to Efron" (Yeshayah 57:11).

56. אמר רבי יוסי בן פזי, תא חזי, כיון שהנשמה פוגעת בהם, ותרין, לאחר כך, פוגעת לאותו המלאך, הממנה עליהם, דתנן, מלאך ממונה, על בתי קברי, ודומה שמו, והוא מכריז ביניהם, בכל יום, על הצדיקים, העתידים ליכנס ביניהם, ומיד פוגעת בו, כדי לשכן הגוף, בהשקט, ובבטחה, ובמנוחה, ובהנאה, דא הוא דכתיב, וידבר אל עפרון.

57. Rabbi Yesa asked, Why is the angel Dumah called Efron? He responded, Because he is in charge over the dwellers of dust (Heb. afar). All the lists of the righteous and companies of the pious that dwell in the dust were given to him, and he will bring them out according to the reckoning.

57. אמר רבי ייסא, זה המלאך הנקרא דומה, ולמה נתבנה שמו עפרון, על שהוא ממונה על שוכני עפר, והופקדו בידו, כל פנקסי הצדיקים, וחבורות החסידים, השוכנים בעפר, והוא עתיד להוציאם בחשבון.

58. Rabbi Elazar said, When the Holy One, blessed be He, comes to raise the dead in the future, He shall call the angel named Dumah, who is appointed over the graves. He will ask him for an enumeration of all the dead, the righteous and the pious, and all the sincere proselytes killed for the sake of His name. He will bring them out according to the reckoning, the same as he put them into it. This is the meaning of the verse: "That brings out their host by number... not one is missing" (Yeshayah 40:26).

59. In the name of Rabbi Ya'akov, Rabbi Shmuel said that the souls of the evil are in the hands of the angel Dumah, who will send them to Gehenom to be sentenced. Once they are put in Dumah's hands, they do not return again before going to Gehenom. This is what David feared when he committed that sin, as it is written: "Unless Hashem had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in Dumah" (Tehilim 94:17). Rabbi Yesa said, The soul entreats him to put the body with the bodies of the other righteous and be enumerated in their numbers. This is the meaning of: "And he spoke to Efron..."

60. Rabbi Tanchum added that the angel first addresses him. Look at what was written before the verse. It is: "And Efron dwelt among the children of Chet" (Beresheet 23:9), who were afraid of dwelling in the dust. He hastens to instruct Dumah to put that body in the reckoning of the righteous. Then the verse reads, "And Efron the Chitite answered Avraham in the ear of the children of Chet, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying" (Ibid.). Who went in at the gate of his city? Rabbi Nachman said, Those who were written in the list. As Rabbi Nachman said, and so is was decreed, by the reckoning made by Dumah, they enter, the cemeteries. And by the reckoning he will take them out. And he is in charge of the dwellers of dust.

61. What is meant by: "The field I give you, and the cave, that is in it" (Beresheet 5:10)? Rabbi Yosi said that it is a treasure of peace and great rest. Rabbi Shalom ben Manyumi said, There is not one righteous of those who are occupied in Torah, who has not 200 bright worlds for the sake of Torah. It is written, "And those that keep its fruit 200" (Shir Hashirim 8:12), for they renounce themselves daily, as if they are killed to sanctify His name and His eternity. Whoever surrenders his soul to sanctify His name, the scripture says it is as if he were killed daily for His sake, as it is written: "But for your sake are we killed all the day long" (Tehilim 44:23). Rabbi Nachman said that whoever surrenders his soul according to this verse inherits 400 worlds in the world to come. Rabbi Yosef said, We were taught that there are 200. According to Rabbi Nachman, it is 200 for Torah and 200 for surrendering every day for the sake of the holiness of His name.
End of Midrash Hane'elam (homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

58. וְתֹאנָא אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזָר, לַעֲתִיד לְבֹא, בְּשִׁימְקוֹד הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְהַחְיֹת הַמֵּתִים, וְקָרָא לְמַלְאָךְ הַמְּמוֹנָה עַל הַקְּבֻרוֹת, וְדוֹמָה שְׁמוֹ וַיִּתְּבַע מִמֶּנּוּ מִנִּין כָּל הַמֵּתִים, הַצְדִּיקִים וְהַחֲסִידִים, וְאוֹתָם גְּרֵי הַצֶּדֶק, וְשִׁנְהֲרָגוּ עַל שְׁמוֹ, וְהוּא מוֹצִיאָם בַּחֲשׁבוֹן, כְּמוֹ שְׁנִטְלָם בַּחֲשׁבוֹן, הֲדָא הוּא דְכֵתִיב הַמוֹצִיא בְּמִסְפָּר צָבָאָם וְגו' אִישׁ לֹא נֶעְדָּר.

59. וְתֹאנָא, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בְּרַבִּי יַעֲקֹב, נַפְשוֹת הַרְשָׁעִים, נִתְּנוֹת בְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל מַלְאָךְ זֶה, שֶׁשְׁמוֹ דוֹמָה, לְהַכְנִיסָם בְּגֵיהֶנֶם, וְלָדוֹן שָׁם, וְכִיוֹן שְׁנִמְסֻרוֹת בְּיָדוֹ, שׁוֹב אֵינָן חֲזָרוֹת, עַד שֶׁיִּכְנְסוּ לְגֵיהֶנֶם, וְזֶה יֵרָאָה דְּוֹד שְׁנִתְיִירָא, כְּשֶׁעָשָׂה אוֹתוֹ עוֹן, שְׁנֹאמַר לוֹלִי ה' עֲזָרְתָה לִּי כְּמַעַט שְׁכָנָה דוֹמָה נִפְשִׁי. אָמַר רַבִּי יִיסָא, הַנִּשְׁמָה פּוֹגַעַת לוֹ, לְהַכְנִיס אוֹתוֹ גּוֹף, עִם שְׂאֵר גּוֹפּוֹת הַצְדִּיקִים, בַּחֲשָׁבוֹנָם, הֲדָא הוּא דְכֵתִיב וַיִּדְבֵּר אֶל עֶפְרֹן וְגו'.

60. אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחוּם, הַמַּלְאָךְ קוֹדֵם וְאוֹמֵר לוֹ. רָאָה מֶה כְּתִיב לְמַעַלָּה, וְעֶפְרֹן יוֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי חֵת, שָׁחַתוֹ לְשִׁכּוֹן בְּעֶפְרָי, וְהוּא מְקַדִּים וְאוֹמֵר לוֹ, לְהַכְנִיס אוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף, בַּחֲשָׁבוֹן הַצְדִּיקִים, הַה"ד וַיַּעַן עֶפְרֹן הַחֵתִי אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּאָזְנֵי בְנֵי חֵת לְכָל בָּאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ לֵאמֹר. מֵאֵי לְכָל בָּאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ, רַב נַחְמָן אָמַר, אֵינּוֹן דְּעָאֵלָה, בְּכַתֵּב חוֹשְׁבֵן פְּנֻקְסִיָּה דְּאָמַר רַב נַחְמָן, וְהֵכִי אֶתְגַּזֵּר, בַּחֲשָׁבוֹן עַל יְדוֹי דְּדוֹמָה, עָאֲלִין בְּבִתֵּי קְבָרֵי, וּבְחוֹשְׁבֵן פְּתָקָא, וְמִין לְאַפְקָא לוֹן, וְהוּא מְמוֹנָה עַל דְּיִירֵי עֶפְרָא.

61. מֵהוּ הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְּנִי לָךְ וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הַפְּקָדָא דְשְׁלוּה, וּמְנוּחָה רַבָּה. אָמַר ר' שְׁלוֹם בֶּר מְנוּיָמִי, אֵין לָךְ כָּל צְדִיק וְצְדִיק מְאוּתָם הָעוֹסְקִים בְּתוֹרָה, שְׁאִין לוֹ מְאֵתִים עוֹלָמוֹת וְכִסּוּפִין בְּשִׁבִּיל הַתּוֹרָה, הַה"ד וּמְאֵתִים לְנוֹטְרִים אֶת פְּרִיו, וּמְאֵתִים, עַל שְׁמוֹסְרִים עֲצָמָם בְּכָל יוֹם, כְּאִילוֹ נִהָרְגוּ עַל קְדוּשַׁת שְׁמוֹ, נִצְחוּ, כְּהֵאֵי פְסוּקָא לְמִסּוֹר נִפְשׁוֹ עַל קְדוּשַׁת שְׁמוֹ, מַעַלָּה עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב כְּאִילוֹ נִהָרַג בְּכָל יוֹם עָלָיו, הַה"ד כִּי עָלֶיךָ הוֹרְגֵנוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם. אָמַר רַב נַחְמָן, כָּל הַמוֹסֵר נִפְשׁוֹ בְּהֵאֵי פְסוּקָא, נוֹחַל אַרְבַּע מְאוֹת עוֹלָמוֹת לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא. אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף, וְהָא תִנּוּן מְאֵתִים. אָמַר רַב נַחְמָן מְאֵתִים עַל הַתּוֹרָה, וּמְאֵתִים עַל שְׁמִסָּר עֲצָמוֹ בְּכָל יוֹם, עַל קְדוּשַׁת שְׁמוֹ. (עַד כָּאן מִדְּרַשׁ הַנֶּעְלָם).

11. "And Sarah died in Kiryat Arba"

Here the Zohar explores the ways in which people's lives determine the quality and nature of their death. The rabbis also resume a discussion of Sarah's uniqueness among women, now comparing her with Miriam, whose age is not mentioned in scripture. Associated with water, Miriam's death is emblematic of the ancient sins of the children of Israel. They, it is explained, owe their happiness and stability solely to the Torah--which is a gift of the Holy One, intended to reveal the true nature and purpose of His creation. Rabbi Yehuda goes on to make an analogy between the effect of a weak king on his kingdom and that of an unrighteous man on his own life. The exploration finally circles back on itself with the assertion that death has no power over someone as pure as Sarah, who died in the place where David was united with the patriarchs. This spiritual locale is the point at which the physical world joins with the spiritual. David represents our material realm, known as Malchut, while the patriarchs signify the spiritual domain. Bridging these two worlds exemplifies the concept of perfection. In this way, the righteousness of the individual soul, the righteousness of the ruler and his people, and the holiness of the land itself, are shown to be one and the same. We learn that as long as a man's soul is nurtured by the Light--which is portrayed here as filtering through the seven lower Sfirot--both his life and his death will remain in harmony with the divine, for a righteous existence alone spares us defilement by the Angel of Death.

The Relevance of this Passage

In practical terms, the Upper World, or the patriarchs, refers to our soul and the desire to share. Our physical world of Malchut or David, refers to our material body and the desire to receive for the self alone. Our ultimate objective in life is to balance and enjoin these two worlds, creating a new dynamic, known in lay terms as the desire to receive for the sake of sharing. When we receive for the sake of imparting to others, we achieve perfect harmony with the sharing nature of the Creator. This assures a life and an afterlife filled with Light. Both the Torah and the Zohar serve to gradually sweeten the trait of receiving for the self into receiving for the purpose of sharing. Here, the Zohar invokes the 'energy of Sarah' to help achieve this effect, strengthening our resolve whenever the temptation to satisfy our own desires arises.

62. "And Sarah died in Kiryat Arba" (Beresheet 23:2). Rabbi Aba noted that, of all the women in the world, only for Sarah are the number of her days and years and the time of her life in the world mentioned, as well as the place in which she was buried. This shows that there was no other woman in the world like Sarah.

63. If you say that it is written of Miriam: "And Miriam died there, and was buried there" (Bemidbar 20:1) AS IT IS WRITTEN OF SARAH, NOTE THAT THIS WAS WRITTEN only to show that Yisrael sinned, AS SAID IN THE NEXT VERSE: "AND THERE WAS NO WATER FOR THE CONGREGATION: AND THEY GATHERED THEMSELVES TOGETHER" (IBID. 2). Yisrael had no water there without Miriam, and HER DAYS AND YEARS were not specified when describing her death, as was done for Sarah.

64. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion saying, "Happy are you, O land, that your king is a man of freedom, and your princes eat in due season" (Kohelet 10:17). This verse was explained by the friends. Nevertheless, we have studied that the children of Yisrael are happy because the Holy One, blessed be He, gave them Torah with which to know the hidden ways and reveal the supreme mysteries.

65. "Happy are you, O land" refers to the land of the living, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH CLOTHES THE LIVING ELOHIM, IMA, because her king, ZEIR ANPIN, prepared for her all the blessings he had received from the supernal fathers--THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA. THAT KING IS the secret of the letter Vav, which is always in readiness to pour blessing over her. He is called "a man of freedom", the son of a Yovel (jubilee), WHICH IS BINAH, NAMELY YISRAEL-SABA, AND TEVUNAH, THE MOCHIN who liberates slaves and gives them freedom, THE MOCHIN OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH. He is also a son of the supernal world--THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA--who gives generously FROM THEIR EVERLASTING UNION all life and illumination, the oil of greatness, and honor. Thus it is written, "Yisrael is my son, my firstborn" (Shemot 4:22). Therefore, "Happy are you, O land."

62. וַתָּמָת שָׂרָה בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבָּע. ר' אַבָּא אָמַר, כְּגֻוְנָא דָא, לֹא הָווּ בְּכָל נָשִׁי עֲלֵמָא, דִּהָא אֲתָמַר חוּשְׁפִין יוֹמָהָא, וּשְׁנָהָא, וְקִיּוּמָהָא בְּעֲלֵמָא, וְהָהוּא אֲתַר דְּאִתְקַבְּרַת בֵּיהּ. אֵלֹא לֹא־חֻזָּאָה, דִּלֹּא הָוָה כְּשָׂרָה, בְּכָל נָשִׁי עֲלֵמָא

63. וְאִי תִימָא הָא מְרִים, דִּכְתִּיב וַתָּמָת שָׁם מְרִים וַתִּקְבֹּר שָׁם. בְּגִין לֹא־חֻזָּאָה סְרַחְנָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל קֹא אֲתָא, דִּהָא מִיּוֹא לֹא אֲזִיל לְהוּ בִּישְׂרָאֵל, אֵלֹא בְּזִכּוּתָא דְּמְרִים. אֲבָל לֹא אֲתָמַר בְּמִיתָתָהּ, כְּמָה דְּאֲתָמַר בְּשָׂרָה.

64. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה פָּתַח אֲשֶׁרִין שְׁמֵלְכֶךָ בֶּן חוּרִים וְשֶׁרִין בַּעַת יֹאכִילוּ, הָאִי קָרָא אוֹקְמוּהָ חֲבֵרְיָא, אֲבָל אֵית לֶן לֹא־סִתְפְּלָא בֵּיהּ, דְּזַבְּאִין אִינוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִין הוּא יְהִיב לֶן אוֹרֵייתָא, לְמַנְדַּע כָּל אוֹרְחִין סְתִימִין, וְלֹא־תִגְלִינָא לֶן רִזִּין עֲלָאִין.

65. וְהָא אֲתָמַר, אֲשֶׁרִין אֶרֶץ, דָּא אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים, בְּגִין דְּמִלְכָּא דִּילָהּ, אֲזִמִּין לָהּ כָּל בְּרַכָּאן, דְּאִתְבְּרָכָא מֵאַבְהֶן עֲלָאִין, רְזָא דְּוָא"ו, דְּאִיהוּ קִיּוּמָא לְאַרְקָא עַלֵּה בְּרַכָּאן תְּדִיר, וְאִיהוּ בֶּן חוּרִין, בֶּן יוֹבֵלָא, דְּאִפִּיק עֲבָדִין לְחִירוֹ, בְּרָא דְּעֲלֵמָא עֲלָאָה, דְּאִפִּיק תְּדִיר כָּל חַיִּין, וְכָל נְהִירוֹ, וְכָל מְשַׁח רַבּוּת, וְכָלֹא אֲנִגִּיד הָאִי בְּרָא בּוֹכְרָא, לְהָאִי אֶרֶץ, כְּדָא בְּנֵי בְּכָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, אֲשֶׁרִין אֶרֶץ.

66. The verse "Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child" (Kohelet 10:16) is explained as follows. This is the nether land, and the nether world draws nourishment from the uncircumcised foreskin alone. All is drawn down only from the king called child, NAMELY MATATRON, as was explained. Woe to the world that must nourish this way.

67. Come and behold this child, MATATRON, who has nothing of himself, but the blessings he receives FROM THE NUKVA at appointed times. Each time these blessings are withheld when the moon, NUKVA, is rendered defective and becomes dark. Woe to the world that depends on him for survival. Moreover, the world suffers many judgments before it draws nourishment from him, NAMELY FROM THE KLIPOT, for all is established and maintained through judgments, as has been explained.

68. The verse: "And Sarah died..." also contains a secret, which is that she did not die by the tortuous serpent, NAMELY THE ANGEL OF DEATH. It had no power over her, as it has over the people of the world. As a result of Adam's sin, all the people in the world die by the serpent except Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam, WHO DIED BY A KISS, as is written: "Upon the mouth of Hashem" (Bemidbar 33:38). In honor of the Shechinah, it is not mentioned of Miriam, "upon the mouth of Hashem," ALTHOUGH SHE, TOO, DIED BY A KISS.

69. Yet of Sarah it is written: "And Sarah died in Kiryat Arba" because she died in and by the hands of Kiryat Arba, and not by the serpent. She died by the hands of Kiryat Arba that is Chevron, where David was united with the patriarchs. Therefore she died not by another, but in Kiryat Arba.

70. Come and behold: When man's days are maintained by the supernal grades, NAMELY THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT-man thrives in the world. If he is not sustained by the supernal grades, MEANING HE HAS LIVED SEVENTY YEARS DRAWN FROM THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT-his days come out OF THE SFIROT and beneath THE SFIROT until they approach the level where death dwells. NAMELY, THE ANGEL OF DEATH UNDERNEATH MALCHUT, OF WHICH IT IS SAID, "SIN CROUCHES AT THE DOOR" (BERESHEET 4:7). Then the Angel of Death receives permission to take out the man's soul. He flies through the world in one flight, takes the soul and defiles the body, which remains defiled. Happy are the righteous who were not defiled by him, for no defilement remained in their bodies.

12. The serpent of the firmament

The stars of the Milky Way--called here 'the serpent of the firmament'--perform a special function in the lives of men, assisting both those who wish to be purified, and those who wish to defile themselves.

Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yosi discuss the evil man, Bila'am, the sorcerer. From their discussion we learn that the primordial serpent is the source of all enchantment and magic. It is in sorcery that the seeds of defilement lie. Those who wish to cast spells draw to themselves the unholy spirit, just as anyone wishing to do good will draw the Light.

The Relevance of this Passage

The stars that glint in the heavens are portals through which spiritual influences enter this material existence. The structure of electricity helps us

66. ומה דאָתמר אי לך אָרץ שְׁמֵלֶכךָ נֶעַר, כִּמָּה דאָוקמוֹה, דִּהאי אָרץ תִּתָּא, וְעֵלְמָא תִתָּא, לֹא יִנְקָא אֱלָא מִגּוֹ שְׁלִטְנוּתָא דְעֵרְלָה, וְכֹלָא מִדִּהוּא מִלְכָּא דְאִקְרִי נֶעַר, כִּמָּה דאָוקמוֹה. ווי לֹאֲרַעָא דְאִצְטֵרִיךְ לִינְקָא הִכִּי.

67. תָּא חֲזִי הָאִי נֶעַר לִית לִיה מִגְרָמִיה כְּלוּם, בְּר כִּד נָטִיל בְּרַכָּאן לְזִמְנִין יִדְעֵן, וְכֹל זִמְנִין דִּאֲתַמְנֵעוּ מִנִּיה, וְאֲתַפְּגִים סִיְהָרָא, וְאֲתַחֲשֵׁךְ, וּבְרַכָּאן אֲתַמְנֵעוּ מִנִּיה, ווי לֵעֲלֵמָא, דְאִצְטֵרִיךְ לִינְקָא בִּדְהִיא שְׁעָתָא. וְעוֹד בְּכִמָּה דִּינִין אֲתֵדֵן הָאִי עֲלֵמָא, עַד לֹא יִנְקָא מִנִּיה, דְּכֹלָא בְּדִינָא אֲתַקְנִים וְאֲתַעְבֵּד וְאִוקְמוֹה.

68. תָּא חֲזִי, וְתַמַּת שְׂרָה בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע, רָזָא אִיהוּ, בְּגִין דְּלֹא הוּא מִיתָתָהּ, עַל יְדָא דִּדְהוּא נָחֵשׁ עֲקִימָאָה, וְלֹא שְׁלַט בָּהּ כְּשֹׂאֵר בְּנֵי עֲלֵמָא. דִּאִיהוּ שְׁלִיט בָּהּ, וְעַל יְדִיה, מִתּוּ בְּנֵי עֲלֵמָא, מִיּוֹמָא דְגָרִים לֹון אָדָם, בְּר מִשָּׁה וְאֶהֱרֹן וּמִרְיָם, דְּכִתִּיב בָּהּ עַל פִּי ה'. וּבְגִין יִקְרָא דְשְׁכִינָתָא, לֹא כִתִּיב בְּמִרְיָם עַל פִּי ה'.

69. אָבֵל בְּשָׂרָה, כְּתִיב בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע, רָזָא דְקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע, בְּרָזָא עֲלָאָה וְלֹא עַל יְדָא אַחֲרָא, בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע וְלֹא בְּנָחֵשׁ. בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע הִיא חִבְרוֹן, דִּאֲתַחֲבֵר דּוֹד מִלְכָּא בְּאַבְהֶן, וְעַל דָּא לֹא הוּא מִיתָתָהּ בִּידָא אַחֲרָא, אֱלָא בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע.

70. תָּא חֲזִי, כִּד יוֹמִין דְּבֵר נֶשׁ, אֲתַקְיָמוּ בְּדִרְגִין עֲלָאִין, אֲתַקְיָם בְּר נֶשׁ בְּעֵלְמָא, כִּיּוֹן דְּלֹא אֲתַקְיָם בְּדִרְגִין עֲלָאִין, נִפְקִי וְנִחְתִּי לְתַתָּא, עַד דְּקִרְיָבוּ לְהָאִי דְרָגָא דְמוֹתָא שְׂרָיָא בִּיה, וּכְדִין נָטִיל רֶשׁוּ לְאַפִּיק נִשְׁמָתָא, וְטָאס עֲלֵמָא בְּזִמְנָא חֲדָא, וְנָטִיל נִשְׁמָתָא, וְסָאִיב לִיה לְגוֹפָא, וְאַשְׁתָּאֵר מְסַבָּא. זְכָאִין אִינוּן צְדִיקָיָא דְלֹא אֲסַתָּאבוּ, וְלֹא אֲשְׁתָּאֵר בָּהּ מְסַבָּאוּתָא.

understand their role: Electrical current can light entire cities. The same current, however, can also cause great destruction. The manner in which we employ the energy, determines its positive or destructive quality, but the nature of the energy never changes. Man was given free will to choose how to draw spiritual energy-via the desire to receive for the self alone, or the desire to receive for the sake of sharing. This passage summons up forces that awaken us to the dual nature of our desires, impelling us to seek purification rather than defilement.

71. Come and behold: In the middle of the firmament is a glowing trail. This is the serpent of the firmament THAT ASTRONOMERS CALL THE MILKY WAY. All the small stars are attached to it in groups, THAT IS, THEY ARE GATHERED AND STAND IN IT LIKE COUNTLESS MOUNTAINS. They are in charge of the secret deeds of the inhabitants of the world.

72. Similarly, there are bunches of lights of Klipot that come into the world from the supernal primordial serpent that seduced Adam. They are appointed to learn the secret deeds of the world. Therefore when a man wishes to be purified, he receives help from above, and the help of his Master encircles and protects him. He is then called 'holy'.

73. If a man wishes to be defiled, several groups of lights of Klipot are waiting for him. They all hover about and around him. They defile him, so he is called unholy. They go before him and proclaim, Unholy, unholy, as it is written: "And shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean'" (Vayikra 17:45). They are all connected to the primordial serpent and are hidden in the deeds of the people of the world.

74. Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yosi were walking from Tiberias to Lod. Rabbi Yitzchak said, I wonder about the evil man Bila'am. All he did was from the side of defilement. Here we learn a secret, which is that all kinds of sorcery and witchcraft of the world are connected and derive from the primordial serpent, which is the impure spirit of defilement. Therefore all enchantment (Heb. nechashim) is named AFTER THE PRIMORDIAL SERPENT (HEB. NACHASH). They all derive from that side, and anyone who is drawn to that MAGIC is defiled.

75. Moreover, one should be impure to cast a spell. One has to draw upon oneself that side of the unholy spirit. As man is aroused from below, he draws upon himself from above. If he is aroused below on the side of holiness, he draws upon himself the supernal holiness and is sanctified. If he is aroused below on the side of defilement, he draws upon himself the spirit of defilement and becomes unholy. Upon this, they said that whoever wishes to be defiled is defiled.

71. וְתָא חַזִּי, בְּאַמְצָעוֹת דְּרִקְיָעָא, אֶתְקֵטֵר חַד אֹרְחָא קְסֵטְרִירָא. וְאִיהוּ חֻיָּא דְּרִקְיָעָא, דְּכָל בְּכַבִּין דְּקִיקִין, בְּלָהוּ קְטִירִין בִּיה, וְקִימִי בִיה, תְּלִי תְּלִין, וְאִינוּן מִמֶּנּוּ בְּסִתִּירוֹ עֹבְדֵי בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא.

72. כְּגֻוְנָא דָּא, כְּמָה חֲבִילֵי טְהִירִין, נִפְקִי לְעֲלָמָא, מִהָאִי חֻיָּא עֲלָאָה קְדָמָאָה, דְּאֶתְפֹּתָא בִּיה אָדָם, וְכָלָהוּ מִמֶּנּוּ בְּסִתִּירוֹ עֹבְדֵי עֲלָמָא, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, אֲתִי בְּר נֶשׁ לְאֶתְדַבָּאָה, מְסִיעִין לִיה מְלַעִילָא, וְסִיעָא דְּמֵאֲרִיה סַחְרָא לִיה, וְאַסְתַּמֵּר וְאַקְרִי קְדוֹשׁ.

73. אֲתִי בְּר נֶשׁ לְאַסְתַּאבָּא, כְּמָה חֲבִילִין טְהִירִין אֲזַדְמִנּוּ לִיה וְכָלָהוּ שְׂרִין בִּיה, וּמְסַחְרִין לִיה, וּמְסַאבִּין לִיה, וְאַקְרִי טָמָא, וְכָלָהוּ אֲזִלִּי, וּמְכַרְזִי קָמִי, טָמָא טָמָא, כְּמָה דָּאֵת אֲמֵר וְטָמָא טָמָא יִקְרָא. וְכָלָהוּ קְטִירִין בְּהֵוָה חֻיָּא קְדָמָאָה, וְסִתִּירִין בְּכָמָה עֹבְדֵי עֲלָמָא.

74. ר' יִצְחָק וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָווּ אֲזִלִּי מִטְּבְּרִיא לְלוֹד. אֲמַר ר' יִצְחָק, תְּוֹהֵנָא עַל הָהוּא רִשְׁע דְּבִלְעָם, דְּכָל עֹבְדֵי דְּהָהוּא רִשְׁע, הָווּ מְסִטְרָא דְּמְסַאבָּא. וְהֵכָא אֹלִימְנָא רְזָא חַדָּא, דְּכָל זִינִי נַחְשֵׁיא דְּעֲלָמָא, בְּלָהוּן מְתַקְטְרִין וְנִפְקִין, מִהָהוּא נַחֲשׁ קְדָמוֹנִי, דְּאִיהוּ רוּחַ מְסַאבָּא מְזוּהָמָא, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, כָּל חֲרָשִׁין דְּעֲלָמָא, אֶקְרוּן עַל שְׁמָא דָּא, נַחֲשִׁים, וְכָלָהוּ מִהָאִי סִטְרָא נִפְקִי. וּמֵאֵן דְּאֶתְמַשֵּׁךְ בְּהָאִי הָא אֶסְתַּאב.

75. וְלָא עוֹד, אֶלָּא דְּבַעֵי לְאַסְתַּאבָּא, בְּגִין לְאַמְשַׁכָּא עֲלִיהָ הָהוּא סִטְרָא דְּרוּחַ מְסַאבָּא. דְּהָא תְּנִינִין, כְּגֻוְנָא דְּאֶתְעַר בְּר נֶשׁ, הֵכִי נָמִי אֲמַשִּׁיךְ עֲלִיהָ מְלַעִילָא, אִי אִיהוּ אֶתְעַר בְּסִטְרָא דְּקְדוּשָׁה, אֲמַשִּׁיךְ עֲלִיהָ קְדוּשָׁה מְלַעִילָא וְאַתְקַדֵּשׁ. וְאִי אִיהוּ אֶתְעַר, בְּסִטְרָא דְּמְסַאבָּא, הֵכִי אֲמַשִּׁיךְ עֲלִיהָ רוּחַ מְסַאבָּא, וְאַסְתַּאב. דְּהָא אֶתְמַר, עַל מַה דְּתִנִּינִין, אֲתִי בְּר נֶשׁ לְאַסְתַּאבָּא, מְסַאבִּין לִיה.

76. For that purpose, the wicked Bila'am defiled himself nightly by mating with his ass in order to draw upon himself the unholy spirit from the supernal serpent, thereby drawing on himself the spirit of unholiness. Then he cast his spells and enchantments.

77. First he took one of the serpents, tied it in front of him, split his head, and removed its tongue. Then he took certain herbs and burned them to incense. He took the serpent's head, cut it into four pieces, and made from it another incense offering.

78. He drew a circle round himself, uttered words, and performed other deeds until he drew to himself the spirits of defilement, who told him what he needed to know. He acted according to their information, which they knew from the side of that serpent in the firmament.

79. This is how he acquired his knowledge, enchantments, and spells. For that reason, it is written: "He went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments" (Bemidbar 24:1), which alludes to real snakes. As has already been explained, the essence and origin of defilement begins with the serpent.

76. בְּגִין כֵּךְ הָהוּא רָשָׁע דְּבִלְעָם, בְּגִין לֹא־מִשְׁכָּא עֲלֵיהּ רוּחַ מִסְּאָבָא, מִהָהוּא נָחֵשׁ עַלְאָה, הָוָה אִסְתָּאב בְּכָל לַיְלָא בְּאַתְנִיָּה, וְהוּא עֲבִיד עִמָּה עוֹבְדֵי אִישׁוֹת, בְּגִין לֹא־סְתָאבָא, וְלֹא־מִשְׁכָּא עֲלֵיהּ רוּחַ מִסְּאָבָא, וְכִדִּין עֲבִיד חֲרָשׁוּי וְעוֹבְדוּי.

77. וְשִׁירוֹתָא דְּעוֹבְדוּי הָוִי, נָטִיל נָחֵשׁ, מֵאִינוֹן חוּיִין, וְקִטֹּר לִיָּה קְמִיָּה, וּבִזַּע רִישָׁיָה, וְאַפִּיק לִישְׁנִיָּה וְנָטִיל עֲשָׁבִין יָדִיעֵן, וְאוֹקִיד כָּלָא, וְעֲבִיד מְנִיָּה קְטָרְתָא חָדָא, לְבַתֵּר נָטִיל רִישָׁא דְּהָהוּא חוּיָא, וּבִזַּע לִיָּה לְאַרְבַּע סְטָרִין, וְעֲבִיד מְנִיָּה קְטָרְתָא אַחְרָא.

78. וְעֲבִיד עֲגוּלָא חָדָא, וְהָוָה אָמַר מְלִין, וְעֲבִיד עוֹבְדִין אַחֲרֵינִין, עַד דֹּא־מִשְׁיַךְ עֲלֵיהּ רוּחִין מִסְּאָבִין, וְאוֹדִיעִין לִיָּה, מַה דֹּא־צָטְרִין, וְעֲבִיד בְּהוּ עוֹבְדוּי, כְּפֻם מַה דֹּא־יִנּוֹן יָדִיעֵי, מִסְטָרָא דְּהָהוּא חוּיָא דִּרְקִיעָא. מִתְּמָן אֲתַמְשֵׁךְ בְּעוֹבְדוּי וְחֲרָשׁוּי, עַד דֹּא־מִשְׁיַךְ עֲלֵיהּ רוּחַ, מִהָהוּא נָחֵשׁ קְדַמָּאָה.

79. וּמִהֲכָא הָוָה יָדַע, יָדִיעֵן, וְחֲרָשִׁין, וְקוֹסְמִין. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ כְּתִיב וְלֹא הֵלַךְ כְּפַעַם בְּפַעַם לְקִרְאָת נָחָשִׁים, נָחָשִׁים וְדָאִי, וְעָקְרָא וְשִׁרְשָׁא בְּמִסְּאָבוֹתָא אִיהוּ, כְּמַה דֹּא־תִמְרָא, וּלְבַתֵּר שִׁירוֹתָא דְּכָלָא, לָאוּ אִיהוּ אֶלָּא בְּנָחֵשׁ.

13. All kinds of witchcraft and sorcery abide only in women

When the serpent came upon Eve it injected impurities into her. For this reason, women are more susceptible to the allure of magic and witchcraft than men. Rabbi Yosi asks why this is so, since the children of Israel were cleansed of impurities at Mount Sinai. Rabbi Yitzchak replies that the Torah was only given to males. Furthermore, since women are of the left side, it is more difficult for them to cleanse themselves of defilement. Various kinds of impurity are discussed, and we learn that anything attached to the world-as are unholy spirits - holds the potential to defile.

The Relevance of this Passage

The term woman is used as a metaphor for man's evil inclination. Kabbalistically, women are on a much higher level of spirituality, as evidenced by their great intuition and heightened sensitivity. Therefore, only the male is required to work at eradicating his Evil Inclination through Torah. When a woman, however, uses her natural gifts for negative purposes, it is referred to as witchcraft. A reading of this section helps men and women subjugate their negative desires.

80. Rabbi Yosi asked why all kinds of witchcraft and sorcery abide only in women. He said that when the serpent came upon Chavah, he injected impurities only into her and not into her husband. BECAUSE WITCHCRAFT RADIATES FROM THE POLLUTION OF THE SERPENT, WITCHCRAFT IS THEREFORE IN WOMEN. He said, Assuredly this is so. Rabbi Yosi kissed Rabbi Yitzchak and said, Many times have I asked upon this matter, but never deserved to understand it until now.

80. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, אֲמַאי כָּל זֵינֵי חֲרָשִׁין וְקוֹסְמִין, לֹא אִשְׁתַּכְּחוּ אֶלָּא בְּנִשְׁיָא. אָמַר לִיָּה, הָכִי אוֹלִיפְנָא, מִדֹּא־תָא נָחֵשׁ עַל חוּהָ, הָטִיל בָּהּ זוּהָמָא בְּהָ אָטִיל, וְלֹא בְּבַעֲלָהּ. אָמַר, הָכִי הוּא וְדָאִי. אֲתָא רַבִּי יוֹסִי, וְנִשְׁקִיָּה לְרַבִּי יִצְחָק, אָמַר כְּמַה זְמַנִּין שְׁאִילְנָא הָאִי מַלָּה, וְלֹא זְכִינָא בָּהּ, אֶלָּא הִשְׁתָּא.

81. He asked, Where did Bila'am learn everything that he did, NAMELY ALL HIS SORCERY, and all that he knew? He answers, He learned it from his father. But in "the mountains of the east" (Bemidbar 23:7), in the land of the east, he learned MOST OF the enchantments and kinds of magic, for in these mountains abide the angels Aza and Azazel, whom the Holy One, blessed be He, caused to fall from heaven BECAUSE THEY DENOUNCED THE CREATION OF MAN. They are tied in chains of iron there and reveal spells to men. This is where Bila'am gained knowledge, as it is written: "Balak the king of Moav has led me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east" (Ibid.), WHERE AZA AND AZAZEL ARE.

82. He said, It is written: "He went not, as at other time, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness" (Bemidbar 24:1), WHICH MEANS THAT HE DID NOT ALWAYS LOOK FOR ENCHANTMENTS (ALSO: 'SNAKES'). Rabbi Yitzchak said that the lower side, which comes from the unholy spirit above, is the unholy spirit that ruled over the wilderness at the time when the children of Yisrael defiled themselves by committing the sin of the golden calf. THEREFORE, "HE SET HIS FACE TOWARD THE WILDERNESS." He cast his spells to all directions in order to uproot the children of Yisrael, but could not do so.

83. Rabbi Yosi said, When you earlier explained why witchcraft abides in women, you said that the serpent came upon Chavah and injected impurity into her. This is well, but we have learned that when Yisrael stood by Mount Sinai and received Torah, their impurities were cleansed. But the heathens who did not receive Torah remained impure, SO IMPURITY IS ALREADY GONE FROM WOMEN. THEREFORE, MY QUESTION IS STILL UNANSWERED, WHY IS WITCHCRAFT MOSTLY IN WOMEN?

84. He said to him, You spoke well. Nevertheless, come and behold: Torah was given to males only, as it is written: "And this is the Torah which Moshe set before the children (lit. 'sons') of Yisrael" (Devarim: 4:44). As women were exempt from the commandments of Torah, NAMELY FROM THE COMMANDMENTS VALID AT A FIXED TIME THEREFORE THEY REMAINED IMPURE AT THE GIVING OF TORAH. FOR THAT REASON, WITCHCRAFT, WHICH DERIVES FROM THE IMPURITY OF THE SERPENT, ABIDES MAINLY IN WOMEN.

85. Moreover, everyone became defiled again after the sin, EVEN THE MEN. It is more difficult for women to cleanse impurities from themselves than for men. Thus, women practice sorcery and abide in defilement more so than men. THE REASON WHY IT IS DIFFICULT FOR WOMEN TO BE CLEANSSED FROM DEFILEMENT IS THAT women come from the left side and are attached to the strict Judgment OF THE LEFT. This side cleaves to them more than to men, because they come from strict Judgment. Everything is attached to and follows its own kind.

81. אָמַר לִיה, כָּל הַיּוֹנֵי עוֹבְדִים וְכָל מַה דִּידַע בְּלַעַם, מֵאֵן אַתָּר אוֹלִיף לִיה. אָמַר לִיה, מֵאֲבוֹי. אָבֵל, בְּאִינוֹן הָרִי קֶדֶם, דִּאִיהוּ אֶרֶץ קֶדֶם, אוֹלִיף כָּל חֲרָשִׁין וְכָל זִינֵי קוֹדְמִין, בְּגִין דְּבְאִינוֹן טוֹרִי, אִינוֹן מְלֹאֲבֵי עִזָּא וְעִזָּא לְדֹאֲפִיל לֹון קוֹדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מִן שְׁמִיָּא, וְאִינוֹן קְטִירִין, בְּשִׁלְשָׁלֵי דְפְרִזְלָא, וְאוֹדִיעִין חֲרָשִׁין לְבְנֵי נֶשָׂא, וּמִתְמֵן הוּא יָדַע בְּלַעַם, כְּמָה דֵּאֵת אָמַר מִן אֶרֶם יִנְחֲנִי בְּלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב מֵהָרִי קֶדֶם.

82. אָמַר לוֹ, וְהָא כְּתִיב וְלֹא הֵלַךְ בְּפַעַם בְּפַעַם לְקִרְאָת נַחֲשִׁים וַיִּשֶׁת אֶל הַמִּדְבָּר פָּנָיו. אָמַר לוֹ, סִטְרָא תַתָּא דֵּאֵתִיא מִרוּחַ מְסֻאָבָא דְלַעִילָא, הוּא רוּחַ מְסֻאָבָא, דְּשִׁלִּיט בְּמִדְבָּרָא, כִּד עֲבָדוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵת עֲגֻלָּא, בְּגִין לְאַסְתָּאבָא בְּהִדְיָה, דִּאִיהוּ תַתָּא, וּבְכָלֵא עֲבַד חֲרָשׁוֹי בְּגִין דִּיכּוֹל לְאַעְקֵרָא לֹון לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, וְלֹא יָכִיל.

83. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָאִי דֵּאֵמַרְתָּ בְּקִדְמִיתָא, דְּכִד נֶחֱשׁ אֵתָא עַל חוּהָ אֵטִיל בֵּה זוּהֵמָא, שְׁפִיר, אָבֵל הָא תְּנִינָן, דְּכִד קְאִימוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל טוֹרָא דְּסִינֵי, פֶּסֶק מְנִיָּהּ זוּהֵמָא. יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּקִבְּלוּ אוֹרִייתָא, פֶּסֶק מְנִיָּהּ זוּהֵמָא, אָבֵל שָׂאָר עִמִּין עַכְכּוֹ, דֵּלָא קִבְּלוּ אוֹרִייתָא, לָא פֶּסֶקָא זוּהֵמָא מְנִיָּהּ.

84. אָמַר לִיה שְׁפִיר קְאֵמַרְתָּ, אָבֵל תָּא חֲזִי, אוֹרִייתָא לֹא אֵתִיָּהִיבַת אֵלָא לְדְכוּרִי, דְּכְתִיב וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁם מֹשֶׁה לְפָנָי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. דֵּהָא נָשִׁי, פְּטִירִין מִפְּקוּדֵי אוֹרִייתָא.

85. וְעוֹד, דֵּאֵהָדְרוּ בְּלָהוּ לְזוּהֵמַתָּן בְּקִדְמִיתָא, בְּתֵר דְּחִטּוֹ, וְאַתָּתָא קִשְׁיָא לְאַתְפָּרְשָׁא זוּהֵמָא מְנָה, יִתִּיר מִגְבָּרָא, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, אֲשֶׁתְּכַחוּ נָשִׁין בְּחֲרָשִׁיא, וּבְזוּהֵמָא דָּא יִתִּיר מִגּוּבְרִין. דֵּהָא נָשִׁיא מְסֻטְרָא דְשְׁמָאֵלָא קָא אֵתִיין וְאַתְדַּבְּקוּ דְּיִנָּא קִשְׁיָא, וְסִטְרָא דָּא, אֵתְדַבֵּק בְּהוּ, יִתִּיר מִגּוּבְרִין, כְּמָה דֵּאֵתְמַר, בְּגִין דֵּאֵתִיא מְסֻטְרָא דְּיִנָּא קִשְׁיָא, וְכָלֵא אֵתְדַבֵּק וְאִזִּיל בְּתֵר זִינִיָּה.

86. Come and behold: As I have said, ENCHANTMENT COMES FROM THE DEFILEMENT OF THE SERPENT, for Bila'am used to defile himself first to draw upon him the unholy spirit. THEN HE PRACTICED SORCERY. Similarly, it behooves man to stay away from a woman during menstruation LEST HE TOUCH HER, because she is attached to the spirit of defilement. If she practices sorcery at that time, she will be more successful than at other times. Whatever she touches is therefore defiled, and all the more so whomever approaches her. Happy are the children of Yisrael, for the Holy One, blessed be He, gave them Torah, and told them, "Also you shall not approach to a woman in the impurity of her menstrual flow, to uncover her nakedness...I am Hashem" (Vayikra 18:19-21).

86. תָּא חֲזִי, דִּהְכִי הוּא, כְּמָה דְאִמְינָא, דְּבִלְעָם הוּא אֶסְתָּאב בְּקִדְמִיתָא, בְּגִין לְאַמְשָׁכָא עֲלֵיהּ רוּחָא מְסֻאָבָא. כְּגִוּוֹנָא דָא, אֶתְתָא בְיוֹמֵי דְמִסְאָבוּ דִּילָהּ, אִית לִיה לְבַר נָשׁ לְאַסְתְּמָרָא מִנָּה, בְּגִין דְּבְרוּחַ מְסֻאָבָא אֶתְדַּבְּקַת וּבִהּ הוּא זְמָנָא, אִי אִיהִי תַעֲבִיד חֲרָשִׁין, אֶצְלָחוּ בִידָהּ, יִתִּיר מִזְמָנָא אַחֲרָא דִּהָא רוּחַ מְסֻאָבָא שְׂרִיָא עִמָּה, וְעַל דָּא, בְּכָל מָה דְקָרִיבַת אֶסְתָּאב, כָּל שְׂכָן מֵאֵן דְקָרִיב בִּיהָ. זְכָאִין אִינוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל, דְקוּדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, יְהִיב לֹון, אִוְרִייתָא, וְאִמַר לֹון, וְאֵל אִשָּׁה בְּגִידַת טְמֵאתָהּ לֹא תִקְרַב לְגִלּוֹת עֶרְוָתָהּ אֲנִי ה'.

87. He asks, Why is it called sorcery if someone uses the chirping of birds TO TELL THE FUTURE? It is because the unholy spirit abides in that bird, which is drawn from this side OF DEFILEMENT. That unholy spirit foretells events. Every defiled spirit, is attached to and comes to the world from the serpent and no one in this world is safe from it, because it is everywhere, until the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, will remove it from the world, as it is written: "He will destroy death for ever" (Yeshayah 25:8) and "I will also cause...the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zecharyah 13:2).

87. אָמַר לִיה, הָאִי מֵאֵן דְאֶסְתָּבֵל, בְּצַמְצוּמוֹי דְעוֹמֵי, אֲמַאי אֶקְרִי נַחֲשׁ. אֲמַר לוֹדָהּ מֵהָהוּא סְטָרָא קָאֲתִי, דְרוּחַ מְסֻאָבָא, שְׂרִיָא עַל הָהוּא עוֹפָא, וְאוֹדַע מְלִין בְּעֵלְמָא. וְכָל רוּחַ מְסֻאָבָא, בְּנַחֲשׁ אֶתְדַּבְּקוּ, וְאֶתִּין לְעֵלְמָא, וְלִית מֵאֵן דִּישְׁתַּזִּיב מִנִּיהּ בְּעֵלְמָא, דִּהָא אִיהוּ אֶשְׁתַּבַּח עִם כָּלָא, עַד זְמָנָא, דִּזְמִין קוּדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא לְאַעֲבָרָא לִיה מֵעֵלְמָא, כְּמָה דְאֶתְמַר, דְכִתִּיב בַּלַע הַמּוֹת לְנֹצֵחַ וּמַחָה ה' אֱלֹהִים דְמַעָה מֵעַל כָּל פְּנִים וְגו'. וְכִתִּיב וְאֵת רוּחַ הַטְּמֵאָה אֶעֱבִיר מִן הָאָרֶץ וְגו'.

14. The cave of Machpelah (Part One)

Rabbi Yehuda tells us how it was that Avraham recognized the significance of the cave of Machpelah, and that he deserved to be buried there. We learn that an ordinary man sees Adam at the moment of death. Yet Avraham saw him, along with a vision of the Garden of Eden, and still lived. This was because Avraham had been in Eden during his own lifetime, and thus looked upon something he was already merited to see when he was alive. He acquires the cave through spiritual wisdom, not through any form of self-centered desire.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our egocentric desires compel us to covet possessions that provide temporary satisfaction. But there is a downside: chaos and darkness appear when the thrill has ended. The soul, however, is in search of permanent fulfillment, and people who achieve that fulfillment are willing and able to forsake short-term, ego-based pleasures. Avraham exemplifies this principle in the story of the cave of Machpelah. By remaining true to a spiritual path, Avraham sought out the cave through his wisdom, not his ego, and therefore merited the greatest possible fulfillment: the Light of the Garden of Eden. The mystical words of the Zohar allow us to glimpse shards of Light gleaming in the Garden. During our lives, this Light helps us to fulfill the needs of our soul, instead of foolishly catering to our ego.

88. Rabbi Yehuda said, Avraham recognized a sign in that cave, NAMELY THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH, and his heart and desire were there. For he had entered it before and seen Adam and Chavah interred there. HE ASKS: How did he know it was they, FOR HE DID NOT KNOW THEM? HE ANSWERS, He saw the shape OF ADAM and looked at it. Then a door to the Garden of Eden opened before him AND HE UNDERSTOOD that this was the shape of Adam before him. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT HE DESERVED TO BE BURIED IN THE GATE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN DURING HIS LIFETIME.

88. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר, אַבְרָהָם יָדַע, בִּהְיָא מַעֲרָתָא סִימָנָא, וְלִבִּיהּ וּרְעוּתִיהּ תָּמֵן הוּא, בְּגִין דְּמִקְדַּמַּת דִּנָּא עָאֵל לְתָמֵן, וְחָמָא לְאַדָם וְחוּהּ, טְמִירִין תָּמֵן. וּמָנָא הוּא יָדַע, דְאִינוּן הוּו. אֶלָּא חָמָא דִּיוֹקְנִיהּ, וְאֶסְתָּבֵל וְאֶתְפַּתַּח לִיה, חַד פִּתְחָא דִּגְנָתָא דְעַדן תָּמֵן, וְהָהוּא דִּיוֹקְנָא דְאַדָם, הוּא קָאִים לְגַבִּיָּה.

89. Come and behold: Whoever beholds the shape of Adam cannot escape death. THAT PERSON HAS TO DIE THAT INSTANT, for man sees Adam the moment that he dies and passes from the world. But Avraham looked at him, saw his shape, and lived. He saw a light shining from within the cave and a candle burning. Then he wanted to dwell in that cave, and his heart and desire were always there.

90. Come and behold: Avraham behaved wisely when he asked for a grave for Sarah, for he did not ask for the cave immediately or say that he wanted to be separated from them. Instead, he said, "Give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight" (Beresheet 23:3). HE DID NOT MENTION EITHER EFRON OR THE CAVE. If you say that Efron was not there, IT IS NOT SO. INDEED he was present, as it is written: "And Efron dwelt among the children of Chet" (Ibid. 9). NEVERTHELESS, Avraham said nothing to him for the time being.

91. He spoke with them further, as it is written: "And spoke to the sons of Chet" (Ibid. 3). Could you conceive that Avraham wanted to be buried among the defiled or that he wanted to join them, when he said, "Give me a possession of a burying place with you"? But he behaved wisely.

92. And we learn proper conduct from the way Avraham acted, because he desired and wished for that cave. Although Efron was there, he did not want to ask him immediately. He did not ask for the cave but rather for what he did not want, and asked another, not Efron, AS HE SAID TO THE SONS OF CHET: "GIVE ME A POSSESSION OF A BURYING PLACE WITH YOU..."

93. Once the sons of Chet said to him in the presence of Efron, "Hear us, my lord, you are a mighty prince among us" (Beresheet 23:5), it is written: "And Efron dwelt (lit. 'dwells') among the children of Chet." 'Dwells' is written without vowels and can be conjugated as 'dwelt', which would mean that Efron was already there as they started talking. Then Avraham said, "Hear me, and entreat for me to Efron, the son of Tzochar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he has" (Ibid. 8). If you say that since my honor is greater than yours I ASK FOR THE CAVE OF THE MACHPELAH FROM EFRON because I do not want to dwell among you, THIS IS NOT TRUE. But "with you" AND "AMONGST YOU" (IBID. 10)-IN OTHER WORDS, to be interred among you. THIS IS WHAT I MEANT, because I want you, so that I shall not be separated from you.

89. וְתָא חַיִּי, כָּל מֶאֵן דְּאַסְתַּכֵּל, בְּדִיוקְנָא דְאָדָם, לֹא אֲשַׁתִּיב לְעֵלְמִין מִמִּיתָה, בְּגִין דְּהָא בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּבֵר נֶשׁ אֲסַתְלַק מִעֲלָמָא, חַמִּי לִיה לְאָדָם, וּבִהְיוּ זְמָנָא מִית. אֲבָל אַבְרָהָם אֲסַתְכֵּל בֵּיה, וְחָמָא דִּיוקְנֵיה, וְאַתְקִינִים, וְחָמָא נִהוּרָא דְנִהִיר בְּמַעְרְתָא, וְחָד שְׁרָגָא דְלִיק, כְּדִין תְּאִיב אַבְרָהָם, דִּיוקְנֵיה בִּהְיוּ אַתְר וּלְבִיה וְרַעוּתֵיה הוּא תְדִיר בְּמַעְרְתָא.

90. תָּא חַיִּי, הֲשָׁתָא אַבְרָהָם בַּחֲכֻמָּתָא עֲבַד בְּזִמְנָא דְתִבְע קְבֵרָא לְשָׂרָה, דְּהָא כִּד תִּבְע, לֹא תִבְע לְמַעְרְתָא בִּהְיוּ זְמָנָא, וְלֹא אָמַר דְּבַעֵי לְאַתְפָּרְשָׁא מִנִּיָּהוּ, אֶלָּא אָמַר, תְּנֻ לִי אַחֲוֹזַת קְבֵר עִמָּכֶם וְאַקְבֵּרָה מִתִּי מִלְפָּנֵי. וְאִי תִימָא דְלֹא הוּא עִמְרוֹן תִּמְן, תִּמְן הוּא, דְכְתִיב וְעִמְרוֹן יוֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי חֵת, וְאַבְרָהָם לֹא אָמַר לִיה בִּהְיוּ שַׁעְתָּא כְּלוּם.

91. אֶלָּא מַה דְּאָמַר לוֹן, אָמַר כְּמָה דְכְתִיב וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי חֵת וְגו'. וְכִי סָלָק דַּעְתָּךְ דְּאַבְרָהָם בַּעַל לְאַתְקַבֵּרָא בִּינִיָּהוּ בֵּין מִסָּאבִין, אִו דְּתַאוּבְתִּיה הוּא עִמְהוֹן, אֶלָּא בַּחֲכֻמָּה עֲבַד.

92. וַיִּלְמִינָן אוֹרַח אֶרֶעָא הָכָא, בְּמָה דַּעְבַּד אַבְרָהָם, דְּהָא בְּגִין דְּתַאוּבְתִּיה וְרַעוּתִיה הוּא בִּהְיוּ מַעְרְתָא, אֶף עַל גַּב דְּהוּא תִּמְן, לֹא בַּעַל לְמִשְׁאֵל לִיה מִיָּד, הֵהוּא רַעוּתָא דְהוּא לִיה בְּמַעְרְתָא, וְשְׁאִיל בְּקִדְמִיתָא, מַה דְּלֹא אֲצַטְרִיךְ לִיה, לְאִינוֹן אַחֲרִינִין, וְלֹא לְעִמְרוֹן.

93. בֵּינָן דְּאָמְרוּ לִיה, קָמִי עִמְרוֹן, שְׁמַעְנוּ אֲדִנִּי נְשׂוּי אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה בְּתוֹכְנוּ וְגו', מַה כְּתִיב וְעִמְרוֹן יוֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי חֵת, יוֹשֵׁב כְּתִיב, מִשִּׁירוּתָא דְּמִלִּין דְּאָמַר אַבְרָהָם, תִּמְן הוּא, כְּדִין אָמַר שְׁמַעוּנִי וּפְגַעוּ לִי בְּעִמְרוֹן בֶּן צַחַר וַיִּתֵּן לִי אֶת מַעְרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר לוֹ וְגו'. וְאִי תִימָא בְּגִין יְקָרָא דִּילִי יְתִיר מִנִּיכּוֹ, אֲנָא עֲבִיד, דְּלֹא רַעִינָא בְּכוֹ, בְּתוֹכְכֶם, בְּגִין לְאַתְקַבֵּרָא בִּינִיכּוֹ, דְּרַעִינוּ בְּכוֹ, בְּגִין דְּלֹא אַתְפָּרֶשׁ מִנִּיכּוֹ.

15. "Four hundred shekels"

The secret of what becomes of the body and soul at death, is explored by Rabbi Yosi bar Yehuda and Rabbi Chiya. When soul and body are parted, the angel Dumah becomes custodian of the body, which must show its worthiness to receive the reward of 400 worlds. According to the rabbis, this worthiness takes the form of a deep longing for purity and righteousness; desiring those qualities makes us worthy. Those who did not feel this yearning will not be resurrected on the Day of Reckoning.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Kabbalists have long taught that the Light of the Creator reveals itself only to genuine seekers of the truth. Through our desire for

righteousness, we earn the Light and become active participants in the process of Creation. Many people turn to the Creator only when tragedy or hardship strikes. Longing for the Light is easily kindled during moments of adversity. But when times are good, we tend to forget our spiritual aspirations. And as desire for the Light ceases, periods of prosperity inevitably come to an end. This passage sustains and increases our yearning for the Light so that it illuminates our lives without end.

Tosefta (Addendum)

94. Rabbi Yosi, the son of Rabbi Yehuda, visited Rabbi Chiya and asked, Sir, have you heard how those who are versed in the Mishnah explained this portion of the scripture as concerning the subject of the soul, AVRAHAM BEING THE SOUL AND SARAH THE BODY? He said, Happy is the fate of the righteous in the world to come, for Torah in their hearts is like a great stream. Although they block it, the water breaks through and creates smaller streams in all directions.

95. Come and listen: Rabbi Yosi, you are beloved. I will tell you about this portion of the scripture. In the reckoning of the righteous, Dumah never enters a man's body after his demise until the soul shows him a letter as a sign that the Cherubs gave it in the Garden of Eden. Rabbi Yosi said, I heard that when the soul enters THE GARDEN OF EDEN it ascends to its place, TO BINAH, and does not descend TO MALCHUT. But before the soul ascends, Dumah makes it a custodian of the body. The soul then shows Dumah that the body is worthy to receive 400 worlds as a reward.

96. Rabbi Chiya argued, yet Rabbi Elazar said that Dumah knows THAT THE BODY IS WORTHY OF THE 400 WORLDS AS ITS REWARD before THE BODY SHOWS HIM, because it is announced in the Garden of Eden. But I have heard that when the soul is given the letter as a token, it returns to the body to enter it in the reckoning of the righteous at the hands of Dumah. It is written: "But if you will give it, I pray you, hear me: I will give you the price of the field, take it of me" (Beresheet 23:12). The price (Heb. kesef) of the field is the longing (Heb. kisuf) and desire for the 400 worlds given as an heirloom FOR THE BODY.

97. When he heard this explained by the heads of the Yeshivah, Rav Yosef said, Whoever is made of dust may merit all this, NAMELY THE 400 BRIGHT WORLDS? Who shall merit it? Who shall stand? It is written: "Who shall ascend into the mountain of Hashem or who shall stand in his holy place?" (Tehilim 24:3).

תוספתא

94. רבי יוסי ב"ר יהודה, אָזיל לְמִיחְמֵי לִר' חִיָּיא, אָמְרֵלּוּ, לִימָא מַר, אִי שְׁמַע הָאִי פִּרְשָׁתָא, הִיךְ אָמְרוּ מֵאֲרִי מִתְנִיתָא, דְּפִרְשָׁהּ בְּעִנְיָנָא דְנִשְׁמָתָא. אָמַר, זָכָאָה חוֹלְקִיהוֹן דְּצִדִּיקָא, בְּעֵלְמָא דְאַתִּי, דִּכְךָ הִיא אוֹרִייתָא בְּלַבְהוֹן, כְּמַבּוּעָא רַבָּא דְמִיָּא, דְּאֵף עַל גְּבִדְמִסְתִּימִין לִיה, מְסָגִיאוֹת מִיָּא, פְּתַחִין מַבּוּעִין דְּנִבְעִין לְכָל עֵיבַר.

95. ת"ש, ר' יוסי, רְחִימָא אֶת, אָנָּא אִימָא לָךְ בְּהָאִי פִּרְשָׁתָא, לְעוֹלָם אִין גּוֹף הָאָדָם נִכְנָס בְּחִשְׁבוֹן הַצִּדִּיקִים, עַל יַד דּוּמָה, עַד שֶׁתִּרְאֶה הַנִּשְׁמָה, פְּנִקְס סִימְנָה, שְ�נוֹתֵנִין לָהּ הַכְּרוּבִים בִּג"ע. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, אָנָּא שְׁמַעְנָא, דְּהָא נִשְׁמָתָא, בְּתַר דְּעִיילַת תַּמָּן, הִיא אֲזֵלַת לְסַלְקָא לְאַתְרָא לְעִילָא, וְלֹא לְמִיחַת לְתַתָּא, אֲבָל קוֹדֵם שֶׁתַּעֲלֶה וְתִכְנָס, נַעֲשִׂית אֶפְטָרוֹפּוֹס הַגּוֹף, עַל יַד דּוּמָה, וּמִרְאֶה לוֹ, שְׂרָאוּי הוּא, לְקַבֵּל שְׂכָר אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת עוֹלָמוֹת.

96. אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא, הָא רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אָמַר, דְּהָא דּוּמָה יָדַע קוֹדֵם, מְשׁוּם דְּמִכְרִזֵּי עֲלֶה בְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֶרֶן. אֲבָל אָנָּא כִּךְ שְׁמַעְנָא, דִּי בְּעַדְנָא דִּיהִבִּין לִיה פְּנִקְסָא, חֲזַר עַל גּוֹפָא, לְאַעִּיל לִיה בְּפִתְקָא דְּצִדִּיקָא, עַל יְדוּי דְּדּוּמָה. הָדָא הוּא דְכֶתִיב, אֵךְ אִם אַתָּה לוֹ שְׁמַעְנִי נִתְּנִי כֶּסֶף הַשָּׂדֶה קַח מִמֶּנִּי. מִהוּ כֶּסֶף הַשָּׂדֶה, דָּא כְּסוּפָא דְּעֵלְמִין אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת, דִּיהִבִּין לִיה לְאַחֲסָנָא.

97. רַב יוֹסֵף, כִּד הוּה שְׁמַע פִּרְשָׁתָא דָּא, מִמַּאֲרִיהוֹן דְּמִתְנִיבְתָּא, הוּה אָמַר, מֵאֵן דְּאִיהוּ עֲפָרָא, מֵאִי קֹא זְכִי לְהָאִי, מֵאֵן יִזְכָּה, וּמֵאֵן יָקוּם הָדָא הוּא דְכֶתִיב מִי יַעֲלֶה בְּהַר ה' וְגו'.

98. Rabbi Aba said, Come and behold, it is written: "And Avraham hearkened to Efron, and Avraham weighed to Efron the silver..." This is the longing for those desirable worlds. The "400 shekels of silver" are the 400 worlds of pleasure and desire. As Rabbi Nachman said, "Current money with the merchant" means that one may pass all the gates of heaven and Jerusalem the terrestrial with it, without being detained.

99. Come and behold: It is written, "And after this, Avraham buried Sarah his wife" (Beresheet 18:19). THIS REFERS TO THE BODY, which was numbered in the company of the other righteous by a note of the chieftain Dumah. Rabbi Yitzchak said, So I have learned that all the bodies registered and visited by Dumah will be resurrected when THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, revives the dwellers of dust. Woe to the wicked who are not registered by him in writing, for they will be lost in Gehenom forever. Of this, it is said, "And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1).
End of Tosefta (Addendum)

16. The cave of Machpelah (Part Two)

A discussion of the events surrounding Avraham's purchase of the Machpelah cave ensues. We learn that Avraham managed to purchase both the cave and the field it stood in for a reasonable price, because he neither outwardly displayed nor inwardly harbored a desire to own either one. He knew that they were his by right--by virtue of his spiritual effort--and this is something very different from a selfish desire for ownership. Indeed, it is Avraham's spiritual elevation that causes the property to seem like a burden to Efron, its original owner. Rabbi Shimon then recounts what transpired between Adam and Avraham in the cave. Adam at first believes that his original humiliation and sin will be compounded in comparison with Avraham's righteousness. But a remarkable truth is now brought to light, when Avraham agrees to pray for Adam. Both Adam and Eve are said to have lived for Avraham's sake, for he was the first man to become aware and cognizant of the Creator. This startling fact concerning Avraham's connection to Adam and Eve is further illuminated when Avraham restores Eve--for whose sin he has not prayed--to Adam's side, an event paralleled by the burial of Sarah. After questions from Rabbi Shimon's son, Rabbi Elazar, we are then taken deep into the secret of the difference between the field of Machpelah and the cave. This difference exists, ultimately, to show that the Holy One's actions in this world are simply intended to bring the Light and sweetness of the Upper Realms. The differences between the cave and the field is a code, referring to the different frequencies of spiritual Light that are present in the physical realm, like the colors of the spectrum.

The Relevance of this Passage

This section helps explain how right conduct and resistance to our avaricious impulses allow us to receive the infinite delight waiting to pour down from the heavenly realm. In turn, we draw the strength to triumph over these self-seeking whims.

100. Rabbi Elazar asks, How did Avraham enter the cave? WHY DID HE ENTER? HE RESPONDED, He was running after a calf, about which it is written: "And Avraham ran to the herd..." (Beresheet 18:7). This calf ran to the cave. Avraham ran after it and saw what he saw.

101. Another REASON was that Avraham prayed every day. He came out to the field that was fragrant with heavenly perfumes, saw light coming out of the cave, and entered there to pray. There the Holy One, blessed be He, spoke with him. As a result, Avraham wanted the cave and always harbored a desire for it.

98. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, תָּא חַזִּי, מַאי דְכָתִיב, וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָהָם אֶל עֶפְרוֹן וַיִּשְׁקַל אַבְרָהָם לְעֶפְרוֹן אֶת הַכֶּסֶף, דָּא הוּא כְּסוּפָא רַבְתָּא, דְּאִינוּן עֲלָמִין וְכְסוּפִין. אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שְׁקָל כֶּסֶף, אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת עוֹלָמוֹת, וְהֵנְאוֹת, וְכְסוּפִין, עוֹבֵר לְסוֹחֵר. רַב נַחֲמָן אָמַר, שְׂוִיעָבוֹר כָּל שְׁעָרֵי שָׁמַיִם, וִירוּשָׁלַיִם שֶׁל מַעְלָה וְאִין מוֹחָה בִּידָה.

99. תָּא חַזִּי, מַה כְּתִיב, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ, וְנִמְנָה, עִם שְׂאֵר הַצְּדִיקִים בַּחֲבוּרָתָם, מִפְתָּקָא דְּמִמְנָא עַל יְדוּי דְּרוּמָה. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, הָכִי גְמִירָנָא, כָּל אִינוּן דְּכְתִיבִין בִּידוּי דְּרוּמָה, וּמִמְנָן עַל יְדוּי, יְקוּמוּן לְזִמְנָא דְּזִמִּין לְאַחִיא דִּינְרֵי עֶפְרָא, וְוִי לְהוֹן לְרִשְׁיַעְיָא דְּלֹא כְתִיבִין עַל יְדוּי בְּמִתְקָא, שְׂוִיעָבוֹר בְּגִיָּהֶם לְעֲלָמִין, וְעַל דָּא נֶאֱמַר וּבָעִתְהוּ הָיִיא יְמֵלֵט עִמָּךְ כָּל הַנִּמְצָא כְּתוּב בְּסִפְרָא. (עַד כָּאן תּוֹסֶפֶת).

100 רַבִּי אֱלֵעָזָר אָמַר, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּעָאֵל אַבְרָהָם בְּמַעְרְתָא, הֵיךְ עָאֵל. בְּגִין דְּהוּא רְהִיט אַבְתְּרִיָּה דְּהוּא עָגְלָא, דְּכָתִיב וְאֵל הַבָּקָר רָץ אַבְרָהָם וְגו', וְהוּא בֶן בָּקָר, עָרַק עַד הָהוּא מַעְרְתָא, וְעָאֵל אַבְתְּרִיָּה, וְחָמָא מַה דְּחָמָא.

101. תוּ בְּגִין דְּאִיהוּ צָלִי כָּל יוֹמָא וְיוֹמָא, וְהוּא נִפְיָק עַד הָהוּא חָקֵל, דְּהוּא סָלִיק רִיחִין עֲלָאִין, וְחָמָא נְהוּרָא דְּנִפְיָק מִגּוּ מַעְרְתָא, וְצָלִי תַמָּן, וְתַמָּן מְלִיל עֲמִיָּה קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וּבְגִין כֵּן בְּעָא לִיה, דְּתִיאובְתִּיָּה הוּא בְּהוּא אֶתְר תְּדִיר.

102. You may ask, why did he not seek to buy it until then? HE SAYS: Because he had no need for it, he was afraid that they would check it, UNDERSTAND HIS WISH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CAVE, AND THEN ASK FOR MORE MONEY. OR THEY COULD REFUSE TO SELL IT ALTOGETHER. Now that he needed it, the time had come to ask for it.

103. Come and behold: If Efron had seen in the cave what Avraham saw, he would never have sold it. But because Efron saw nothing in it, as nothing is revealed except to its owner, it was revealed to Avraham only and not to Efron. It was revealed to Avraham because it was his, and not Efron's, for Efron had no share in it. Therefore Efron saw nothing of the cave. He saw only darkness and therefore, he sold it.

104. Moreover, he also sold him what Avraham did not ask him to sell, because Avraham said only, "That he may give me the cave of the Machpelah...for the full price he shall give it me" (Beresheet 23:8) and did not mention the field. And Efron said, "The field I give you, and the cave that is in it, I give it you" (Ibid. 10), for Efron knew not what it was and found it all loathsome. EVEN THE FIELD, IN WHICH THE CAVE WAS, WAS LOATHSOME TO HIM. THEREFORE HE SOLD THE FIELD TOO, ALTHOUGH AVRAHAM DID NOT ASK FOR IT.

105. Come and behold: When Avraham entered the cave for the first time, he saw a light. The dust was removed from before him, revealing two graves. Adam rose from his grave in his rightful form, saw Avraham, and laughed. By that, Avraham knew that he was destined to be buried there.

106. Avraham said to him, 'If you please, is there an unroofed castle here?' HE ASKED THIS BECAUSE THE CAVE OF THE MACHPELAH IS DERIVED FROM THE WORD DOUBLE, THAT IS, A CAVE WITHIN A CAVE. INSTEAD OF COMPLETE DARKNESS, HE SAW LIGHT THERE, AS ONE WOULD IN AN OPEN HOUSE WITH NO ROOF. ADAM answered him, 'The Holy One, blessed be He, hid me here. From then until now, I have been hidden as a fish in a ditch. Since you came into the world, from now on, I and the world are maintained for your sake.'

107. Look at what is written: "And the field, and the cave that is in it, were made over (also: 'raised') to" (Beresheet 18:20). The field was truly raised, which had not happened previously. By BEING IN AVRAHAM'S POSSESSION, THE FIELD GAINED IN IMPORTANCE. THEREFORE IT IS WRITTEN, "RAISED." Rabbi Aba said, "And he raised the field" means actual raising, as the field was raised and elevated by Avraham, for nothing was seen there until then. Now, IN THE POSSESSION OF AVRAHAM, all that was hidden was raised and elevated according to its worth, as it should be.

102. ואי תימא אי הכי, אמאי לא בעא לה עד השתא. בגין דלא ישגחון עליה, הואיל ולא אצטריך ליה, השתא דאצטריך ליה, אמר הא שעתא למתבע ליה.

103. תא חזי, אי עפרון הוה חמי במערתא, מה דהוה חמי אברהם בה, לא יזבין לה לעלמין, אלא ודאי לא חמא בה ולא כלום, דהא לית מלה אתגליא, אלא למאריה, ובגין כך, לאברהם אתגלייא, ולא לעפרון, לאברהם אתגלייא, דיליה הוה לעפרון לא הות אתגליא ליה, דלא הוה ליה חולקא ביה. ובגין כך, לא אתגלי לעפרון כלום, ולא הוה חמי אלא חשוכא, ועל דא זבין לה.

104. ומה דלא תבע אברהם בקרמיתא, דיזבין ליה זבין, דהא אברהם לא קאמר, אלא ויתן לי את מערת המכפלה אשר לו וגו', בכסף מלא ותננה לי וגו', ואיהו אמר השדה נתתי לך והמערה אשר בו לך נתתיה וגו'. בגין דכלא הוה מאיס עליה דעפרון, דלא ידע מה היא.

105. ותא חזי, בר עאל אברהם במערתא, בקרמיתא חמא תמן נהורא, ואתרמי עפרא קמיה, ואתגלי ליה תרין קברין, אדהכי אסתלק ארם בדיוקניה, וחמא ליה לאברהם, וחיין, וביה ידע אברהם, דתמן הוא זמין לאתקברא.

106. אמרלו אברהם, במטו מינך, קוסטרא קטיר אית הכא, אמר ליה, קודשא בריך הוא טמרני הכא, ומהווא זמנא עד השתא, אתטמרנא בגילדא דקירטא, עד דאתית אנת בעלמא, השתא מכאן ואילך, הא קיומא לי, ולעלמא, הוה בגינך.

107. חמי מה כתיב ויקם השדה והמערה אשר בו, קימה ממש הוה ליה, מה דלא הוה ליה עד השתא. רבי אבא אמר, ויקם השדה, ודאי קימה ממש, דקם ואסתלק קמיה דאברהם, בגין דעד השתא, לא אתחזי תמן כלום, והשתא מה דהוה טמיר, קם ואסתליק, וכדין קם כלא בנמוסוי.

108. Rabbi Shimon said, When Avraham entered the cave and brought Sarah thither, Adam and Chavah rose and did not want Sarah to be buried there. They said, It is it not enough for us that we are in disgrace in the world before the Holy One, blessed be He, because of the sin that we committed, but now we will further be put to shame because of your good deeds.

109. Avraham said, I am ready to pray for you before the Holy One, blessed be He, so you shall never be disgraced before Him, NAMELY SO HE WILL FORGIVE YOU COMPLETELY FOR YOUR SIN. "And after this, Avraham buried Sarah his wife" (Beresheet 18:19). What is the meaning of: "And after this"? IT MEANS after Avraham undertook TO PRAY FOR ADAM.

110. Adam returned to his place, but Chavah did not, AS SHE HAD MADE ADAM SIN, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "THE WOMAN WHOM YOU DID GIVE TO BE WITH ME" (BERESHEET 3:12). SHE WAS AFRAID THAT ADAM WOULD NOT RECEIVE HER. Then Avraham approached and put her with Adam, who received her for Avraham's sake. This is the meaning of: "And after this, Avraham buried Sarah his wife." The particle Et before "Sarah" is meant to add Chavah, WHOM AVRAHAM RETURNED TO THE GRAVE, AS WAS SAID. Then ADAM AND CHAVAH were properly settled in their places, as it is written: "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created (Heb. behibar'am)" (Beresheet 2:4). We learned that behibar'am HAS THE SAME LETTERS AS beAvraham (lit. 'by Avraham'), WHICH INDICATES THAT THEY WERE CREATED FOR HIM. The generations of the heaven and the earth are Adam and Chavah. It is not written 'the heaven and the earth,' but "the generations of the heaven and of the earth", WHICH REFERS TO ADAM AND CHAVAH, who were not begotten by man. OF THESE THE VERSE SAYS they lived for the sake of Avraham. How do we know that they existed for Avraham? Because it is written: "And the field, and the cave that is in it, were made over (also: 'maintained') to Avraham." Until Avraham came, Adam and Chavah did not exist in the world. "THE FIELD AND THE CAVE IN IT" ALLUDE TO ADAM AND CHAVAH, WHO DWELT THERE. THE WORDS "BY AVRAHAM" MEAN FOR AVRAHAM. IT IS SHOWN THAT ADAM AND CHAVAH WERE SUSTAINED FOR AVRAHAM'S SAKE.

111. Rabbi Elazar asks Rabbi Shimon, his father, if the cave is really the Machpelah, for although it is written: "The cave of Machpelah" (Beresheet 23:8), it is later written "the cave of the field of Machpelah" (Ibid. 19). Thus, the field is called Machpelah AND NOT THE CAVE.

112. RABBI SHIMON replied that indeed it is called the cave of Machpelah, as it is written: "That he may give me the cave of Machpelah" (Beresheet 23:8), but neither the cave nor the field along is Machpelah. It refers instead to the field with the cave, TOGETHER they are called Machpelah. Only the field is of Machpelah, not the cave, WHICH MEANS THAT ONLY THE FIELD BEARS THE NAME OF THE MACHPELAH, NOT THE CAVE, because the cave is in the field, and the field is in something else, AS WILL BE DISCUSSED PRESENTLY.

108. אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּעָאֵל אַבְרָהָם בְּמַעֲרַתָּא, וְאָעִיל שָׂרָה תַּמָּן, קָמוּ אָדָם וְחָוָה, וְלֹא קִבְּלוּ לְאַתְקַבְּרָא תַּמָּן, אָמְרוּ וּמָה אֲנִין בְּכַסּוּפָא קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּהָהוּא עֲלָמָא, בְּגִין הָהוּא חוּבָא דְּגַרְיָמָנָא, וְהִשְׁתָּא יְתוּסָף לָן כְּסוּפָא אַחֲרָא, מִקָּמִי עוֹבְדִין טְבִין דְּבָכוּ.

109. אָמַר אַבְרָהָם, הָא אֲנָא זְמִין קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִינֵךְ דְּלֹא תִכְסִיף קָמִיָּה לְעֲלָמִין. מִיָּד וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ, מֵאִי וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן. בְּתַר דְּקִבֵּיל אַבְרָהָם עָלֶיהָ מְלָה דָּא.

110. אָדָם עָאֵל בְּדוּכְתִּיָּה, חָוָה לֹא עָאֵלָת, עַד דְּקָרִיב אַבְרָהָם, וְאָעִיל לָהּ לִגְבֵּי אָדָם, וְקִבֵּיל לָהּ בְּגִינִיָּה, הָה"ד וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ, לְשָׂרָה לֹא כְּתִיב, אֲלֵא אֶת שָׂרָה, לְאַסְגָּאָה חָוָה, וּכְדִין אֲתִישְׁבוּ בְּדוּכְתִּיָּהוּ בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, הָה"ד אֵלָה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבְרָאָם, וְתַנִּינָן בְּאַבְרָהָם. תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ, דָּא אָדָם וְחָוָה, אֵלָה הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ לֹא כְּתִיב, אֲלֵא תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ, וְלֹא תּוֹלְדוֹת בְּרַ נֶשׁ. וְאִינוּן אֲתַקְיָמוּ בְּגִינִיָּה דְּאַבְרָהָם. וּמָנָא לָן דְּאֲתַקְיָמוּ בְּגִינִיָּה דְּאַבְרָהָם. דְּכְתִיב וַיִּקֶּם ה' שָׂרָה וְהַמַּעֲרָה אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ לְאַבְרָהָם, וְעַד דָּאֲתָא אַבְרָהָם, לֹא אֲתַקְיָמוּ אָדָם וְחָוָה בְּדוּכְתִּיָּהוּ, בְּהָהוּא עֲלָמָא.

111. ר' אֵלְעָזָר שְׁאִיל לְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אָבוֹי, אָמַר הָאִי מַעֲרַתָּא לָאו אִיהוּ כְּפִילְתָּא, דְּהָא כְּתִיב מַעֲרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה וְקָרָא קְרִי לָהּ לְבֵתָר, מַעֲרַת שָׂרָה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה, מַכְפֵּלָה קָא קְרִי לִיהָ לְשָׂרָה.

112. אָמַר לִיהָ, הֲכִי קֶאֱרִי לִיהָ, מַעֲרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה, כְּמָה דָּאֲתָא אָמַר, וַיִּתֵּן לִי אֶת מַעֲרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה, אֲבָל וְדָאִי, חֲזִיךְ, לָאו מַעֲרַתָּא אִיהוּ מַכְפֵּלָה, וְלָאו שָׂרָה אֲקָרִי מַכְפֵּלָה, אֲלֵא הָאִי שָׂרָה וּמַעֲרַתָּא, עַל שׁוּם מַכְפֵּלָה אֲקִרוּן, שָׂרָה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה וְדָאִי, וְלֹא מַעֲרַתָּא, דְּהָא מַעֲרַתָּא בְּשָׂרָה אִיהִי, וְהָהוּא שָׂרָה קָאִים בְּמַלְהָ אַחֲרָא.

113. Come and behold: The whole land of Yisrael is enfolded beneath Jerusalem, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT. It is above and below in the following manner. THERE IS the upper Jerusalem, WHICH IS BINAH, and there is the lower Jerusalem, WHICH IS MALCHUT, for it is held above and held below. The upper Jerusalem is held on two sides-above and below-and, therefore, it is doubled.

114. Thus, the field is of that Machpelah (lit. 'double'), WHICH IS MALCHUT, for it dwells there, as it is written: "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which Hashem has blessed" (Bereshheet 27:27), WHICH IS MALCHUT. BECAUSE IT IS DOUBLE, above and below, it is written: "the field of Machpelah" and not "a double field", BECAUSE THIS WOULD ALLUDE TO THE DOUBLE MALCHUT CALLED FIELD.

115. Moreover, the secret of the matter relates to the field of Machpelah. What is the Machpelah (double)? It is the Hei of the holy name, which is double, FOR THERE ARE TWO HEI IN THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, and both are as one. For that reason, the scriptures say vaguely the (=Hei) Machpelah, for this is the only double letter in the holy Name. AND THE WORD "THE MACHPELAH" WITH THE HEI ALLUDES TO THE DOUBLE HEI, NAMELY THE LOWER HEI OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT SWEETENED BY BINAH, THE FIRST HEI OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI.

116. Although the cave was indeed double, a cave within a cave, it is called the cave of the field of Machpelah for a different reason as we said, AFTER THE SWEETENING OF MALCHUT BY BINAH. Avraham knew that, and when he spoke to the sons of Chet, he concealed it by saying "that he may give me the cave of Machpelah," which was called by that name because it was double. HE DID NOT SAY THE FIELD OF MACHPELAH CALLED AFTER THE SWEETENING BY BINAH. In Torah, though, it is called the cave of the field of Machpelah, as it ought to be called, FOR THE SWEETENING OF MALCHUT BY BINAH WAS ONLY OVER THE FIELD AND NOT IN THE CAVE.

117. The Holy One, blessed be He, does everything so whatever is in this world, MALCHUT, will resemble what there in above, in BINAH. AS A RESULT, they are connected, and His glory is established above and below. Happy is the portions of the righteous that the Holy One, blessed be He, desires them in this world and in the world to come.

113. תָּא חֲזִי, יְרוּשָׁלַם כָּל אֶרֶץ דִּישְׂרָאֵל אֲתַכְפֵּל תַּחֲוֹתָהּ, וְאִיהִי קְיֻמָּא לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא, בְּגֻוְנָא דָא, יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעִילָא וְרוּשָׁלַם לְתַתָּא, אַחֲרֵי דָא לְעִילָא, וְאַחֲרֵי דָא לְתַתָּא, יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעִילָא אַחֲרֵי דָא בְּתֵרִין סְטֵרִין, לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, כְּפֻלְתָּא הִיא.

114. וְעַל דָּא, הָאִי שָׂדֶה מֵהֵינָא כְּפֻלְתָּא אִיהוּ, דְּבִינָה שְׂרִיא. בְּגֻוְנָא דָא כְּתִיב בְּרִיחַ שָׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכּוּ ה', לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ שָׂדֶה הַמְכַפֵּלָה וְדָאִי וְלֹא שָׂדֶה כְּפֻלָּה.

115. תו, רְזָא דְמִלָּה, שָׂדֶה הַמְכַפֵּלָה וְדָאִי, מֵאן מְכַפֵּלָה, ה' דְּבִשְׂמָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּאִיהִי מְכַפֵּלָה. וְכָלֹא קְיֻמָּא בְּחֹדֶר, וּבְגִינִיָּה קְאָמֵר, בְּאוֹרַח סְתִימָה, ה' מְכַפֵּלָה, דְּלֹא הוּי בְּשְׂמָא קְדִישָׁא, אֶת אַחֲרָא מְכַפֵּלָה, בְּרִי אִיהִי.

116. וְאִף עַל גַּב דְּמַעֲרָתָא כְּפֻלְתָּא הוּהוּ, וְדָאִי, דְּאִיהִי מַעֲרָתָא, גּוּ מַעֲרָתָא, אֲבָל עַל שׁוּם אַחֲרָא, אֲקִרִי מַעֲרַת שָׂדֶה הַמְכַפֵּלָה, כְּמָה דְּאִתְּמַר. וְאַבְרָהָם יָדַע, וְכֹד אָמַר לְבָנֵי חֵת, בְּסִי מִלָּה, וְאָמַר וַיִּתֵּן לִי אֶת מַעֲרַת הַמְכַפֵּלָה, עַל שׁוּם דְּאִיהִי מַעֲרָתָא כְּפֻלְתָּא, וְאוֹרִינְתָא לֹא קָרִי לָהּ, אֶלֹא מַעֲרַת שָׂדֶה הַמְכַפֵּלָה כְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

117. וְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיחַ הוּא, עֶבֶד כָּלֹא לֹא שְׂתַכְחָא הָאִי עֲלֵמָא, בְּגֻוְנָא דְלְעִילָא, וְלֹא תִדְבַּק דָּא בְּדָא, לְמַהוּי יְקָרִיָּה לְעִילָא וְתַתָּא, זְכָאָה חוֹלְקִיהוּן דְּצִדִּיקָא, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיחַ הוּא אֲתֵרְעִי בְּהוּ, בְּהָאִי עֲלֵמָא וּבְעֲלֵמָא דָּאֲתִי.

17. "And Avraham was old, advanced in age"

Using Avraham and David as examples, Rabbi Yehuda explains the difference between the righteousness and contrition. While the soul of a contrite person immediately enters the supernal realm, where it cleaves to the Holy One, merely righteous souls may take many years to acquire such a blessing. Even Avraham and David were unable to enter the world where the truly contrite are made welcome. Rabbi Yosi further adds that a contrite soul is closer to the Creator than all others, drawing down more Light from above, in proportion to its yearning and penitence.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Zohar values a spiritual state of mind far above a religious, dogmatic one. Some people observe the Law, but at the expense of hurting those around them. Righteousness turns to self-righteousness and negative action, all in the name of God. Uninterrupted humbleness and repentance for our misdeeds protects us from this fate. This passage helps us raise our consciousness so we can differentiate our desire for righteousness from our need for penitence. Concentrating on penitence hastens us into the Light, rather than merely flattering our egotistical pride.

118. "And Avraham was old, advanced in age (lit. 'coming with the days'), and Hashem blessed Avraham in all things" (Beresheet 24:1). Rabbi Yehuda opened with the verse, "Happy is the man You choose, and cause to approach to You, that he may dwell in Your courts" (Tehilim 65:5). This verse has already been explained. Nevertheless, happy is the man whose ways are acceptable to the Holy One, blessed be He, who wants to bring himself nearer to Him.

119. Come and behold: Avraham came closer to THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. All his days, his desire was TO COME CLOSER TO HIM. Avraham did not come closer through one day or at one time, but his GOOD deeds brought him closer every day as he moved from one grade to another, until his grade was elevated.

120. When he was old, he entered the supernal grades as he deserved, as it is written: "And Avraham was old" and then "coming with the days." This refers to the supernal days, the days known by the secret of the faith. "And Hashem blessed Avraham in all," NAMELY BY YESOD OF THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA CALLED ALL, where blessings and every goodness come from, AS ITS PLENTY NEVER STOPS FLOWING.

121. Happy are the penitent, who in one hour, one day, one moment, get as close to the Holy One, blessed be He, as most righteous come to the Holy One, blessed be He, over several years. Avraham did not come into the supernal days until he was old, as has been explained. Neither did David, as it is written: "Now King David was old, advanced in years (lit. 'coming with the days')" (I Melachim 1:1). But a penitent comes right in and cleaves to the Holy One, blessed be He.

122. Rabbi Yosi said, We learned that the wholly righteous have no permission to be in that place where the contrite stand. They are closer to the King than everyone else and draw plenty from above with a more intent heart and greater force in order to come closer to the King.

118. וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וְה' בֵּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם
בְּכָל. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה פָּתַח, אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתְקַרֵּב יִשְׁכֹּן
חֲצִירֶיךָ, הָאִי קָרָא אֶתְמֹר, אֲבָל זִכָּא הוּא בֵּר נֶשׁ,
דְּאוּרְחוּי אֶתְבְּשָׁרֵן קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְאִיהוּ
אֶתְרַעֵי בֵיה, לְקַרְבָּא לֵיה לְגַבִּיה.

119. תָּא חַזִּי, אַבְרָהָם אֶתְקָרִיב לְגַבִּיה, וְתִיאוּבְתִיה
דִּילִיה הָוָה כָּל יוֹמוֹי בְּהָאִי, וְלֹא אֶתְקָרִיב אַבְרָהָם
בְּיוֹמָא חָדָא, אוּ בְזִמְנָא חָדָא, אֶלָּא עוֹבְדוּי קָרִיבּוּ
לֵיה בְּכָל יוֹמוֹי, מִדְּרָגָא לְדְרָגָא, עַד דְּאֶסְתַּלַּק
בְּדְרָגוּי.

120. בְּדִ הָוָה סִיב, וְעָל בְּדְרָגִין עֲלֵאִין בְּדָקָא חַזִּי,
דְּכִתִּיב וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן, וְכִדִּין בָּא בַּיָּמִים, בְּאִינוֹן יוֹמִין
עֲלֵאִין, בְּאִינוֹן יוֹמִין יִדְעָאן בְּרָזָא דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא. וְה'
בְּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל, דְּמִתְמֵן נִפְקִין כָּל בְּרָכָאן,
וְכָל טִיבּוּ.

121. זִכָּאִין אִינוֹן מְאִרְיָהוֹן דְּתִשׁוּבָה, דְּהָא בְּשַׁעְתָּא
חָדָא, בְּיוֹמָא חָדָא, בְּרָגְעָא חָדָא, קָרִיבִין לְגַבִּי
קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מַה דְּלֹא הָוָה הָכִי אֶפְּלוּ
לְצִדִּיקִים גְּמוּרִים, דְּאֶתְקָרִיבּוּ גַבִּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא
בְּכַמָּה שָׁנִין. אַבְרָהָם לֹא עָל בְּאִינוֹן יוֹמִין עֲלֵאִין,
עַד דְּהָוָה סִיב, בְּמָה דְּאֶתְמֹר. וְכֵן דּוּד, דְּכִתִּיב
וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דּוּד זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים. אֲבָל מְאִרְיָהוֹן דְּתִשׁוּבָה,
מִיד עָל, וְאֶתְדַבֵּק בֵּיה בְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

122. ר' יוֹסִי אָמַר, תְּנִינֵן, אֶתְר דְּמְאִרְיָהוֹן דְּתִשׁוּבָה
קְוִימִי בֵיה, בְּהֵוָה עֲלֵמָא, צִדִּיקִים גְּמוּרִים לִית לֹון
רְשׁוּ לְקוִימָא בֵיה, בְּגִין דְּאִינוֹן קָרִיבִין לְמַלְכָּא וְתִיר
מְבַלְהוּ, וְאִינוֹן מְשַׁכִּי עֲלִייהוּ בְּרַעוּתָא דְּלֵבָא וְתִיר,
וּבְחִילָא סָגִיא לְאֶתְקָרְבָּא לְמַלְכָּא.

18. There are many places for the righteous

The relationship of a man's good deeds to the place allotted to him in the World to Come is expounded by the rabbis. We learn that there are ultimately as many different places in upper world as there are varieties of good deeds in this one. Just as the wicked receive a judgment each night while they are asleep, so the righteous nightly receive a blessing, as their souls ascend to carve out their future path to the supernal realms. The righteous souls also enjoy a dialogue with the angels and saints, who in exchange for information from the lower world, confer gifts of wisdom. It was such wisdom, says Rabbi Chiya, that enabled Avraham to understand, locate, and avoid the sources from which unholy spirits bring defilement and negativity to the unwary and unrighteous in this world.

The Relevance of this Passage

In simplest terms, reality includes two basic realms--the upper world, and our existence in the physical dimension. The upper world is the source of our intuition and the force behind moments of mystical insight. When a dream comes true, for example, contact has been made with the upper worlds. When instinct impelled you to make an illogical decision that brought good fortune, this is another form of connection to the upper world. Unfortunately, these acute moments of insight and clarity are rare. We seem to have no control over how or when we make contact with the supernal realms. When we must make decisions and choices based on the evidence of our physical existence, the result is often turmoil and turbulence. The author of the Zohar understood this difficulty, and prescribed this portion as a remedy. A reading of this passage helps us utilize our sleep as a tool for spiritual enlightenment. The 'energy of Avraham' is summoned forth through these verses, strengthening our powers of judgment in matters that

help or hinder the entrance of the Light into our world.

123. Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, has several places in that world. In them all, there are apartments for the righteous, each according to his deserved grade.

124. It is written, "Happy is the man whom You choose, and cause to approach You, that he may dwell in Your courts" (Tehilim 65:5). This verse refers to those whom the Holy One, blessed be He, causes to approach Him, as these are the souls that ascend to join the inheritance prepared for them. "That he may dwell in Your courts" alludes to the outer halls and the grades outside THE TEMPLE. To whom does it refer? The allusion here is as written: "Then I will give you free access among these who stand by..." (Zechariah 3:7). This is a specific grade assigned among the celestial holy beings.

125. All those who merit this grade are the messengers of the Master of the universe like the angels, FOR THOSE WHO STAND BY ARE MESSENGERS. They always do the errands according to their Master's wish, for they are forever in holiness and are never defiled.

126. Similarly, whoever is defiled in this world draws the spirit of unholiness to himself. When his soul leaves him, he is defiled BY THE OTHER SIDE, and his dwelling is with the unclean, with the fiends of the world. As a man draws upon himself in this world, his dwelling will likewise be determined IN THE ETERNAL WORLD. The defiled spirits defile him and bring him into Gehennom.

127. Come and behold: Whoever sanctifies himself and is on guard against defilement in this world will find his dwelling in the next world among the celestial holy beings who eternally carry forth the missions OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. They stand by in the court, as it is written: "The court of the tabernacle" (Shemot 27:9), UPON WHICH THE SCRIPTURES FURTHER STATE, "HAPPY IS HE... THAT HE MAY DWELL IN YOUR COURTS."

128. Others are in a more inner place, not in the court but in the house, as it is written: "We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house" (Tehilim 65:5). David said, "We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house." HE ASKS, if he said "that he may dwell in Your courts," why is it written: "We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house"? Should it not have been written: 'He will be satisfied', as "he may dwell"? But we learned that sitting in the Temple court is solely for the kings of the house of David. THEREFORE HE SAID, AS SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF, "WE WILL BE SATISFIED WITH THE GOODNESS OF YOUR HOUSE" MEANING HIMSELF AND THE OTHER KINGS, WHO HAVE A PLACE IN THE TEMPLE COURT IN THE SECRET OF THE HOUSE, NAMELY THE TEMPLE.

123. תָּא חֲזִי, כִּמָּה אֶתְרִין מִתּוֹקֵנִין לִיה לְקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּהוּא עֲלָמָא, וּבְכֻלָּהוּ בִּי מוֹתְבֵי לֹון לְצַדִּיקִים. כָּל חָד וְחָד לְמוֹם דְּרָגִיה בְּדָקָא חֲזִי לִיה.

124. בְּתִיב אֲשֵׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתְקַרֵּב יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצִירֶךָ, דְּקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא קְרִיב לֹון לְגִבְיָה, דְּסֻלְקִין אֵינֹון נִשְׁמָתִין מִתְתָּא לְעִילָא, וְלֹאֲתֹאחְדָא בְּאַחְסִנְתִּיהוֹן, דְּאִתְתְּקִנֵּן לָהּ. יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצִירֶךָ, אֵלִין אֶתְרִין וּדְרָגִין לְבָר, וּמֵאן אֵינֹון, כְּדָבָר אַחֵר וְנִתְתִּי לָךְ מֵהִלְכִּים בֵּין הָעוֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה. וְהֵאֵי הוּא, דְּרָגָא בֵּין קְדִישִׁין עֲלָאִין.

125. וּמֵאן דְּזֻכְאִין לְדְרָגָא דָא, אֵינֹון שְׁלִיחֵן דְּמֵאֲרִי עֲלָמָא, כְּאֵינֹון מְלָאכִין, וְעִבְדִּין שְׁלִיחוֹתָא תְדִיר בְּרַעוֹתָא דְּמֵאֲרִיהוֹן, בְּגִין דְּאֵלִין תְדִיר בְּקְדוּשָׁה וְלֹא אִסְתָּאבוּ.

126. כְּגוֹנוֹנָא דָא, מֵאן דְּאִסְתָּאב בְּהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, אִיהוּ מְשִׁיךְ עֲלֵיהּ רוּחַ מְסָאב, וְכֵד נִפְק נִשְׁמָתִיה מִנִּיה, מְסָאבִין לִיה, וּמְדוּרִיה בֵּין אֵינֹון מְסָאבִין, וְאֵלִין אֵינֹון מְזִיקִין דְּעֲלָמָא. כִּמָּה דְּאִתְמַשֵּׁךְ בֵּר נֶשׁ גְּרַמִּיה בְּהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, הֵכִי הוּא מְדוּרִיה, וְאִתְמַשֵּׁךְ בְּהוּא עֲלָמָא, וְאֵינֹון רוּחֵי מְסָאבִי מְסָאבִין לִיה, וְאֵעֲלִין לִיה לְגִיְהֵנָם.

127. תָּא חֲזִי מֵאן דְּאִתְקַדֵּשׁ, וְנִטִּיר גְּרַמִּיה בְּהֵאֵי עֲלָמָא, דְּלֹא אִסְתָּאב, מְדוּרִיה בְּהוּא עֲלָמָא, בֵּין אֵינֹון קְדִישִׁין עֲלָאִין, וְעִבְדִּין שְׁלִיחוֹתָא תְדִיר, וְאֵלִין קִיּוּמֵי בְּחֶצֶר, כִּמָּה דָּאֵת אִמֵּר אֵת חֶצֶר הַמִּשְׁכָּן.

128. וְאֵית אַחֲרָנִין, דְּאֵינֹון לְגוּ יְתִיר, דְּלֹא אֵינֹון בְּחֶצֶר, אֶלָּא בְּבֵיתָא, כִּד "א נִשְׁבַּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ. אִמֵּר דָּוִד, נִשְׁבַּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ, בֵּינֹון דְּאִמֵּר יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצִירֶךָ, אִמָּאֵי בְּתִיב נִשְׁבַּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ, יִשְׁבַּע בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ מִיבְעֵי לִיה, כִּמָּה דְּכְתִיב יִשְׁכֹּן. אֶלָּא הָא תְּנִינֵן, לִית יְשִׁיבָה בְּעֶזְרָה, אֶלָּא לְמַלְכֵי בֵּית דָּוִד בְּלַחוּדִיהוּ.

129. There is a place for the most pious who receive EVEN MORE inward, TO THE ASPECT OF THE TEMPLE. Who are they? They are "those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, before the Tent of Meeting eastward, shall be Moshe and Aharon and his sons..." (Bemidbar 3:38). OF THEM, IT IS WRITTEN: "YOUR HOLY TEMPLE" (TEHILIM 65:5). Many compartments upon compartments, lights upon lights exist in that world, each different from the other, each feeling ashamed by its fellow's light. For as good deeds are different FROM EACH OTHER in this world, so the places FOR THE COMPARTMENTS and their lights are different in that world.

130. Come and behold: We have learned that even in this world when man is asleep in his bed and the soul comes out of his body to hover about the world, not every soul rises to see the glory of the face of Atik Yomin. His soul ascends as he generally draws upon himself, and according to his deeds.

131. When a defiled person sleeps, his soul leaves and the spirits of defilement seize it. It is attached to the lower grades that hover about the world and tell it things that will happen in the world in the future, THINGS THEY HEARD BEHIND THE CURTAIN. And sometimes they tell it false things and laugh at it, as has already been explained.

132. If the man has merit, then his soul ascends when he sleeps. It goes around and paves a way among the spirits of defilement. All say, Make way, make way, this one is not of our side. And it ascends among the saints, who tell accurate information to it.

133. And when the soul descends again, the mixed legions OF ANGELS, IN WHOM HOLINESS IS MINGLED WITH DEFILEMENT, want to approach the soul in order to learn the information it received. In return, they tell it other things. But what it learned from holy beings compares to what it learned from THE MIXED LEGIONS, as grain compares with straw and chaff. This is the most meritorious reward while one is still among the living-that is, while the soul is still in this world.

134. Similarly, when souls in this world leave their bodies, I.E. AFTER THEY DIE, they wish to ascend by passing through gates at which one finds harmful hordes that seize the souls of their own side and deliver them into the hands of Dumah, so that he may take them to Gehenom.

129. ואית אתר לחסידיו עליונן, דעיוילי לגו, ומאי אינון, בדכתיב והחונים לפני המשכן קדמה לפני אהל מועד מזרחה משה ואהרן ובניו וגו'. וכמה מדורין על מדורין, ונהורין על נהורין, מתפרשן בהוא עלמא, וכל חד אכסוף מנהורא דחבריה, כמה דעובדין אתפרשן בהאי עלמא, הכי נמי, דוכתיב ונהורין, מתפרשן בהוא עלמא.

130. ותא חזי, הא אתמר, דאפילו בהאי עלמא, בד בר נש נאים על ערסיה, ונשמתין אצטריכו לאתשוטטא בעלמא, ונפקו מגו גופא, לאו כל נשמתא ונשמתא, סלקא ושטיא, למחזי ביקר סבר אפי דעתיק יומין, אלא במא דאתמשוך תדיר, וכפום עובדי, הכי נשמתיה סלקא.

131. אי אסתאב, איהו נאים ונשמתא נפקא, וכל אינון רוחין מסאבין נקטין לה, ואתדבקת בהו באינון דרגין תתאין דשטיין בעלמא, ואינון מודיעין לה מלין דאינון קריבין למיתי בעלמא, ולזמנין דמודיעין לה, מלין בדיבן, וחייכן בה, והא אוקמוה.

132. ואי זכי בר נש, בד איהו נאים ונשמתיה סלקא, אזלא ושטיא, ובקעא בין אלין רוחין מסאבין, וכלהו מכריזין ואמרין פגון אתר, פגון, לאו דא מסטרנא, ואיהי סלקא בין אינון קדישין, ומודיעי לה מלה חדא דקשוט.

133. וכד נחתא, כל אינון חבילין טריקין, בעאן לאתקרבא בהדה, למנדע ההיא מלה, ואינון מודיעין לה, מלין אחרנין, וההיא מלה דנטלא גו אינון קדישין, בין אינון אחרנין, איהו בעבורא גו תיבנא. והאי איהו דזכי יתיר, בעוד דאיהו קאים, ונשמתא קיימא, בהאי עלמא.

134. בגוונא דא בד נפקין נשמתין מגופא מהאי עלמא, בעאן לסלקא, וכמה תרעין חבילי טהירין קיימי, אי אינון מסטריהו, בלהו אחרין בהו, באינון נפשאן, ומסרי לון בידי דדומה, לאעלא לון בגיהנם.

135. Later, as they ascend from Gehenom, the demons grab the souls and proclaim, These transgressed the precepts of their Master. Then, they travel throughout the world, bringing these souls back to Gehenom. THUS, THEY REPEATEDLY TAKE THE SOULS OUT OF GEHENOM, MAKE THEIR PROCLAMATIONS, AND AGAIN RETURN THEM TO GEHENOM for twelve months. After twelve months appeased, they are quieted and rise to the place that they deserve. Meritorious souls ascend and receive their places, as has already been explained.

136. Come and behold: Happy are the righteous, for much goodness is put aside for them in that world. The innermost place is reserved for the righteous, those who know the secret of their Master and cleave to Him every day. Of these, it is written: "Neither has the eye seen, that an Elohim, beside you, should do such a thing for him that waits for Him" (Yeshayah 64:3).

137. HE ASKS, What is meant by: "For him that waits for Him?" He replied that it is similar to the verse: "waited to speak to Iyov" (Iyov 32:4). This refers to those who are anxious TO FULLY UNDERSTAND some words of wisdom, thereby better understanding their Master. In them, the Master takes pride daily. They enter the upper gates and come among the supernal saints without meeting any obstacles. Happy is their portion in this world and the world to come.

138. Come and behold: Avraham thus entered to properly know and cleave to his Master. First he performed good deeds to merit the supernal days, and was therefore blessed by the place from where all the blessings derive, as it is written: "And Hashem had blessed Avraham in all" (Beresheet 42:1). What is the meaning of "in all"? It means the dwelling place of the river, in which water never stops flowing, NAMELY YESOD OF THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA, WHOSE UNION IS ETERNAL.

139. Rabbi Chiya said, Come and behold that Avraham did not want to mix with the women of the world and cling to the heathen nations because the wives of the heathen nations defiled their husbands and those attached to them. Because Avraham had the knowledge of wisdom, he knew the essence and root of the place from which the unholy spirits come out to hover in the world. Therefore, he made his servant swear not to take a wife for his son from among the other nations.

135. ולבֹּתֶר סֶלֶקֶן ואַחֲרָן בָּהוּ, ואִינוּן נִטְלִי לְהוֹן, וּמִכְרִיזוּ בָּהוּ, אֵלֶיךָ אִינוּן דַּעְבְּרוּ עַל פְּקוּדֵי דְמֵאֲרִיָּהוֹן, וְכֵן שְׁטִינִין בְּכָל עֲלָמָא. וּלְבֹתֶר מֵהֲדָרִי לְהוֹן לְגִיָּהֲנָם, וְכֵן עַד תְּרִיסָר יָרְחֵי. לְבֹתֶר תְּרִיסָר יָרְחֵי, מִשְׁתַּכְּכִי, בַּהּוּא אַתָּר דְּאַתְחֲזִי לֹון, אִינוּן נִשְׁמָתִין דְּזִכּוּ, סִלְקִי לְעִילָא, כְּמָה דְאַתְמָר, וְזָכָאן בְּדוּכְתֵּייהוּ.

136. תָּא חֲזִי, זַבְּאִין אִינוּן צְדִיקָא, דְּאַתְגִּיז לְהוֹן, כְּמָה טְבִין לְהֵוּא עֲלָמָא, וְלִית אַתָּר פְּנִימָא בְּכָל אִינוּן, בְּאִינוּן דִּידְעֵי רְזָא דְמֵאֲרִיָּהוֹן, וְיִדְעֵי לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בָּהוּ, בְּכָל יוֹמָא עַל אֵלֶיךָ כְּתִיב עֵין לֹא רָאָתָא אֱלֹהִים וּזְוֹלָתָךְ יַעֲשֶׂה לְמַחְכָּה לּוֹ.

137. מַאי לְמַחְכָּה לּוֹ, בְּדַבֵּר אַחֲרֵי חֻכָּה אֶת אִינוּן בְּדַבְרִים. וְאֵלֶיךָ אִינוּן דְּדַחְקִין לְמַלְה דְּחֻכְמָתָא, וְדִיִּקִּין לָהּ, וּמַחְכָּאן לָהּ, לְמַנְדַּע בְּרִירָא דְמַלְה, וְאַשְׁתַּמּוּדְעָא לְמֵאֲרִיָּהוֹן, אֵלֶיךָ אִינוּן דְּמֵאֲרִיָּהוֹן מִשְׁתַּבַּח בָּהוּ בְּכָל יוֹמָא, אֵלֶיךָ אִינוּן, דְּעֵאלִין בֵּין עֲלָאִין קְדִישִׁין, וְאֵלֶיךָ עֵאלִין כָּל תְּרַעֵי דְלְעִילָא, וְלִית מֵאן דִּימְחִי בִידְהוֹן, וְכָאָה חוֹלְקִיהוֹן בְּעֲלָמָא דִּין, וּבְעֲלָמָא דְאַתִּי.

138. תָּא חֲזִי, אַבְרָהָם עָאֵל לְמַנְדַּע וּלְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בְּמֵאֲרִיָּה בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, לְבֹתֶר דְּאַקְדִּים עוֹבְדֵי בְּקְדֻמִּיתָא, וְזָכָה בְּאִינוּן יוֹמִין עֲלָאִין, וְאַתְבַּרְךְ מֵאַתָּר דְּכָל בְּרַכָּאן נְפָקִי מִתַּמָּן, דְּכְתִיב וְה' בֵּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל. מַאי בְּכָל. אַתָּר דְּנִהָרָא, דְּלֹא פִסְקִי מִיּוֹמֵי לְעָלְמִין.

139. אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּא, תָּא חֲזִי, דְּאַבְרָהָם לֹא בַּעַל לְאַתְעַרְבָא בְּנָשֵׁי עֲלָמָא, וּלְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בְּשָׂאֵר עַמִּין עַכּוּ"ם, בְּגִין דְּנִשְׁטִיא דְשָׂאֵר עַמִּין עַכּוּ"ם, אִינוּן סָאֲבִין, לְגוֹבְרִיָּהוּ, וּלְאִינוּן דְּמִתְדַּבְּקִין בָּהוּ, בְּגִין דְּכֹד אַבְרָהָם יָדַע חֻכְמָתָא, יָדַע עֲקָרָא וְשִׁרְשָׁא, וּמֵאן אַתָּר נְפָקִי וְשְׁטִינִין רוּחֵי מִסָּאֲבִין בְּעֲלָמָא, וְעַל דָּא אֹמְרִי לְעַבְדֵּיהּ, דְּלֹא יִסָּב אַתְתָּא לְבְרִיָּה, מִשָּׂאֵר עַמִּין.

19. Eden drips upon the garden

The rabbis display their profound and comprehensive knowledge of the scriptures and writings, in a complex discussion of an image in Yechezkel, "Behold one wheel upon the earth..." While replete with the arcane wisdom of gematria (numerology) and Kabbalah, and the profound mystical beauty of Solomon's great 'Song', this debate has a surprisingly straightforward resolution--one that echoes previous sections of the Zohar in its

emphasis on the importance of a pure heart and good deeds in this world for bringing mercy and peace in the next. Rabbi Yitzchak concludes with a simple exposition of the reason for mentions of Avraham's age. Avraham, literally, "came into the days"; his soul had reached its high-allotted place, where its great longevity was assured.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Talmud reveals the difference between man and beast. A wild animal, according to Talmudic sages, instinctively knows to flee the raging fire. Man's nature, on the other hand, compels him to jump head first into the fiery blaze. Our natural tendency is to invite chaos and mayhem into our lives. We complicate and intellectualize life and its challenges, and we rationalize our responses to them. We refuse to heed the simple principles that create happiness--good deeds and persistent spiritual development. In reading this passage, we clear away the barriers to knowledge, and recognize that even the most complex mysteries arise from the same simple and eternal issues. Indeed, complexity itself is merely another excuse to avoid the quest to draw down Light. This excuse must be overcome like any other.

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

140. "And Avraham was old, advanced in age" (Beresheet 24:1). We learned in the Mishnah: Rabbi Elazar said, In any case, this Mishnah well EXPLAINS THE VERSE: "Behold one ofan (wheel) upon the earth by the living creatures, with its four faces" (Yechezkel 1:15). It becomes a Neshamah as said in the earlier Mishnah. THUS, ALTHOUGH OFAN (WHEEL) IS ALWAYS A NAME OF THE NEFESH, THE MISHNAH STATES THAT THE OFAN IN THIS VERSE BECAME A NESHAMAH AGAIN. THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT THIS FACT, AND THE EXPLANATION IS ACCURATE, BUT THE MISHNAH DOES NOT EXPLAIN WHY.

141. Rabbi Aba responded, Tell us, sir, about this Mishnah. What is it? He replied: THE HIDDEN MEANING OF THE VERSE, "BEHOLD ONE WHEEL UPON THE EARTH," AS EXPLAINED IN THE MISHNAH, IS THAT THE OFAN BECOMES A NESHAMAH. This was also explained in another section-the one about the thirteen divine attributes of mercy. But here we have to explain THIS PORTION. He began with the verse: "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother" (Shir Hashirim 6:9), FOR THIS VERSE ALLUDES TO THE NESHAMAH. Rabbi Elazar asked, Why do we refer to it here in Shir Hashirim as a female, NAMELY "MY DOVE, SHE...IS BUT ONE", but in the Torah we refer to it as male, NAMELY AVRAHAM?

142. Rabbi Elazar said, In Torah, THE SOUL is male in relation to the body because the body to the soul is like a woman to a man. In relation to a higher grade, the soul is as a female to a male. Each receives its grade according to the context. THEREFORE, IN THE SONG OF SONGS, WHEN THE KING THAT PEACE IS HIS TALKS OF THE SOUL, BEING OF A HIGHER GRADE, IT IS THEREFORE CONSIDERED AS A FEMALE AND CALLED, "MY DOVE, MY UNDEFILED..." BUT IN TORAH, THE SOUL IS IN ITSELF AND IS THEREFORE REFERRED TO AS A MALE, NAMELY AVRAHAM.

143. It was taught in the Mishnah that four times an hour every day, Eden drips upon the garden. The result of these drops is a river which separates into four branches. Each day, 48 drops fall on the seventy trees in the garden, as it is written: "The trees of Hashem have their fill" (Tehilim 104:15). Rabbi Tanchum said, It is written: "He waters the hills from His upper chambers" (Ibid. 13). What is his upper chamber? It is Eden. And where is Eden? Rabbi Yehuda said, It is above Aravot (sweet firmament). Rabbi Yosi said that it is in Aravot, where are treasures of good life, blessing and peace, and the souls of the righteous, as was taught. This is the upper chamber, while the Garden of Eden is lower, and an earthly garden is in apposition and draws from it daily.

מדרש הנעלם

140. ואברהם זקן בא בימים וגו'. מתניתין. אמר רבי אלעזר, על כל פנים כך הוא, דהאי מתניתין שפיר, דאתעביר נשמתא, ההוא דכתיב ביה, והנה אופן אחד בארץ אצל החיות לארבעת פניו, בדאמור בההיא מתניתא קמיינתא.

141. אמר ליה רבי אבא, לימא לן מר, מההיא מתניתין, אמר ליה הכי אתפרש, בתלת עשר מכולן דרחמי, בפרשתא דיליה, אבל הכא אית לן למימר, פתח ואמר, אחת היא יונתי תמותי אחת היא לאמה וגו'. אמר רבי אלעזר, מאי היא, דאנן קרינן הכא, בשיר השירים, לישנא דנוקבתא, והתם באורייתא, לישנא דדכורא.

142. אלא אמר רבי אלעזר, הכא בתורה, נקרא בלשון זכר, אצל הגוף, מפני שהגוף, אצל הנשמה, כאשה אצל הזכר, והנשמה לגבי מעלה, כנוקבה בפני הזכר, וכל אחד מעלתו יורש.

143. תנן התם, בארבעה פעמים בשעה, בכל יום, עדן מנטף על הגן, ויוצא מאותם הטפות נהר גדול, המתחלק לארבעה ראשים, ושמנה וארבעים טפות, מנטף בכל יום, ומשם שבעים אילני הגן, הה"ד ישבעו עצי ה'. ר' תנחום אמר מהכא, משקה הרים מעלותיו, איזו היא עליה, זהו עדן. ועדן באיזה מקום הוא. ר' יהודה אמר, למעלה מערבובות הוא. ר' יוסי אמר בערבובות הוא, דהא תנן, שם גנזי חיים טובים ברכה ושלום, ונשמתן של צדיקים, הוא העליון. עדן למטה, מכאן כנגדו גן בארץ, ונוטל ממנו שפע בכל יום.

144. Rabbi Abahu said that 48 prophets stood for Yisrael. Each one took his share, which was the essence of one drop from the drops of Eden. If every prophet who took one drop had the grade of the holy spirit, this was more true for Adam, who received the 48 drops. From this, you learn the scope of his wisdom.

145. Rabbi Bo said that Rabbi Kahana asked, Where did the prophets get these drops? We learned each drop that comes out of Eden includes the spirit of wisdom. Therefore, it was decreed that there is water that raises wise men and water that raises fools. This water that drops from Eden raises wise ones.

146. Rabbi Yosi said, So the water containing the drops comes from the most ancient of four rivers, as it is written: "The name of the first is Pishon" (Beresheet 2:11). Why is it written: "the name of the first is Pishon?" Pishon is different from the rest because it flows into the land of Egypt. Therefore, the wisdom of Egypt is greater than that of the rest of the world.

147. When it was decreed that the wisdom of Egypt was lost, the Holy One, blessed be He, took the drops and threw them across the garden into the river of the Garden of Eden, as it is written: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden" (Beresheet 2:10). AND WHEN THE DROPS, WHICH REMAIN IN THE GARDEN, WERE TAKEN FROM EGYPT, WISDOM WAS GONE FROM EGYPT. It separated into four other rivers, of which the most special was Pishon. Wisdom was thus lost in Egypt when the drops were taken from Egypt and left in the garden.

148. Every prophet was sucking from that spirit that came out of Eden. This is the meaning of "walking in the garden in the breeze of the day" (Beresheet 3:8). It is stored in the Garden of Eden for the future. This is the river that Yechezkel saw in his prophecy. Therefore the scripture reads, "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Hashem" (Yeshayah 11:9), as this water always causes the knowledge in the world to increase.

149. The sages said that the souls of all the righteous are above in Eden, and wisdom is strengthened in the world because of what descends from Eden. How much more so for every one of those who stand in it and take their fill of its pleasure and brightness.

144. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבְהוּ, שְׁמֹנֶה וָאַרְבָּעִים נְבִיאִים, עָמְדוּ לָהֶם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, וְכָל אֶחָד נָטַל בְּחֶלְקוֹ, תְּמִצִּית טֶפֶה אַחַת מֵאוֹתָם טָפוֹת שֶׁל עֵדֶן, שֶׁהֵם שְׁמֹנֶה וָאַרְבָּעִים טָפוֹת. וְמָה אִם כָּל נְבִיא, שֶׁנָּטַל טֶפֶה אַחַת מֵהֶן, הִטְתָּה מַעֲלָתוֹ בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, עַל כָּל הַשָּׂאֵר, אֲדָם הִרְאִישׁוֹן, שֶׁהִיָּה מְקַבֵּל מִשְׁמֹנֶה וָאַרְבָּעִים לֹא כָּל שָׂכֵן, מִכָּאן אֵתָּה לְמַד, כִּמָּה הִיָּתָה חֲכָמָתוֹ.

145. רַבִּי בָּא אָמַר רַב כַּהֲנָא, וְכִי מֵאֵין הָיָה לָהֶם לְנְבִיאִים, מֵאוֹתָם הַטָּפוֹת, אֵלָּא הָכִי תֵּנֵן, בְּכָל טֶפֶה וְטֶפֶה, הַיּוֹצֵאת מֵעֵדֶן, רוּחַ חֲכָמָה יּוֹצֵא עִמּוֹ, וְעַל כֵּן אֲתַגְזֹר בְּמִתְנִיתִין, אֵיִת מִיָּא מְגַדֵּלֵן חֲכִימִין, וְאֵיִת מִיָּא מְגַדֵּלֵן טִפְשִׁין, וְאֵינֻן מִיָּא דְּמְגַדֵּלֵן חֲכִימִין, אֵינֻן מִיָּא, הוּוּ מְטָפִין דְּעֵדֶן.

146. דָּאֻמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, מִיָּא דְּבִיָּה טָפִין יִתְבִּין, מִכָּל אֵינֻן אַרְבַּע נְהָרִי, קְדָמָא הוּא, דְּכָתִיב שֵׁם הָאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן. מֵאֵי שֵׁם הָאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן. הַמִּיּוֹחֵד מִכּוֹלִם פִּישׁוֹן, וְהוּא הַנוֹפֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וְלִפְיָכֶךָ, הִיָּתָה חֲכָמַת מִצְרַיִם יוֹתֵר מִכָּל הָעוֹלָם.

147. וּמִשְׁנִגְזְרָה גִזְרָה, שֶׁאֲבָדָה חֲכָמַת מִצְרַיִם, נָטַל קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, אוֹתָם טָפִין וְזָרַק לֹון בְּהֵוֹא גָּנָא, בְּהֵוֹא נְהָרָא דְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֵדֶן, דְּכָתִיב, וְנָהָר יּוֹצֵא מֵעֵדֶן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת הַגֵּן. וְזֶה הָיָה מוֹלִיד אַרְבָּעָה אֲחֵרִים, וְהָאֶחָד הַמִּיּוֹחֵד, הַנוֹלֵד מִמֶּנּוּ, פִּישׁוֹן הָיָה. מִשְׁנָטְלוּ אֵלּוֹ הַטָּפוֹת שְׁלֹא יֵצְאוּ מֵהֶגֶן, אֲבָדָה הַחֲכָמָה מִמִּצְרַיִם.

148. וּמֵאוֹתוֹ הַרוּחַ שֶׁהִיָּה יּוֹצֵא מֵעֵדֶן, הַמֵּצֵו כָּל נְבִיא וְנְבִיא, וְהֵינּוּ דְּכָתִיב, מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּגֵן לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם. וְגִנּוּ זֶה בְּגֵן עֵדֶן, לְעֵתִיד לְבוֹא, וְזֶה הוּא הַנְּהָר, שֶׁרָאָה יְחִזְקָאֵל בְּנִבְוָאתוֹ. וְעַל כֵּן אָמַר הַכְּתוּב כִּי מְלֹאָה הָאֶרֶץ דְּעָה אֶת ה' וְגו'. שְׁאוֹתָם מִיָּם, תִּמְיֹד מְגַדֵּלִים הַיִּדְיָעָה בְּעוֹלָם.

149. ת"ר, כָּל נִשְׁמָתָן שֶׁל צְדִיקִים, לְמַעַלָּה בְּעֵדֶן הֵן, וְמָה מִמָּה שְׂיוֹרֵד מֵעֵדֶן, יִשְׁגָּא הַחֲכָמָה בְּעוֹלָם, לְעוֹמְדִים בּוֹ, וְנִהְיִין מֵהִנְאוֹתָיו וְכִסּוּפָיו, עַל אַחַת כִּמָּה וְכִמָּה.

150. Rabbi Yitzchak said, If the soul deserves to pass through the gates of the terrestrial Jerusalem, the great angel Michael hastens to greet and walk with it. The ministering angels wonder about this and ask, "Who is that, coming up from the wilderness" (Shir Hashirim 8:5). Who rises to be among the high ones from the destroyed body, which resembles a breath, as is written: "Man is like a breath" (Tehilim 144:4)? He answers by saying, "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is distinguished she is the only one of her mother" (Shir Hashirim 6:9). Her mother is the throne of glory, a mother for the soul that gives it birth, for the soul is derived from her.

151. "The daughters saw her, and called her happy" (Ibid.). This refers to the other souls, whose rank is high and who are called the daughters of Jerusalem. According to Rabbi Yosi, they are called the daughters of Jerusalem while the other ones are called the daughters of Lot. "The daughters saw her, the rest of the souls praise it and say to it, Come in peace. "The queens and the concubines praised her" (Ibid.). The queens are the patriarchs that are queens. The concubines are the proselytes. They all praise and laud it until it enters above. Then the soul is in its ascended place, and longevity is maintained, as it is written: "And Avraham was old, advanced in age (lit. 'coming into the days')" (Beresheet 24:1), as he entered longevity in the world to come.

20. About the resurrection of the dead

In this long and complex section, the rabbis first discuss the nature of souls at the time of the Resurrection. They then examine Torah verses concerning difficult questions on the amount of Light souls will merit from the Throne of the Holy One, based upon the souls' deeds and the role of angels in the body's resurrection. We then hear an account of Rabbi Eliezer's visit to his rabbi, Yochanan ben Zakai, on the day of the new moon. They discuss the 'Secret of Ten'--ten dimensions composing reality--through which the primordial Light functions in this world. We learn that the Light of the soul is greater than the Light of angels. The friends then continue their study of Torah, uncovering hidden meanings in phrases concerning the relationship between soul and body in the story of Avraham.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light derived from the letters and lessons of this portion hastens the coming of the Resurrection in a merciful manner. The resolve to perform good deeds is also kindled in our hearts, enabling us to overcome the seductive lure of physical impulse, serve the true needs our souls, and merit a share in the world to come.

152. Rabbi Aba Saba (the elder) stood up and said, May peace and tranquillity come to you, Rabbi Shimon, the son of Yochai, for restoring the diadem to its former splendor. For we learned in the first Mishnah that since the soul is perfected in the supernal place, it does not return to the body. It remains in the same condition, but other souls are created and come out of it. Then Rabbi Shimon, the son of Yochai, taught that although this world is vanity and the body is a putrid drop of semen, yet the soul enters it. In the future, when everyone will be refined and the body will be more pure, sustained and complete, there will be no reason for the soul to enter it with all its completeness.

150. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק בֵּינוֹן שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה זֹכָה, לִיכָנֵס בְּשַׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם שֶׁל מַעְלָה, מִיכָאֵל הַשָּׂר הַגָּדוֹל, הוֹלֵךְ עִמָּהּ, וּמַקְדִּים לָהּ שְׁלוֹם. מֵלֶאכֶי הַשָּׂרִת, תַּמְהִים בּוֹ, וְשׂוֹאֲלִים עָלֶיהָ, מִי זֹאת עוֹלָה מִן הַמִּדְבָּר. מִי זֹאת, עוֹלָה בֵּין הָעֲלִיוֹנִים, מִהַגּוֹף הַחָרֵב, שְׂדוּמָה לְהַבֵּל, דִּכְתִּיב אֶדָם לְהַבֵּל דְּמָה. הוּא מָשִׁיב וְאוֹמֵר, אַחַת הִיא יוֹנְתִי תַמְתִּי, אַחַת הִיא מִיּוֹחֶדֶת הִיא. אַחַת הִיא לְאִמָּהּ וְגו', לְאִמָּהּ. זֶה הִיא כֶּסֶּא הַכְּבוֹד, שֶׁהִיא אִם לְנֶשְׁמָה, וְיוֹלְדָתָהּ לָהּ, שְׁנִגְזָרָה מִמֶּנָּה.

151. רְאוּהָ בָנוֹת וַיֵּאשְׁרוּהָ, אֵלּוּ שְׂאֵר הַנֶּשְׁמוֹת, שֶׁהֵן בְּמַעְלָתָן לְמַעְלָה, וְהֵם הַנִּקְרְאוֹת בָּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הֵא חֲזַרְנָא עַל מָה דְּאָמְרִין, אֵלּוּ נִקְרְאוֹת בָּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, וְהָאֲחֵרוֹת נִקְרְאוֹת בָּנוֹת לוֹט. רְאוּהָ בָנוֹת וַיֵּאשְׁרוּהָ, שְׂאֵר הַנֶּשְׁמוֹת, מִשְׁבָּחוֹת לָהּ, וְאוֹמְרוֹת שְׁלוֹם בּוֹאֵךְ. מַלְכוּת וּפְלִגְשִׁים וַיְהִלְלוּהָ מַלְכוּת אֵלּוּ הָאֲבוֹת, שֶׁהֵם מַלְכוּת וּפְלִגְשִׁים: הֵן גִּירֵי הַצֶּדֶק, כּוֹלֵם מִשְׁבָּחוֹת, וּמַקְלָסוֹת אוֹתָהּ, עַד שֶׁנִּכְנַסְתָּ לְמַעְלָה, וְאִזֵּי הַנֶּשְׁמָה בְּמַעְלָתָהּ, וּמִתְקִימָא אֲרִיכוֹת הַיָּמִים, הֵה"ד, וְאִבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים. נִכְנַס בְּאֲרִיכוֹת הַיָּמִים, לַעוֹה"ב.

152. רַבִּי אַבָּא סָבָא, קָם עַל רַגְלוֹי, וְאָמַר, מִנוּחָה וְשְׁלוֹם גְּרָמִין יְהֵא לָךְ רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָאי, דְּחֻזְרַת עֵטְרָה לְיוֹשְׁנָה. דְּתַנִּינָן בְּמִתְנִיתָא קְדָמָא, דְּכֵיוֹן שֶׁהַנֶּשְׁמָה הִיא בְּתַשְׁלוּמָהּ, בְּאַתֵּר עֲלָאָה, לֹא תִבָּאֵת לְגוּפָא אֲלֵא אֶתְבָּרִיאֵן מִנָּה, נִשְׁמִי אַחֲרֵנִין, דְּנִפְקִי מִנָּה, וְאִיהִי אֶשְׁתָּאֲרַת בְּקִיּוּמָא, עַד דְּאֵתָא רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָאי וְדָרַשׁ, וּמָה אִם בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא הַבֵּל, וְהַגּוֹף שֶׁהוּא טֶפֶה סְרוּחָה, נִכְנַסְתָּ בּוֹ, אוֹתָהּ הַנֶּשְׁמָה. לַעֲתִיד לָבֹא, שְׂיִצְרָפוּ כּוֹלֵם, וַיְהִיֶּה הַגּוֹף מוּבָחַר, בְּקִיּוּם וְתַשְׁלוּם יוֹתֵר, אִינוּ דִּין לְהִכָּנֵס אוֹתָהּ הַנֶּשְׁמָה בּוֹ, בְּכָל הַתַּשְׁלוּמִין, וְהָעֲלִוּיִן שָׁבָה.

153. Rabbi Acha said, The Holy One, blessed be He, will give the very soul and very body existence in the future, but both will be whole and have completeness of knowledge so they can achieve what they did not achieve in this world.

154. "And Avraham was old, advanced in age (lit. 'coming with the days')." Rabbi Bo said that, according to Rabbi Yochanan, this refers to the world of days, NAMELY LIGHT, and not to that world which is night. Rabbi Ya'akov said, COMING WITH THE DAYS MEANS THAT HE CAME TO those worlds called days because of all the pleasures and the brightness that he inherits. RABBI YA'AKOV IS NOT DIFFERING FROM RABBI YOCHANAN, HE IS SIMPLY EXPLAINING THE VERSE MORE FULLY. "And Hashem had blessed Avraham in all" (Beresheet 24:1) refers to the office, NAMELY TO THE AUTHORITY that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him of His name, which is the letter Hei by which the world was created.

155. We learned that Rabbi Yochanan said, Matatron, the great minister, is a boy, a servant whose Rabbi, his master, rules him. He is in charge of the soul and gives it daily of the light he was ordered TO GIVE IT. In the future, he will receive an account in writing from the cemetery, from Dumah FOR EACH BODY that he can show to his Master. He will turn that backbone into yeast TO BUILD THE BODY under the ground, to mend and wholly revive the body, AS IS PROPER FOR a body without a soul. Later, the Holy One, blessed be He, will send the soul to its place WITHIN THE BODY. THIS WILL BE AFTER IT COMES TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL.

156. Rabbi Yitzchak said, it is then written, "And Avraham said to the eldest servant of his house, that ruled..." (Beresheet 24:2). If we look at this from the aspect of wisdom, NAMELY AS IT CONCERNS THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, what is THE MEANING OF THE WORDS, "his servant"? BECAUSE AVRAHAM IS THE SECRET OF THE SOUL "AND AVRAHAM SAID TO THE...SERVANT" REFERS TO THE SERVANT OF THE SOUL. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THERE IS A SERVANT TO THE SOUL? Rabbi Nehorai responded, We need look only at the words "his servant" AND NOT CONNECT THEM TO AVRAHAM IN THE MEANING OF THE VERSE. THEN, THE MEANING IS the servant of Hashem, close to His worship. Who is he? He is Matatron, who will beatify the body in the grave, as we have said.

157. Thus the words, "And Avraham said to his eldest servant" refer to Matatron, the servant of Hashem. The phrase: "The eldest servant of his house" is the beginning of the creations of Hashem. "That ruled over all that he had" means that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him power over all His hosts, NAMELY OVER THE UPPER ANGELS.

153. אָמַר רַבִּי אַחָא, אוֹתָהּ הַנִּשְׁמָה מִמֶּשׁ, וְאוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף מִמֶּשׁ, עֲתִיד הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְהַעֲמִידֵן בְּקִיּוּמָן לְעֲתִיד לָבֵא, אָבֵל שְׁנֵיהֶם יִהְיוּ שְׁלֵמִים, בְּתִשְׁלוֹם הָדַעַת, לְהַשִּׁיג מַה שֶּׁלֹּא הִשִּׁיגוּ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

154. וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וּגו'. ר' בּוֹ אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, בְּאוֹתוֹ הָעוֹלָם: שֶׁהוּא יָמִים, וְלֹא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא לַיְלָה. אָמַר ר' יַעֲקֹב, בְּאוֹתָם הָעוֹלָמוֹת, שֶׁהֵם יָמִים, בְּאוֹתָם הַהֲנָאוֹת וְהַכְּסוּפִין, שֶׁהוּא נֹחֵל. וְה' בְּרִיךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל. בְּאוֹתוֹ הַמְּשֻׁרָה שֶׁנָּתַן לוֹ הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מִשְׁמוֹ, שֶׁהִיא אוֹת ה"א שְׁבוּ נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם.

155. וְתַנְיָא, אָמַר ר' יוֹחָנָן, מִטְטְרוֹן שֶׁר הַפְּנִים, שֶׁהוּא נֶעֶר, עֶבֶד מִרְבּוֹ, הָאֲדוֹן הַמוֹשֵׁל עָלָיו, מְמוּנָה עַל הַנִּשְׁמָה, בְּכָל יוֹם, לְהַסְפִּיק לָהּ, מֵאוֹתוֹ הָאוֹר שֶׁנִּצְטָוָה, וְהוּא עֲתִיד לְמִיסֵב, חוֹשֵׁבֵן פֶּתְקָא, בְּבֵתִי קְבֵרִי, מִן דּוּמָה, וְלֹאחֲזָאָה לִיהָ קָמִי מֵאַרְיָה, וְהוּא זְמִין, לְמַעַבְדַּ חֲמִיר, הֵהוּא גִרְמָא, תַּחוֹת אֶרְעָא, לְתַקְנָא לְגוּפִיָּא, וּלְקִיּוּמָא לוֹן בְּשְׁלִימוּתָא דְּגוּפָא, בְּלֹא נִשְׁמָתָא, דְּקוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יִשְׁדֵּר לָהּ לְאַתְרָהּ.

156. אָמַר ר' יִצְחָק, בְּאוֹתָהּ שְׁעָה, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל עֶבְדוֹ זָקֵן בֵּיתוֹ הַמוֹשֵׁל וּגו'. מַהוּ אֶל עֶבְדוֹ, אִי בַּחֲכָמָתָא דָּא נִסְתַּבֵּל, מַהוּ אֶל עֶבְדוֹ, אָמַר רַבִּי נְהוֹרָאִי, לֹא נִסְתַּבֵּל, אֲלֵא בְּמַה שֶׁאָמַר עֶבְדוֹ, עֶבְדוֹ שֶׁל מָקוֹם. הַקְּרוֹב לְעִבּוּדָתוֹ, וּמֵאֵן אִיהוּ, זֶה מִטְטְרוֹן, כְּדַקְאֲמָרֵן, דְּאִיהוּ עֲתִיד לְיִפּוֹת לְגוֹף בְּבֵתִי קְבֵרִי.

157. הֵדָּא הוּא דְּכְתִיב, וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל עֶבְדוֹ, זֶה מִטְטְרוֹן, עֶבְדוֹ שֶׁל מָקוֹם. זָקֵן בֵּיתוֹ, שֶׁהוּא תַּחֲלַת בְּרִיּוֹתָיו, שֶׁל מָקוֹם. הַמוֹשֵׁל בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ, שֶׁנָּתַן לוֹ קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, מְמַשְׁלָה, עַל כָּל צְבָאוֹתָיו.

158. We learned that Rabbi Shimon quoted Rabbi Yosi who quoted Rav saying that all the hosts of the servant receive light and delight in the splendor of the soul, as the light of the soul in the world to come is greater than the light of the throne, NAMELY THE THRONE OF GLORY. AND THE ANGELS RECEIVE THEIR LIGHT FROM THE THRONE, SO THE LIGHT OF THE SOUL IS GREATER THAN THAT OF THE THRONE. A DIFFICULT POINT IS THEN RAISED. It seems that the soul was taken from the throne, AND THE RECEIVER IS SMALLER THAN THE GIVER OF NECESSITY. THE EXPLANATION IS THAT each had according to what was appropriate for it. Rav Nachman added that it is actually greater than the light of the throne, as it is written: "The likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it" (Yechezkel 1:26), above it in splendor.

159. When he goes to perform the errand OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, all his hosts and his Chariot are nourished by that splendor OF THE SOUL. And the soul says to him, "Put...your hand"--namely, your escort, NAMELY THE HOSTS OF MATATRON--"under my thigh" (Beresheet 24:2). This is the light that flows from the soul.

160. Rabbi Yehuda the son of Rabbi Shalom said that we have been taught that when he goes on an errand for the Holy One, blessed be He, He moves His upper hosts by one letter of His name, NAMELY BY THE LETTER YUD OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. HEI IS THE SECRET OF IMA AND ABA, THE ROOT OF THE SOUL'S LIGHT. Rabbi Huna said, Yerechi (my thigh) has the same numerical value as ram (lit. 'high'), which is what the soul says, that is, "Put...your hand," your escort, under the grade of the high and elevated, that rules over all. After the soul commanded the escort of high ones to be under Him, IT TOLD HIM, I make you swear a great oath.

161. Rabbi Yitzchak said, It is written: "Elohim of the heaven, and Elohim of the earth" (Yechezkel 1:26). Since he already mentioned Hashem, NAMELY "I WILL MAKE YOU SWEAR BY HASHEM," why add "Elohim of the heaven, AND ELOHIM OF THE EARTH"? HE ASKS RABBI YEHUDA, WHO SAID THAT HE MOVES ALL HIS HOSTS BY ONE LETTER OF HIS NAME WHEN HE GOES. Rabbi Yehuda said, IT IS WRITTEN: "ELOHIM OF THE HEAVEN, AND ELOHIM OF THE EARTH" to show that He is Master over everything simultaneously. In one instant, He moves everything, and everything is nothing compared to Him. THIS IS WHY HE MENTIONS HEAVEN AND EARTH IN THE OATH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE LETTER YUD, WHICH INDICATES THAT THIS LIGHT GOVERNS ALL THE GRADES AND EVERYTHING IS AS NAUGHT COMPARED TO IT. Rabbi Yitzchak said that by two letters of His name HE MOVES HIS WHOLE HOSTS, WHEN MATATRON GOES TO DO HIS ERRAND. This is to show that He is all, and there is nothing save Him.

162. "And I will make you swear by Hashem, Elohim of the heaven..." Rabbi Huna said, If he had been with those versed in the Baraitha at the time that they revealed the secret of this verse, he would not have left them without knowing everything, for he saw great depth in their utterances. They revealed much, but man does not understand what they revealed. Come and behold: The soul causes to swear this oath of the covenant, as it is written: "That you shall not take a wife to my son" (Beresheet 24:3)). AVRAHAM IS ALLUDING TO THE SOUL, AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED.

158. וְתֵאנָא, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר רַב, כָּל צְבָאוֹתָיו שֶׁל אוֹתוֹ עֶבֶר, נוֹטְלִים אוֹר, וְנִהְנִין מִזֵּיו הַנִּשְׁמָה, דִּתְאָנָא אוֹר הַנִּשְׁמָה, לַעֲהָ"ב, גְּדוֹל מְאֹד הַכֶּסֶּא. וְהָא מִהֶכֶּסֶּא נִטְלָה הַנִּשְׁמָה. אֵלָא זֶה לְפָנֵי הָרְאוּי לּוֹ, וְזֶה לְפָנֵי הָרְאוּי לּוֹ. רַב נִחְמֵן אָמַר גְּדוֹל מְאֹד הַכֶּסֶּא מִמֶּשׁ, דִּכְתִּיב, דִּמּוּת בְּמִרְאֵה אָדָם עָלָיו מִלְמַעְלָה מֵאֵי עָלָיו עַל זֵהָרוֹ.

159. וּכְשֶׁהוּא הוֹלֵךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת שְׁלִיחוּתוֹ, כָּל צְבָאוֹתָיו וְהַמְרַכְבֶּה שָׁלוֹ נִזְוָנִין מֵאוֹתוֹ הַזֹּהָר. הֵדָא הוּא שֶׁהַנִּשְׁמָה אוֹמֶרֶת לוֹ, שִׁים נָא יָדְךָ בְּלוֹמַר סִיעֲתָךְ, תַּחַת יָרְכִי, זֶהוּ אוֹר הַנִּשְׁפָּע מִן הַנִּשְׁמָה עָלֵיהֶם.

160. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בְּרַבִּי שְׁלוֹם, כִּךְ קִבְלָנוּ, בְּשַׁעֲה שְׁזָה הוֹלֵךְ בְּשְׁלִיחוּתוֹ שֶׁל מְקוֹם, קוֹדֶשׁא בִּרְךָ הוּא, מִנִּיעַ כָּל צְבָאוֹתָיו שֶׁל מַעְלָה, בְּאוֹת אַחַת מִשְׁמוֹ. אָמַר רַב הוֹנָא, כִּךְ יָרְכִי בְּגִימְטְרִיא ר"ם. בְּלוֹמַר הַנִּשְׁמָה אוֹמֶרֶת, שִׁים נָא יָדְךָ, סִיעֲתָךְ, תַּחַת מַעְלָתוֹ שֶׁל רֵם וְנִשְׂא הַמוֹשָׁל עַל הַכֹּל. וְלֵאחֶר שְׁצוּה סִיעַת עֲלִיוֹנִים, תַּחַת יָדוֹ, אֲנִי מִשְׁבִּיעֶךָ, שְׁבוּעָה גְּדוֹלָה בּוֹ.

161. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ. הוֹאִיל וְאָמַר בֵּה שֶׁהוּא הַכֹּל, לָמָּה נֶאֱמַר, אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה שֶׁהוּא אֲדוֹן עַל הַכֹּל, בְּבֵת אַחַת, וּבִרְגַע אֶחָד הוּא מִנִּיעַ לְכֹל, וְכֹלָם כְּאִין נִגְדוּ. רַבִּי יִצְחָק אוֹמֵר, עַל שְׁתֵּים אוֹתִיּוֹת מִשְׁמוֹ, לְהוֹרוֹת, שֶׁהוּא הַכֹּל וְאִין אַחֵר בִּלְתּוֹ.

162. וְאִשְׁבִּיעֶךָ בֵּה' אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ. אָמַר רַב הוֹנָא, וְאִי הוִינָא עֲמַהוּן, דְּמֵאֲרִי מִתְנִיתָא, כִּד גָּלוּ רְזָא דִּנָּא, לָא אִינְפְּרִשְׁנָא מִנְהוּן הֵכִי, דִּהָא אָנָּא חַזִּי, עֲמִיקִין סְגִיאִין בְּמוֹמִיָּהוּ, דִּגְלוּ וְלֹא אִתְחַזְּיִין לְכֹל אִינִישׁ. תָּא חַזִּי, שְׁבוּעַת קִיּוּמָא דָּא, אוֹמֵי לֵה נִשְׁמַתָּא, דִּכְתִּיב אֲשֶׁר לֹא תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי.

163. Rabbi Yitzchak said, from here, it is understood THAT THE SOUL SAID TO MATATRON, Because you are going on this mission TO RESURRECT THE DEAD, "you shall not take a wife for my son." This means you shall not take a body for my son, BECAUSE THE BODY IN RELATION TO THE SOUL IS CALLED A WIFE. He cannot enter another body, an idolatrous body, a body not worthy of him, but only the body which is actually my own, the very one I came from. And this is what is meant by the verse: "But you shall go to my country, and to my kindred" (Ibid. 4).

164. Rabbi Yosi said, What is meant by the verse: "And take a wife to my son Yitzchak"? IF THIS REFERS TO THE ENCLOTHING OF THE SOUL, SHOULD IT NOT HAVE SAID AVRAHAM? Rabbi Yitzchak replied: The very body that suffered with me in that world and had no pleasure or content for fear of its Possessor IS A REFERENCE TO THE LUZ BONE, WHICH DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EATING AND DRINKING IN THIS WORLD. This very body shall you take to laugh with, in that rejoicing of the righteous, to take delight in it in the joy of the Holy One, blessed be He. Have pleasure with it, because it is time for laughter AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, as it is written: "Then was our mouth filled with laughter" (Tehilim 126:2).

165. Rabbi Yehuda, the son of Rabbi Yitzchak, said, Come and listen: An angel does only one errand, not two at the same time. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, TWO ERRANDS TO PERFORM: TO RESURRECT THE BODY IN THE GRAVE AND TO MAKE IT RISE TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL, WHERE THE SOUL WILL BE ENCLOTHED IN IT. BUT ONE ANGEL DOES NOT PERFORM TWO ERRANDS. Rabbi Aba said, There is one angel with an inkstand at his waist. THIS IS GAVRIEL. He will put a mark on the brow of each, MEANING THAT HE WILL MEND THE BODY. Afterward, the great minister MATATRON will go and mend each one, preparing it to receive its soul. This is the meaning of the verse: "He shall send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife" (Beresheet 24:7). What is meant by "before you"? It indicates that THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WILL SEND AN ANGEL TO MEND THE BODY before your errand. THEN MATATRON WILL BRING THE SOUL WITH WHICH MAN IS ENCLOTHED, AS NO ONE ANGEL DOES TWO ERRANDS.

166. Rabbi Eliezer went to see his Rabbi, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai, on the first day of the month. When he arrived he told him, 'O Well for those who see, filled WITH DRAWN WATER, yet gushing more from its own source. What does it seek here?'

167. He answers, It behooves a man to greet his Rabbi ON THE DAY OF A NEW MOON. He said to him, Not for that reason I said, 'WHAT DOES IT SEEK HERE?' I see in your face that there is a new deep secret about which you are going to ask. THEREFORE I ASKED, WHAT DOES SOMEONE AS GREAT AS YOU WANT WITH ME?

168. He responded, I see that primordial light, THAT WAS IN USE AT THE TIME OF THE CREATION AND WAS THEN STORED FOR THE RIGHTEOUS IN THE FUTURE, travels by ten and conducts everything according to the secret of ten. We learned that there are ten writings, ten keys to the hospital in its hands. It takes these and ten notes in the Garden of Eden to mend the earth for the bodies of the righteous.

163. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, מֵהֵכָא מִשְׁמַע, שְׁהוּאִיל וְאַתָּה הוֹלֵךְ בְּשְׁלִיחוֹת זֶה, לֹא תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי, כְּלוּמַר שְׁלֹא תִקַּח גּוֹף לְבָנִי, לִיכְנֹס בְּגוֹף אֲחֵר, בְּגוֹף זֶר, בְּגוֹף שְׂאִינוּ רְאוּי לוֹ, אֶלֶּא בְּהוּא מִמֶּשׁ, שְׁהוּא שְׁלִי, בְּהוּא מִמֶּשׁ, שְׁיִצְאָתִי מִמֶּנּוּ, הִדָּא הוּא דְכִתִּיב כִּי אִם אֶל אֶרְצִי וְאֶל מוֹלְדֵי תִלְךְ.

164. אָמַר ר' יוֹסִי, מֵהוּ וְלִקְחַת אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי לִיִּצְחָק. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, אוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף שְׁנִצְטַעַר עִמִּי בְּאוֹתוֹ הָעוֹלָם, וְלֹא הָיָה לוֹ הִנָּאָה וְכִסּוּף בּוֹ, מִפְּנֵי יִרְאָת קוֹנּוֹ, אוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף מִמֶּשׁ, תִּקַּח לִיִּצְחָק עִמּוֹ בְּהָאִי שְׁמַחַת הַצְּדִיקִים, לִיִּצְחָק עִמּוֹ בְּשְׁמַחַת הַקּוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לִיִּצְחָק עִמּוֹ דַּעֲכָשֵׁי עַת שְׁחוֹק בְּעוֹלָם, הֵה"ד אַז יִמְלֵא שְׁחוֹק פִּינוּ וְגו'.

165. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֶּר יִצְחָק, ת"ש, אֵין מְלַאךְ אַחֵר עוֹשֶׂה אֶלֶּא שְׁלִיחוֹת אַחֵר וְלֹא ב' שְׁלִיחוֹת אַחֵר וְתִנְיָא, אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, מְלַאךְ אַחֵר, אֲשֶׁר קִסַּת הַסּוֹפֵר בְּמִתְנִיּוֹ, עֲתִיד לְהִרְשִׁים כָּל אַחֵר וְאַחֵר, עַל מִצְחוֹ, וְלֵאחֵר בֶּן, הַשֵּׁר הַגָּדוֹל, הוֹלֵךְ לְתַקֵּן כָּל אַחֵר וְאַחֵר, וְלִהְעֵמִידוֹ לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָתוֹ, הֵה"ד הוּא יִשְׁלַח מְלַאכּוֹ לְפָנֶיךָ וְלִקְחַת אִשָּׁה, מֵאִי לְפָנֶיךָ. לְפָנֶיךָ שְׁלִיחוֹתֶךָ.

166. רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אָזל לְמַחְמֵי לְרַבֵּן יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זְכַאי רַבִּינָה, וְהָהוּא יוֹמָא רִישׁ יִרְחָא הוּהוּ, בֶּר מָטָא גְבִינָה, אָמַר לִיה, בִּירָא דְלִסְרִיּוֹן, וּמְלִיּוֹן לִיה, וְהוּא נְבִיעַ מְהִירָה יְתִיר, מֵאִי בְּעָא הֵכָא.

167. אָמַר לִיה חַיִּיב אֲדָם לְהִקְבִּיל פָּנֵי רַבּוֹ. אָמַר לִיה, לָאו עַל כֵּךְ אָמַרְתָּ. אֶלֶּא אֲנָא חַמִּי בְּאַנְפֶּךָ, דְּמִלָּה חֲרַתָּא אִית גַּבְךָ, מֵאִינוֹן עִמִּיקִים, דָּאֵת עֲתִיד לְמִתְבַּע.

168. אָמַר לוֹ, חַמִּינָא הָאִי אוֹר הָרָאשׁוֹן, דְּמִטְלָנוּי עֲשָׂרָה, וּבְעֲשָׂרָה נְטִיל, וּבְרָזָא דְעֲשָׂרָה נְהִיג לְכָלֵּא, וּבְאַתּוּתָא דְעֲשָׂרָה עֲבִיד עוֹבְדוּי. וְתֵאנָא, עֲשָׂרָה פְּתָקִין, עֲשָׂרָה מִפְתָּחוֹן דְּבִי קֶצְרִי בִירוּי, וּפְתָקִין עֲשָׂרָה, נְטִיל בְּגִינְתָא דְעֶרְן, לְאַתְקְנָא אֶרְעָא, עַל גּוֹפִיהוֹן דְּצִדִּיקָיָא.

169. He said, Eliezer my son, you have seen more than a holy angel, FOR THE LIGHT OF THE SOUL IS GREATER THAN THE LIGHT OF ANGELS. BECAUSE RABBI ELIEZER EXPLAINED THE SECRET OF THE TEN ONLY BY THE UPPER THREE COLUMNS-CHOCHMAH, BINAH, AND DA'AT-RABBI YOCHANAN BEN ZAKAI IS GOING TO EXPLAIN THE SECRET OF THE TEN ALSO IN THE LOWER SEVEN SFIROT. HE SAYS: The world, MALCHUT, is created by ten, and it is conducted by ten. THIS IS YESOD THAT LEADS MALCHUT CALLED WORLD. The holy throne, NETZACH AND HOD CALLED THE LOWER THRONE, is according to ten. The Torah, THE SECRET OF TIFERET, is by ten. Its traveling, NAMELY GVURAH, is by ten. The supernal worlds, CHESD, WHICH IS SUPERIOR TO THE LOWER SEVEN, are by ten. And there is the supernal one above them all, blessed be He, NAMELY KETER, FROM WHICH EVERYTHING IS DRAWN, BOTH THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM ALLUDED TO IN THE SECRET OF TEN, AND THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH.

170. I will tell you something else. Those versed in the Mishnah put some thought into it, as it is written: "And the servant took ten camels" (Beresheet 42:10). RABBI ELIEZER said to him, Master, I know this verse, MEANING YOU DO NOT HAVE TO EXPLAIN IT TO ME, but what is the meaning of: "For all the goods of him master were in his hands" (Ibid.)? I DO NOT KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT. HOW COULD IT BE THAT HE CARRIED ALL THE PROPERTY OF AVRAHAM IN HIS HANDS? He replied: This is the name of his Master, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH CALLED NAME, that went with him to bring him TO THE DESIRABLE PLACE and to protect him, SO THAT NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN TO HIM. RABBI ELIEZER SAID, Assuredly this is THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "For My name was in him" (Shemot 23:21).

171. Rabbi Abahu said, Come and behold: He who knows His name perfectly knows that He and his Name are one. The Holy One, blessed be He, and His Name, THE SHECHINAH, are one, as it is written: "Hashem shall be one, and his Name One" (Zecharyah 14:9). That is, the name, THE SHECHINAH, and He, ZEIR ANPIN, are one.

172. Rabbi Aba said, We should look at the verse, "And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water" (Beresheet: 24:11). According to Rabbi Aba, outside the city means in the cemetery. "By a well of water" refers, as we learnt, that those who are the first TO BE REVIVED FROM THE DEAD in the cemetery, are those who dealt in Torah. As we have learned, when a man comes into his grave, he is first asked if he set appointed times to study Torah, as it is written: "And he shall be the faith of your times" (Yeshayah 33:6). Without question, he who responds yes, is revived first.

173. Rabbi Aba said that "at the time of evening" (Beresheet 24:11) refers to Friday, Shabbat eve, the time of the resurrection of the dead. HE ASKS, What is the meaning OF THESE THINGS? HE RESPONDS: We have learned that the world exists for 6,000 years and that SHABBAT EVE is the 6th millennium, the ending of all. Thus "at the time of evening" means the time of ending for everything. The phrase: "At the time that the women go out to draw water" refers to the scholars of the Torah, who draw the water of Torah, the time to go out and shake off the dust, NAMELY THE TIME TO RESURRECT.

169. אָמַר לִיה, אֱלִיעֶזֶר בְּרִי, חֲמִית הָיִית יְתִיר מִמְּלָאכָא קְדִישָׁא, דְּעֵלְמָא בְּעֵשְׂרָה אֲתַבְרִי, בְּעֵשְׂרָה אֲתַנְהִיג, בְּרִסְיָא קְדִישָׁא, בְּעֵשְׂרָה, אֲוִרִיתָא הוּא בְּעֵשְׂרָה, מְטִלְנוּ בְּעֵשְׂרָה, עֵלְמִין עֵלְאִין בְּעֵשְׂרָה, וְחָד עֵלְאָה עַל כֻּלָּא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

170. וְאִימָא לֶךְ מְלָה, דְּעֵתִיָּה דְּמֵאֲרִי דְּמִתְנִיתָא הָוָה בְּהָאִי, מַה כְּתִיב, וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֲשָׂרָה גַמְלִים מִגַּמְלֵי אֲדָנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ. אָמַר לִיה, רַבִּי, זָכִינָא לְפִסְוָקָא דָא, אֲבָל וְכָל טוֹב אֲדָנָיו בִּידּוֹ מֵהוּ. אָמַר לִיה, הוּא שְׁמִיה דְּמֵאֲרִיָּה, דְּאֵזִיל גַּבִּי, לְאֵעֲלָא לִיה, וְלֹאֲנַהֲגָא לִיה, אָמַר דָּא וְדָאִי הוּא, כִּי שְׁמִי בְּקֶרְבּוֹ.

171. תֵּנִן, אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ, תָּא חֲזִי, מֵאֵן דִּידַע שְׁמִיָּה עַל בּוֹרִיָּה, יָדַע דְּהוּא וְשְׁמִיָּה חָד הוּא, קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְשְׁמִיָּה חָד, דְּכְתִיב ה' אֶחָד וּגו'. כְּלוּמַר הֵשֵׁם וְהוּא אֶחָד.

172. אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָא, אֵיט לְאַסְתַּכְלָא בְּמִרְשַׁתָּא דָא, וַיִּבְרַךְ הַגַּמְלִים מִחוּץ לְעִיר אֶל בְּאֵר הַמַּיִם. אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָא, מִחוּץ לְעִיר, דָּא הוּא בִּי קְבָרִי. אֶל בְּאֵר הַמַּיִם, דְּתַנִּיא, הַנִּקְדָּמִים בְּבֵיתִי קְבָרִי אוֹתָם שְׁנִשְׂאוּ וְנָתְנוּ בַּתּוֹרָה, דְּהָא תֵּנִן, כְּשֹׁכְנֵס אֶדָם לְקֶבֶר, מַה דְּשָׁאֲלוּ לִיה תַּחֲלִילָה, אִם קִבַּע עֵתִים לַתּוֹרָה, דְּכְתִיב וְהָיָה אֲמוֹנָת עֵתְךָ וּגו'. וְכַשִּׁיצֵא אִינוּ דִּין לְהַקִּימָם בַּתַּחֲלָה.

173. אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָא, לַעַת עֶרֶב, זֶהוּ יוֹם שְׁשִׁי, שְׁהוּא עֶרֶב הַשַּׁבָּת, שָׂאז הַזְמָן לְקוּיָמָא מִתְיָא, מֵאִי מִשְׁמַע, דְּתֵנִן, שִׁיתָא אֲלֵפִי שְׁנִין הָיוּ עֵלְמָא וְהוּא אֲלֵף הַשְּׁשִׁי, שְׁהוּא סִיּוּם הַכֹּל, וְהָיִינוּ לַעַת עֶרֶב, זְמַן סִיּוּם הַכֹּל. לַעַת צֵאת הַשּׁוֹאֲבוֹת, אֵלוּ הֵם תַּלְמוּדֵי חֻכְמִים, הַשּׁוֹאֲבִים מִימֵיהָ שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, שְׁהוּא עַת לְצֵאת וּלְהַתְנַעַר מִן הָעֶפֶר.

174. Rabbi Aba added that there is more to know, as we have learned that those occupied in knowing their Master in this world and their soul to perfection in the world to come, deserve to get out OF THE GRAVE by the oath of the soul MATATRON WAS MADE IT SWEAR. FOR MATATRON comes to know which is the soul's proper body, AS THE SOUL MADE HIM SWEAR, and it is written: "Behold, I stand here by the well of water" (Beresheet 24:43). Although it is A BODY OF the scholar of the Torah, MATATRON GOES to look for perfection, as it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that the maid who comes forth to draw, and I say to her, 'Give me, I pray you, a little water from your pitcher'" (Ibid. 44), which means 'tell me by hint, the knowledge of the name, from what you conceived'.

175. "And she says to me, 'Both drink you'" (Beresheet 24:44). THIS MEANS THAT SHE LET HIM KNOW THREE THINGS: 1) You are a servant like me; 2) The knowledge of you does not compare with the knowledge of Hashem, blessed be He, AND 3) It behooves you to conceive that you are a creature like me AND, ALTHOUGH YOU ARE AN ANGEL, YOU ARE LIKE A CREATURE; NAMELY, THERE IS WANT IN YOU, AS THERE IS IN ME.

176. "I will draw water for your camels also" (Beresheet 24:19) INDICATES THAT IT ALSO DREW FORTH FOR HIS ATTENDANTS FROM WHAT IT PERCEIVED. THE WORDS "YOUR CAMELS" MEANS "YOUR RETINUE." IN OTHER WORDS, my understanding is that: 1) Your retinue was not aware, THEY ARE UNABLE TO CONCEIVE HIM; 2) "I know that I have an advantage over you" I.E. FROM THE ASPECT OF BEING INCLUDED IN A POINT IN THIS WORLD, WHICH IS LACKING IN SUPERNAL ANGELS; AND 3) I know how you were created from the radiance that was placed with you. THAT IS, IT ALSO UNDERSTOOD THE SECRET OF HIS CREATION. IF THE BODY MENTIONS ALL THESE PERCEPTIONS, let this sign THAT WAS PRINTED ON ME be delivered to me. IF THE BODY SHALL SAY THESE THINGS AND NOT ONE SHALL BE MISSING, then I shall know she is the woman. She is the body from the same soul according to the oath it made me swear.

177. "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking" (Beresheet 24:15). According to Rabbi Yitzchak, Rabbi Yehuda said while he was thinking of how to try the body, it is written: "Behold, Rivkah came out," which is the holy body that is occupied in Torah. It pounds the body for knowledge of the conception of his Possessor, "who was born to Betuel" (Ibid.) Rav Yehuda said she was the daughter (Heb. bat) of El, the "son of Milkah" (Ibid.), who is a son to the king (Heb. Malkah) of the universe. "The wife of Nachor, Avraham's brother" alludes to the company of the mind, the body attached to the mind, and is the brother of the soul, and the phrase: "With her pitcher upon her shoulder" alludes to the weight of wisdom upon it.

178. "And the servant ran to meet her" (Beresheet 24:17) refers to Matatron. And said, "Let me, I pray you, drink a little water of your pitcher" give me a hint of the wisdom of the knowledge of your Maker that you dealt with in the world you left. Rabbi Aba said, We have explained that after that it is written: "And I put the ring upon her nose, and the bracelets upon her hands" (Ibid. 47). Rabbi Aba said that these are the bones that were scattered here and there. He puts them together and weighs them one upon the other, as is written: "And strengthen your bones" (Yeshayah 58:11).

174. וְאָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, עוֹד יֵשׁ לְדַעַת, דְּתַנּוּן, אוֹתָם הַמִּתְעַסְקִים לְדַעַת אֶת בּוֹרְאָם בְּעוֹה"ז, וְנִשְׁמָתָם בְּתִשְׁלוּמָה, לְעוֹה"ב זָכוּ לִיצֵאת מִשְׁבוּעַת הַנִּשְׁמָה, הוֹלֵךְ לְדַעַת מִי הוּא גּוֹפָה מִמֶּשׁ, וּמֵאִי הוּא. הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי נֹצֵב עַל עֵין הַמַּיִם, אֵף עַל גֵּב שְׁתַּלְמִיד חֹכֵם הוּא, הוֹלֵךְ אַחֵר הַתִּשְׁלוּם, דְּכִתִּיב וְהִיָּה הָעֹלָמָה הַיּוֹצֵאת לְשֹׁאֵב וְאָמַרְתִּי אֵלֶיהָ הַשְׁקִינִי נָא מֵעֵט מַיִם מִכֶּדֶךְ, אָמֹר לִי רִמּוֹ יָדִיעֵתוּ מִמָּה שֶׁהִשְׁגַּתְּ.

175. וְאָמַרְהָ אֵלַי גַּם אֶתָּה שְׁתֵּה, אֵף אֶתָּה עֶבֶד כְּמוֹנִי, וְלֹא נִתְחַלֵּף לִי יָדִיעֵתְךָ, בִּידִיעֵתוֹ שֶׁל מָקוֹם בְּרוּךְ הוּא, וְצָרִיךְ אֶתָּה לְהַשִּׁיג שְׁאֵתָה נִבְרָא כְּמוֹנִי.

176. וְגַם לְגַמְלִיךְ אֲשָׁאֵב, בְּלוֹמַר יָדִיעֵת הַשְּׁגָתִי, שֶׁלֹּא הִשְׁיִגוּ סִיעֵתְךָ וְיָדִיעֵתִי כִּי מַעֲלָה יֵשׁ לִי עֲלִיךָ, וְהֵינָךְ נִבְרָא אֶתָּה מִזֵּיו הַנִּתּוֹן אֶצְלֶךָ. אִם הוּא אוֹמֵר סִימָן זֶה, יְהִי מְסוּר בְּיָדִי, עַל כָּל דְּבָרִים אֵלֶּה, וְאִדַּע שֶׁהִיא הָאִשָּׁה, הוּא הַגּוֹף, מֵאוֹתָהּ הַנִּשְׁמָה הַשְּׁבוּעָה שֶׁהִשְׁבִּיעֵנִי.

177. וְהִי הוּא טָרָם כֹּלָה לְדַבֵּר וגו'. רַבִּי יִצְחָק אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, בְּעוֹד שֶׁכָּל הָעֲנִינִים, הוּא רוֹצֵה לְנִסּוֹת עַל הַגּוֹף, מֵאִי כְּתִיב, וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יּוֹצֵאת, זֶהוּ הַגּוֹף קְדוֹשׁ, שֶׁנִּתְעַסַּק בְּדָת, וְכִתֵּת גּוֹפּוֹ לְהַשִּׁיג וּלְדַעַת אֶת קוֹנוֹ. אֲשֶׁר יִלְדָּה לְבִתּוֹאֵל, אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה, בִּתּוֹ שֶׁל אֵל. בֶּן מַלְכָּה, בֶּן מַלְכָּה שֶׁל עוֹלָם. אִשָּׁת נָחוֹר אַחִי אַבְרָהָם. חֲבֵרַת הַשֶּׁכֶּל, גּוֹף שֶׁנִּדְבַּק בְּשֶׁכֶּל, וְהִיא אַח הַנִּשְׁמָה. וְכֵדָה עַל שְׁכָמָה, מִשָּׂא הַחֲכָמָה עָלֶיהָ.

178. וַיִּרְץ הָעֶבֶד לִקְרֹאתָהּ, זֶה מִטְטְרוֹן. וַיֹּאמֶר הַגַּמְיָאֲנִי נָא מֵעֵט מַיִם מִכֶּדֶךְ, אָמֹר לִי רִמּוֹ חֲכָמָתָא, בִּידִיעֵת בּוֹרְאֵךְ, מִמָּה שֶׁעִסְקָתָ בְּעוֹלָם שִׁיּוּצֵאת מִמֶּנּוּ. אָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, כְּדַפְרֵשִׁינָן, אַחֵר כָּל זֶה מָה כְּתִיב, וְאִשִּׁים הֵנּוּ עַל אִפָּהּ וְהַצְמִידִים עַל יָדֶיהָ, אָמַר רַבִּי אָבָא, אוֹתָם הָעֲצָמוֹת שֶׁנִּמְצְאוּ לְכָאן וּלְכָאן, הוּא צוֹמֵר אוֹתָם, וְשׁוֹקֵלָם זֶה עֲלֹה, כְּמָה דְּאֵת אָמַר וְעֲצָמוֹתֶיךָ יַחְלִיץ.

179. Rabbi Aba said, At that time, the body stands in the land of Yisrael, where the soul enters it. Rabbi Yochanan asked, Who conducts the body to the land of Yisrael? Rabbi Zira said, The Holy One, blessed be He, digs caverns under the ground and they roll to the land of Yisrael. Hence it is written: "And the earth shall cast out the shades of the dead" (Yeshayah 26:19).

180. Rabbi Yitzchak said, Gavriel conducts them to the land of Yisrael. How do we know that? From the verse: "Will you go with this man?" (Beresheet 24:58). Elsewhere, it is written: "The man Gavriel" (Daniel 9:21). Rabbi Yosi asked, Why is it written: "And Rivkah had a brother and his name was Lavan" (Ibid. 29)? Rabbi Yitzchak answered, The Evil Inclination does not pass away from the world, and though it is not entirely present, some of it is.

181. Come and behold: When it was in this world, it was called Lot. In the world to come, it will be partly canceled and called Lavan, it not as corrupt as before, but as one who washed the filth off of himself. HE ASKS, Why is there need of Lavan? NAMELY, WHY IS IT NEEDED? TO REMAIN IN THE WORLD Rabbi Shimon said, It is needed for being fruitful and multiply. If there is no Evil Inclination, nothing is fruitful or multiplies.

182. Come and listen: Since the body was constructed and established, why is it then written, "And they sent away Rivkah, their sister, and her nurse..." (Beresheet 24:59). What does the phrase "and her nurse" imply? It is the power of movement. Rabbi Yitzchak further clarifies this by explaining that this is the power of the body.

183. Rabbi Abahu opened with the verse, "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, with me from Lebanon..." (Shir Hashirim 4:8). Rabbi Abahu said, Once the body was built and established, it is brought to the land of Yisrael to receive its soul. The soul awaits it there and comes out to greet it, as is written: "And Yitzchak went out to meditate in the field" (Beresheet 24:63). "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride" is the soul, and "Look from the top of Amana" (Ibid.) corresponds to: "And he lifted his eyes and saw" (Ibid.).

184. Rabbi Yehuda said, If this is the soul, Avraham is satisfactory, as was said. What then is Yitzchak? Rabbi Abahu said, The friends said it is now called Yitzchak because of the increased joy in the world.

179. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה, אוֹתוֹ הַגּוֹף עוֹמֵד בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְשֵׁם נִכְנָס בּוֹ נִשְׁמָתוֹ. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, מִי מוֹלִיךְ הַגּוֹף לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, אָמַר רַבִּי זִירָא, קוֹדֶשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עוֹשֶׂה מַחִילוֹת תַּחַת הָאָרֶץ, וְהֵם מִתְגַּלְגְּלִים וְהוֹלְכִים לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, הֲדָא הוּא דְכֹתִיב וְאֶרֶץ רַפָּאִים תִּפִּיל.

180. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, גַּבְרִיאֵל מוֹלִיךְ אוֹתָם לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִנֵּ"ל, דְּכֹתִיב הִתְלַכְי עִם הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה, וְכֹתִיב הָתָם וְהָאִישׁ גַּבְרִיאֵל. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, מַאי דְכֹתִיב, וְלִרְבֵּקָה אַח וְשִׁמּוֹ לָבָן. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק, אֵין יֵצֵה"ר בְּטַל מִן הָעוֹלָם אֶף עַל פִּי שְׂכָלוֹ לֹא נִמְצָא קִצְתוֹ נִמְצָא.

181. תָּא חֲזִי בְּתַחֲלָה בְּשָׂהִיָּה מוּטַל בַּעַה"ז נִקְרָא לוֹט, לְעַה"ב יִבְטַל מִן הָעוֹלָם, אֲבָל לֹא כּוֹלֵו וְנִקְרָא לָבָן, לֹא מִנוּוֹל כְּבָרְאשׁוֹנָה, אֲלֵא כְּמֵאן דְּסָחִי מִנוּוֹלוֹ. לָבָן לְמַאי אֶצְטְרִיךְ. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, לְמַעַבְד פְּרִיָּה וּרְבִיָּה אֶצְטְרִיךְ, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, אִם אֵין יֵצֵר הָרַע נִמְצָא, פְּרִיָּה וּרְבִיָּה אֵינוֹ מִצְוִי.

182. ת"ש, בֵּינָן שְׁהַגּוֹף נִבְנָה וְעוֹמֵד בְּקִיּוּמוֹ, מַאי כְּתִיב וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ אֶת רְבֵּקָה אֶחָתָם וְגו'. מַאי וְאֵת מְנִיקְתָּהּ זֶה כֹּחַ הַתְנוּעָה. רַבִּי יִצְחָק אָמַר זֶה כֹּחַ הַגּוֹף.

183. רַבִּי אַבְהוּ פָּתַח בְּהָאֵי קְרָא, אֵתִי מְלַבְּנוֹן כְּלָה אֵתִי מְלַבְּנוֹן תְּבֹאֵי וְגו', אָמַר רַבִּי אַבְהוּ, בֵּינָן שְׁהַגּוֹף נִבְנָה עַל קִיּוּמוֹ, וּמִבִּיּוֹן אוֹתוֹ, לְקַבֵּל נִשְׁמָתוֹ, לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַנִּשְׁמָה מִמֵּתָנָת אֵלָיו, וַיּוֹצֵאת לְקִרְיָתוֹ, כְּמָה דְּאֵת אָמַר וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוֹךְ בְּשָׂרָה. הֲדָא הוּא דְכֹתִיב אֵתִי מְלַבְּנוֹן כְּלָה. זֶה הִיא הַנִּשְׁמָה. תְּשׁוּרֵי מִרְאשׁ אֲמָנָה, הֵינּוּ דְכֹתִיב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא.

184. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, אִם הִיא הַנִּשְׁמָה, תֵּינִיחַ אֲבִרְהָם כְּדִקְאֲמָרֵן, אֲבָל יִצְחָק מַהוּ. אָמַר ר' אַבְהוּ, הָא חֲבֵרִיאֵי אָמְרוּ, דְּעִכְשָׁיו אֲתִקְרִי יִצְחָק, עַל שׁוּם חֲדוּתָא סְגִיָּא דְּבַעֲלָמָא.

185. Rabbi Abahu said, First the soul was called Avraham and the body Sarah. Now the soul is called Yitzchak and the body Rivkah. Rabbi Shimon said, It was taught in the Mishnah that the soul awaited the body in the land of Yisrael forty years before the body existed. Where? At the Temple.

186. Rabbi Abahu said, Look at the verse: "And took Rivkah, and she became his wife, and he loved her; and Yitzchak was comforted after his mother's death" (Beresheet 24:67). When he loves the body and is comforted by it, it is time for laughter and delight in the world.

187. Rabbi Yehuda said, Now this whole portion of the scripture is made clear, but I do not know the meaning of the verse: "Then again Avraham took a wife, and her name was Kturah" (Beresheet 25:1). To a reasonable mind, this text is contradictory. IT CONTRADICTS THE EXPLANATION CONCERNING THE SOUL AND BODY AT THE TIME OF RESURRECTION.

188. Rav Dimi arrived and said, I have heard an explanation for this portion, but I do not remember it. They said that the high and strong, NAMELY THE UPPER GRADES, did not present it for revelation. What have we to say? Rabbi Yehuda stood up and said that the portion is revealed in the Yeshivah of our friends, the sages of the Mishnah.

189. They stood up and began walking, he, Rabbi Yesa, and Rabbi Chiya. They found Rabbi Elazar ben Rabbi Shimon, who was revealing the secret of Tfilin. They came before him and asked, Sir, what are you engaged in? He replied: I am recounting the reason for the Tfilin, for blessed is the man who dons Tfilin and knows the sense thereof.

190. They said, If it is well before you, Sir, may you tell us something. They said, We learned from your father that the Holy One, blessed be He, in His great love for the children of Yisrael, told them to build Him a tabernacle, reflecting the supernal high Chariot, so He might come and dwell among them. This is the meaning of: "And let them make Me a sanctuary: so that I may dwell among them" (Shemot 25:8). We learned from your father that the reason for the Tfilin was hidden in this verse.

191. He said to them, Come and behold: The Temple was made to reflect the upper one in THE SHAPES OF its holy Chariots. And then the Holy One, blessed be He, caused His Shechinah to dwell among them. In this manner, those versed in the Mishnah discussed the reason for the Tfilin. Any man WHO WEARS TFILIN will be patterned after the upper Chariots: the lower Chariot and the upper Chariot so that His kingdom will come and the Shechinah will dwell upon him.

185. אָמַר ר' אַבְהוּ, בְּתַחֲלָה נִקְרְאת הַנֶּשְׁמָה אַבְרָהָם, וְהַגּוּף שָׂרָה עַכְשָׁיו נִקְרְאת הַנֶּשְׁמָה יִצְחָק וְהַגּוּף רִבְקָה. תֵּנִן בְּמִתְנִיתִין, אָמַר ר' שְׁמַעוֹן, אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה קֹדֶם קִיּוֹם הַגּוּף, מִמֵּתֶנֶת הַנֶּשְׁמָה לַגּוּף בָּאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. בְּאִיזָה מָקוֹם, בְּמָקוֹם הַמְּקֻדָּשׁ.

186. אָמַר ר' אַבְהוּ, תָּא חַזִּי, וַיִּקַּח אֶת רִבְקָה וַתְּהִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ וַיִּנָּחֵם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ. אוֹהֵב לְאוֹתוֹ הַגּוּף, וּמִתְנַחֵם עִמּוֹ וְהוּא עֵת לִשְׂחֹק וְהַחֲדוּהָ בְּעוֹלָם.

187. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, הָא כֹּל פְּרֻשָּׁתָא דָּא אֲתַבְּרִי לָן, אֲבָל לֹא יְכִילְנָא לְמַנְדַּע מַהוּ, וַיּוֹסֶף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וְשֵׁמָּה קְטוּרָה. וּלְשָׁקוּלָא רְדֵעָתָא כֹּל פְּרֻשָּׁתָא דָּא לִיסְתוּרִי.

188. כִּד אַתָּא רַב דִּימִי, אָמַר הָאִי פְּרֻשָּׁתָא דָּא שְׁמַעְנָא, וְלֹא אֲדַבְּרָנָא, אָמְרוּ, דַּעֲלִינן תְּקִיפִין, לֹא זְמַנָּה לְגַלְאָהּ, וְאַנֵּן מֵאִי גִימָא. קָם רַבִּי יְהוּדָה וְאָמַר, מִמִּתְיבְתָּא דְחִבְרָנָא, מֵאִרִי מִתְנִיתָא גְּלִיָּא.

189. קָמוּ וַאֲזָלוּ, הוּא וְרַבִּי יִיסָא וְרַבִּי חִיָּיא, אֲשַׁכְּחוּהָ לְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בְּרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, וְהוּא מְגַלֵּה רִזִּין דְּתַפִּילִין, עָאֵלוּ קָמִיָּה, וְאָמְרוּ בְּמֵאִי אֲתַעְסֵק מֵר, אָמַר לוֹן, טַעֲמָא דְּתַפִּילִין אֲמִינָא, דִּהָא זִכָּאָה הוּא בְּרַ נֶשׁ, דִּמְנַח תַּפִּילִין, וַיִּדַּע טַעֲמָא דִּידְהוּ.

190. אָמְרוּ אִי נִיחָא קָמִיָּה דִּמֵּר, לִימָא לָן מַלְּהָ. אָמְרוּ, שְׁמַעְנָא מֵאַבּוּךְ, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּרַחֲמֵימוּ סְגִיָּאָה דִּהּוּה לִיָּה עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל, אָמַר לוֹן לְמַעַבְדַּ לִּיָּה בֵּי מִשְׁכְּנָא, כְּגוּוֹנָא דְּרִתִּיכָא עֲלָאָה דְּלַעֲיָלָא, וַיִּיתִי דִּינִירִיָּה עֲמַהוֹן, הָה"ד וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכָם. וְשְׁמַעְנָא מֵאַבּוּךְ דִּהָכָא סְתִים טַעֲמָא דְּתַפִּילִין, בְּהָאִי פְּסוּקָא.

191. אָמַר לוֹ תָּא חַזִּי, כְּגוּוֹנָא עֲלָאָה, אֲתַעְבְּד מִקְדָּשׁ בְּרִתִּיכוֹי קְדִישִׁין, וּבִתְר כֵּן, אֲשֵׁרִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא דִּינִירִיָּה עֲמַהוֹן, כְּעַנְיִינָא דָּא, וּכְגוּוֹנָא דָּא, אֲתַעְרוּ חֲבֵרִיָּא מֵאִרִי מִתְנִיתָא בְּטַעֲמָא דְּתַפִּילִין, לְמַהוּי הֵהוּא גִבְרָא דּוּגְמָא דְּרִתִּיכֵי עֲלִיָּין, רִתִּיכָא תַתָּאָה, רִתִּיכָא עֲלָאָה, לְמִיתִי מַלְכוּתָא דִּילִיָּה, וַיִּשְׂרִי דִּינִירִיָּה עֲלִוָּהּ.

192. We learned that there are deep secrets in THE TFILIN and its patterns. There are three Chariots within them, like the high and holy ones, reflecting the secrets of the three letters of His holy name, YUD-HEI-VAV. For these three Chariots ARE the three letters YUD-HEI-VAV. The four sections govern the four LETTERS OF HIS HOLY NAME. This is therefore the secret of the Shin of three crowns and Shin of four crowns, WHICH MEANS the three kings ruling over the body, CORRESPONDING TO THE SHIN WITH THREE HEADS and the Tfilin upon the Holy One, blessed be He, above the head Tfilin and the hand Tfilin, AMOUNTING TO four sections, WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE SHIN WITH FOUR HEADS.

193. Similarly, the heart rides as if on the lower Chariot, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. And the lower one, THE NUKVA is mounted. We have also learned that this Chariot of the arm, THE NUKVA, is below, NAMELY THE SECRET OF THE HAND TFILIN, CALLED THE ARM. The heart rides as if beneath. It was given to it to bring in all the heavenly hosts. So the heart rides down below and all the limbs of the body are given to it.

194. Above THE HEART are the four sections of the brain. The Holy One, blessed be He, is supreme ruler over them. He is King of all. And the secret of wisdom resembles the Temple, as it is written: "And make one Cherub on the one end, and the other Cherub on the other end" (Shemot 25:19). Above them is the King's Shechinah, within the four letters YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. YUD-HEI IS ON THE RIGHT CHERUB, AND VAV-HEI ON THE LEFT CHERUB. Within the two Chariots, THE UPPER CHARIOT IS ON THE RIGHT CHERUB AND THE LOWER CHARIOT IS ON THE LEFT CHERUB.

195. Similarly, the heart and the brain, THE HAND TFILIN AND THE HEAD TFILIN, the heart is on one side and the brain on the other side. Upon them is the King's Shechinah in four sections. Rabbi Elazar said, From now on, the secrets of the crowns of the letters, the sections in their bodies, NAMELY THEIR COMPARTMENTS, and the straps are an ancient tradition that Moshe received in Sinai. They were already explained by allusion, NAMELY BY THE EXPLANATION BEFORE US, and the sense of all this is in the secret of the thirteen divine attributes OF MERCY.

196. Rabbi Yehuda said, Even if we came only for this secret, it would have sufficed. They said to him, Happy is your lot in the world to come, for no secret is withheld from you. They said to him, We came before you, Sir, to know the secret of the verse: "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah" (Beresheet 25:1).

197. He said, the explanation of this verse is revealed by the friends versed in the Mishnah. When the soul enters its holy body, these words, NAMELY "THEN AGAIN..." WILL BE SAID of the wicked, who will be resurrected and make better their deeds. And the soul will grant them its precious splendor, so they will know, repent and have full merit again.

192. וְתַנִּינָן, אֵית בֵּיה, רִזִּין עֲלָאִין, וְדוּגְמִיהוּן, וְאֵית בֵּיה תִּלְת רִתִּיכִין, דּוּגְמַת עֲלָאִין קְדִישִׁין, רִזִּין דְּתִלְת אַתּוּתָא, דְּשִׁמְהָן קְדִישִׁי, עֲלָאִין תִּלְת, רִתִּיכִין, תִּלְתָּא אַתּוּתָא, אַרְבַּע פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת שְׁלִיט עַל אַרְבַּע, וְעַל כֶּךָ, רִזָּא דְשִׁי"ן דְּתִלְת כְּתָרִין, וְשִׁי"ן דְּאַרְבַּע כְּתָרִין, תִּלְתָּא מַלְכִין שְׁלִיטִין בְּגוּפָא, תַּמְלִין עַלּוּי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעִילָא, אֲלִין תַּמְלִין דְּרִישָׁא, תַּמְלִין דְּרוּעָא אַרְבַּע פְּרָשִׁיּוֹן.

193. לְבָא, רָכִיב דּוּגְמָא דְרִתִּיכָא תַתָּא, וְתַתָּא רָכִיב. עוֹד תַּנִּינָן, דָּא רָכִיבָא דְרוּעָא לְתַתָּא. וְלְבָא רָכִיב דּוּגְמָא דְאִיהוּ לְתַתָּא, וְאַתְמַסְרוֹן בִּידֵיהּ לְאַעֲלָא לֹון כָּל חִילֵי שְׁמִיָּא, כֶּךָ לְבָא הוּא רָכִיב לְתַתָּא, וְאַתְמַסְרוּ בִידֵיו כָּל אַבְרֵי גוּפָא.

194. וְעִילָא מְנִיה אַרְבַּע פְּרָשִׁיּוֹן עַל מוּחָא דְרִישָׁא אִיהוּ, אֲבַל קוּדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, שְׁלִיטָא עֲלָא מַלְכָּא מַכְלָא. וְרִזָּא דְחֻכְמָתָא דָּא, הוּא, כְּגוּוֹנָא דְמַקְדָּשָׁא דְכְּתִיב, וַעֲשֵׂה כְרוֹב אֶחָד מְקַצָּה מִזֶּה וְכְרוֹב אֶחָד מְקַצָּה מִזֶּה, וְעַלִּייהוּ דִּינוּרִיהּ דְּמַלְכָּא, בְּאַרְבַּע אַתּוּן, תִּרִין רִתִּיכִין.

195. וְכֵהָאִי גּוּוֹנָא, לְבָא וּמוּחָא, לְבָא מְכָאן, וּמוּחָא מְכָאן, וְעַלִּייהוּ מְדוּרִיהּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, בְּאַרְבַּע פְּרָשִׁיּוֹן. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, מְכָאן וְלֵהֲלָאָה רִזִּי דְכְּתָרֵי אַתּוּתָא, וּפְרָשִׁיּוֹן בְּגוּפֵיהּ וּרְצוּעוֹתֵיהּ, הִלְכָּה לְמִשָּׁה מְסִינִי, וְרַמְזָא דְלֵהוּן אַתְגָּלִי, וְטַעְמָא דְכָלָא בְּתִלְת עֶשֶׂר מְכִילָן.

196. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אֲלַמְלָא לָא אַתִּינָא, אֲלָא בְדִיל רִזָּא דָּא דִּינִי. אָמְרוּ לֵיה, זַבָּאָה חוּלְקָךְ לְעִלְמָא דְאַתִּי דְכָל רָז לָא אָנִיס לָךְ. אָמְרוּ לֵיה אַתִּינָא קְמִיה דִּמָּר, לְמַנְדַּע רִזָּא דְהָאִי פְסוּקָא, וְיוֹסֵף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וְשִׁמָּה קְטוּרָה.

197. אָמַר, פִּירוּשָׁא דְהָאִי פְסוּקָא, כְּמָה דְגָלוּ חֲבֵרְנָא, מְאִרֵי מִתְנִיתִין, דְּכַד נִשְׁמַתָּא יִיתִי בְּהוּא גּוּפָא קְדִישָׁא דִלְהָ, הָא מִילֵּינָא הוּוּ, עַל חֲיִיבָא, דִּיקוּמוֹן וַיִּכְשְׁרוֹן עוֹבְדִין, וַיִּתֵּן לֵהוּ מְזִינָא יִקְרָא דִלְיָה, דִּינְדַּעֵן, וַיִּתּוּבּוֹן, וַיִּזְכּוּן זְכוּתָא שְׁלִימָתָא.

198. When Solomon saw this, he wondered very much, and said, "And so I saw the wicked buried, and come to their rest...gone from the holy place" (Kohelet 8:10), WHICH MEANS THAT THEY WILL COME AND LIVE AT THE HOLY PLACE, NAMELY THEY WILL RISE AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. Rabbi Aba quoted Rabbi Yochanan, saying it is written: "Can the Kushite change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" (Yirmeyah 13:23), similarly the wicked who did not deserve to repent in this world and offer good deeds as sacrifices will never burn sacrifices in the world to come. **THOUGH THEY WILL RISE FROM THE DEAD, THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DO GOOD DEEDS, BECAUSE THEY DID NOT LEAD MERITORIOUS LIVES.** It is written: "Then again Avraham took a wife" and wanted to produce a soul for their bodies and bring them closer in repentance, as it is written: "And the souls that they had made in Charan" (Beresheet 12:5).

199. Rabbi Elazar said, Look at the verse: "And she bore him Zimran, and Yokshan" (Beresheet 25:2). They did many evil deeds, until they were driven from the world, as it is written: "And sent them away from his son Yitzchak" (Ibid.). Of them it is written, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake..." (Daniel 12:2). Of the others, it is written: "And they who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament" (Ibid. 3).

200. Rabbi Yehuda said, This is the meaning of the text indicating that it was called Avraham at one time, and is now called Yitzchak in his place, as it is written: "And it came to pass after the death of Avraham, that Elohim blessed his son Yitzchak; and Yitzchak dwelt by Be'er Lachai Roi (lit. 'the well of living and seeing')" (Beresheet 25:11). Through the knowledge of the living, the life of the world, he may know and conceive what he had not conceived in this world, as it is written: "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Hashem" (Yeshayah 11:9).
End of Midrash Hane'elam (homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

201. Rabbi Yitzchak opened with the verse: "And the dust returns to the earth as it was: and the spirit returns to Elohim who gave it" (Kohelet 12:7). Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He took the dust from the place of the Temple and built his body from the four directions of the world, each of which gave him strength. Later, He poured the spirit of life upon him, as it is written: "And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Beresheet 2:7). Then he stood up and knew that he comprised both high and low; he cleaved to Hashem and knew the supernal wisdom.

202. Similarly, all people in the world are included from the upper and the lower. When all those who know how to properly sanctify themselves in this world beget a child, they draw on it a holy spirit from that place where all that is holy originates. These are called children to the Holy One, blessed be He, because their bodies were properly made in sanctity. He is also given a spirit from the holy supernal place, as he deserves. This has already been explained.

198. וְכֵן חָמָא שְׁלָמָה דָּא הוּא סְגִי וְאָמַר וּבִכְן רְאִיתִי רְשָׁעִים קְבוּרִים וּבָאוּ וּמִמָּקוֹם קְדוֹשׁ יִהְיוּ, שִׁיבֹאוּ וְיַחְיוּ, מִמָּקוֹם קְדוֹשׁ. וְתַנִּינָן, אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן, כְּתִיב הִיִּהְפֹךְ בּוֹשֵׁי עוּרוּ וְנִמְר חֲבַרְבְּרָתוֹ, כֵּךְ הָרְשָׁעִים, שְׁלֵא זָכוּ לְשׁוּב בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וּלְהַקְטִיר מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים, לְעוֹלָם לֹא יִקְטִירוּ בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא. רְאֵה מָה כְּתִיב, וַיּוֹסֶף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה, וְשָׂרָוְצָה לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהֶם נִשְׁמָה לְגוֹפָם, וּלְקַרְבָּם בְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה, כִּד"א וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בַּחֲרָן.

199. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, תָּא חַזִּי, מָה כְּתִיב, וַתֵּלֶד לוֹ אֶת זִמְרָן וְאֶת יוֹכְשָׁן, הֲרֵבָה מַעֲשִׂים רָעִים, עַד שֶׁנִּגְרָשִׁים מִן הָעוֹלָם, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּשְׁלַחֵם מֵעַל יִצְחָק בָּנוּ. וְעֲלֵיהֶם נֶאֱמַר וְרַבִּים מִיָּשְׁנֵי אֲדָמַת עֶפֶר יִקְיָצוּ וְגו', וְעַל הָאֲחֵרִים נֶאֱמַר וְהַמִּשְׁכִּילִים יִזְהִירוּ בְּזֹהָר הָרָקִיעַ וְגו'.

200. אָמַר, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הָאִי מִשְׁמַע עַל פְּרִשְׁתָּא, וּמִשְׁמַע דְּאוֹתוֹ זְמַן נִקְרָא אַבְרָהָם וּבְמִקְוֹמוֹ נִקְרָא יִצְחָק, בְּדִקְאָמְרָן, הָה"ד וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּבְרַךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יִצְחָק בָּנוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק עִם בְּאֵר לַחֵי רְאִי. עִם יָדִיעַת הַחַי, שֶׁהוּא חַי הָעוֹלָמִים, לְדַעַת וּלְהַשִּׁיג, מָה שְׁלֵא הִשִּׁיג בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה הָה"ד כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דְּעָה אֶת ה' (עַד כָּאן מִדְּרַשׁ הַנֶּעְלָם)

201. רַבִּי יִצְחָק פָּתַח וְאָמַר, וַיֵּשֶׁב הָעֶפֶר עַל הָאָרֶץ כְּשֶׁהָיָה וְהָרוּחַ תִּשׁוּב אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנָה. תָּא חַזִּי, כִּד בְּרָא קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאָדָם, נָטַל עֲפָרִיהָ מֵאֲתַר דְּמִקְדָּשָׁא, וּבִנָּה גּוֹפִיהָ מֵאַרְבַּע סְטְרִין דְּעֵלְמָא, דְּכֻלָּהּ יִהְיֶה לִיה חֵילָא, לְבַתָּר אֲתַרְק עֲלֵיהָ רוּחָא דְחַיִּי, כִּד"א וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפִּיו נְשִׁמַת חַיִּים וְגו'. לְבַתָּר קָם וַיֵּדַע דְּאִיהוּ מַעֲיֵלָא וְתַתָּא, וּכְדִין אֲתַדְּבַק וַיֵּדַע חֻכְמָה עֲלָאָה.

202. בְּגוֹנוּנָא דָּא, כָּל בַּר נֶשׁ דְּעֵלְמָא, אִיהוּ כָּלִיל מַעֲיֵלָא וְתַתָּא, וְכָל אִינוּן דִּידְעִין לְאַתְקַדְשָׁא בְּהָאִי עֵלְמָא בְּדִקָּא וְאוֹת, כִּד אוֹלִידוּ בַר, מִשְׁכִּין עֲלֵיהָ רוּחַ קְדִישָׁא, מֵאֲתַר דְּכָל קְדִישֵׁי נִפְקִין מִנִּיהּ, וְאֵלִין אֲקִרוּן בְּגִין לְקוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בְּגִין דְּגּוֹפָא אֲתַעֲבִיד בְּקוֹדֶשָׁה בְּדִקָּא וְאוֹת, הָכִי נִמִּי יִהְיִין לִיה רוּחָא מֵאֲתַר עֲלָאָה קְדִישָׁא בְּדִקָּא חַזִּי, וְהָא אֲתַמַּר.

203. Come and behold: When man is called to account for his deeds before leaving this world, there will be a day of reckoning, a day when both the soul and body give reckoning. The soul then LEAVES THE BODY AND is separated from it, while the body, WHICH WAS CREATED FROM DUST, returns to dust, and all returns to the place from which it was taken. It has already been explained that everything will be stored before the Holy One, blessed be He, until the time when He resurrects the dead.

204. The Holy One, blessed be He, will return that very body and that very soul to the world as before, and renew the face of the world. This is according to the verse: "The dead men of your people shall live, my dead body shall arise" (Yeshayah 26:19). The same soul is stored before the Holy One, blessed be He, as it returns to its proper place AFTER THE DEATH OF THAT PERSON, according to its deeds, as it is written: "And the spirit returns to Elohim who gave it." At that time, He will revive the dead and pour dew from His head upon them. All the bodies will be resurrected from the dust by that dew.

205. It is written: "For your dew is as the dew on herbs (lit. 'of lights')" (Yeshayah 26:19). HE ASKS, What is the dew of lights? AND HE ANSWERS, These are real lights, the Lights of above, by which He will pour life upon the world, because the Tree of Life, ZEIR ANPIN, will then provide never-ending life. For now, there is an end to life, since WHEN the evil serpent has its way, the moon is covered, NAMELY THE UNION OF THE SUPERNAL SUN AND MOON, ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, STOPS. For that reason, the water OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE TREE OF LIFE as it were, stops flowing. Therefore, life does not exist properly in the world.

206. At that time, the Evil Inclination, which is the wicked serpent, will be removed from the world, and the Holy One, blessed be He, will cause it to pass away, as written: "And I will cause...the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zecharyah 13:2). After it passes from the world, the moon will no longer be covered and the sources of the river that flow out OF EDEN, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, will never stop flowing. Then, it is written: "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days" (Yeshayah 30:26).

207. Rabbi Chizkiyah said, If you say that all the bodies in the world will rise to life and wake up from the dust, it behooves us to ask about the bodies that were planted with the same soul, MEANING THAT ONE SOUL INCARNATED WITHIN SEVERAL BODIES, ONE AFTER THE OTHER, AS IS KNOWN. What will become of them? WILL ALL OF THEM RISE AT THE REVIVAL OF THE DEAD, OR ONLY THE LAST ONE? Rabbi Yosi said, It is as if the bodies, which did not have merit THROUGH GOOD DEEDS and did not succeed IN COMPLETING THE SOUL, never were. They are as a dried tree in that world, and so they will be at the time OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. Only the last body that was planted and worthily received its SPIRITUAL roots will be revived AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

203. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְּזִמִּין בְּרִיךְ נֶשְׁ, לְמִיָּהּב חוֹשְׁבִין עוֹבְדֵי, עַד לֹא יָפֹק מֵעֲלָמָא, הֵהוּא יוֹמָא, יוֹמָא דְּחוֹשְׁבִין אִיהוּ, דְּגוּפָא וְנִשְׁמָתָא יְהִיב חוֹשְׁבָנָא. לְבִתֵּר נִשְׁמָתָא אֲתַפְרָשָׁא מִיָּנִיָּה, וְגוּפָא תֵּב לְאַרְעָא, וְכָלָא תֵּב לְאַתְרִיָּה דְּאַתְנָסִיב מִתָּמָן, וְהָא אוֹקְמוּהָ, עַד זְמַנָּא דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא זְמִין לְאַחֲיָא מִתְּיָא, בְּלֹא גְנוֹז קָמִיָּה.

204. וְהֵהוּא גוּפָא מִמֶּשׁ, וְהֵהוּא נִשְׁמָתָא מִמֶּשׁ, זְמִין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַתְבָּא לְעֲלָמָא בְּמִלְקַדְמִין, וְלַחֲדַתָּא אֲנָפִי עֲלָמָא, הֵה"ד יְחִיב מִתֵּיךְ נִבְלָתִי יְקוּמוּן. וְהֵהוּא נִשְׁמָתָא מִמֶּשׁ, גְּנוֹזָא קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְתֵבֵת לְאַתְרָהּ, כְּפֹם אֲרַחָהּ. כִּד"א וְהִרְחֵף תְּשׁוּב אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר נָתַנָּה. וְלִזְמַנָּא דְּזִמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַחֲיָא מִתְּיָא זְמִין אִיהוּ לְאַרְקָא טָלָא מִרִישִׁיָּה עֲלִיָּהּ, וּבִהְהוּא טָלָא יְקוּמוּן בְּלֹא מַעֲפָרָא.

205. הֵה"ד בִּי טַל אֲוֵרוֹת טַלְךְ. מֵאִי טַל אֲוֵרוֹת, אֲוֵרוֹת מִמֶּשׁ, מֵאִינוּן נְהוּרִין דְּלַעֲיָלָא, דְּבִהוּן זְמִין לְאַרְקָא חֲיִין לְעֲלָמָא, בְּגִין דְּאִילִנְאֲדַחֲי, יָרִיק חֲיִין דְּלֹא פִסְקִין לְעֲלָמִין, דְּהָא הִשְׁתָּא פִסְקִין, בְּגִין דְּהָא חוּיָא בִּישָׁא שְׁלֵטָא, וְאַתְכִּסִּי סִיְהָרָא, וּבְגִין כֶּךְ, כְּבִיכּוֹל פִּסְקִין מִיָּמוּי, וְחִיִּין לֹא שְׁלֵטִין בְּעֲלָמָא בְּדָקָא יָאוּת.

206. וּבִהְהוּא זְמַנָּא, הֵהוּא יֵצֵר הָרַע, דְּאִיהוּ חוּיָא בִּישָׁא, וְיִסְתַּלַּק מֵעֲלָמָא, וְיַעֲבֵר לִיָּה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, כְּמָה דְּאֵת אָמַר וְאֵת רוּחַ הַטְּמָאָה אֲעִבִיר מִן הָאָרֶץ. וְלְבִתֵּר דְּאִיהוּ יִתְעַבֵּר מֵעֲלָמָא, סִיְהָרָא לֹא אֲתַכְסִּיא, וְנִהָרָא דְּנִגִּיד, וְנִפִּיק, לֹא יִפְסְקוּן מִבּוֹעֵי, וְכִדִּין כְּתִיב וְהָיָה אֹרֶךְ הַלְבָנָה כְּאֹרֶךְ הַחֲמָה וְאֹרֶךְ הַחֲמָה יִהְיֶה שְׁבַעֲתִים כְּאֹרֶךְ שְׁבַעֲת הַיָּמִים וְגו'.

207. אָמַר ר' חֲזִקְיָה, אִי תִיָּמָא, דְּכָל גּוּפִין דְּעֲלָמָא, יְקוּמוּן וְיִתְעַרְוּ מֵעַפְרָא, אִינוּן גּוּפִי דְּאַתְנָטִיעוּ בְּנִשְׁמָתָא חֲדָא, מַה תִּהְיָ מְנִיָּהּ. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, אִינוּן גּוּפִין, דְּלֹא זָכוּ וְלֹא אֲצַלְחוּ, הָרִי אִינוּן בְּלֹא הוּוּ, כְּמָה דְּהוּוּ עַץ יָבֵשׁ בְּהֵיָא עֲלָמָא, הָכִי נָמִי בְּהֵהוּא זְמַנָּא, וְגוּפָא בְּתִרָאָה, דְּאַתְנָטִיע וְאַצְלַח, וְנִטַּל שְׂרָשׁוּי, בְּדָקָא יָאוּת, יְקוּם.

208. Of this, it is written: "For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters... and its leaf shall be green" (Yirmeyah 17:8), because it bore fruit, NAMELY GOOD DEEDS, and struck roots properly ABOVE IN THE UPPER WORLD. EACH PRECEPT CORRESPONDS TO A SPIRITUAL ROOT THAT IS REVEALED ABOVE, AS IS KNOWN. Of the earlier body that did not bear fruit or strike roots, it is written: "For he shall be like the juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good comes" (Ibid. 6). "When good comes" refers to the resurrection of the dead.

209. And the Light that will illuminate the righteous will shine. It has been stored before Him since the day that the world was created, as written: "And Elohim saw the light, that it was good" (Bereshheet 1:3). In the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will revive the dead. It is written: "But to you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall arise, etc." (Malachi 3:20), for then good will have the upper hand in the world, and that which is called evil will pass away from the world, as we said, then, the bodies that preceded the last one will be as if they never existed.

210. Rabbi Yitzchak said, The Holy One, blessed be He, will pour other spirits upon the bodies THAT CAME BEFORE THE LAST ONE. They will be properly revived in the world if they merit the spirits BY FOLLOWING THE RIGHT PATH. If they do not, they will be ashes under the feet of the righteous, as it is written: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, etc." (Daniel 12:2). Everything was established and prepared before the Holy One, blessed be He, and all were numbered for the time of resurrection, as it is written: "That brings out their host by number, etc." (Yeshayah 40:26).

211. Come and behold: We have learned that all the dead in the land of Yisrael will be resurrected first, because the Holy One, blessed be He, will arouse them WITH A SPIRIT and revive them. Of them it is written: "The dead...shall live" (Yeshayah 26:19) This verse refers to those buried in the land of Yisrael. "My dead body shall arise" refers to those buried in other countries, for whom the term "restoration" is used in place of "resurrection." This is because the spirit of life dwells only in the Holy Land of Yisrael. Therefore, "The dead man of your people shall live" refers only to those buried in the land Yisrael. The bodies of those outside THE LAND OF YISRAEL will be created, but they will be resurrected as a body with no spirit. Thereafter, they will roll under the soil of the land until they reach the land of Yisrael, where they will receive a soul. They will not receive this soul under any other authority, so they will be well established in the world.

208. וְעָלֶיהָ כְּתִיב וְהָיָה כַּעַץ שָׁתוּל עַל מַיִם וְגו', וְהָיָה עָלָיו רֶעֶנָּן וְגו'. דַּעְבַּד אֵיבִין, וְנָטַע שְׂרָשִׁין, וְאַצְלַח בְּדָקָא יְאוּת. וְעַל הָהוּא גּוּפָא קְדָמָא, דְּלֹא עֵבֶד אֵיבִין, וְלֹא נָטַע שְׂרָשִׁין, כְּתִיב וְהָיָה כַּעַרְעַר בְּעֶרְבָה וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה כִּי יָבֵא טוֹב וְגו'. כִּי יָבֵא טוֹב, דָּא תַּחֲיִית הַמֵּתִים.

209. וְיִתְנַהֵיר הָהוּא נְהוּרָא, דִּזְמִין לְאַנְהָרָא לְהוּ לְצַדִּיקָא, דְּהוּה גְּנִיז קָמִיָּה, מִיּוֹמָא דְאַתְבָּרִי עֲלֵמָא, דְּכְתִיב, וְיֵרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאוֹר כִּי טוֹב. וְכִדִּין, זְמִין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַחֲוִיָּא מִתְּוִיָּא, וְכְתִיב וְזָרְחָה לָכֶם יְרֵאִי שְׁמִי שֶׁשֶׁשׁ צִדְקָה וְגו', וְכִדִּין יִתְגַּבֵּר טוֹב בְּעֲלָמָא, וְהָהוּא דְאַתְקֵרִי רַע, יִתְעַבֵּר מִעֲלָמָא, בְּדָאמְרָן. וְכִדִּין אֵינוֹן גּוּפִין קְדָמָאִי, לְהוּ כְּלָא הוּוּ.

210. אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק זְמִין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְאַרְקָא עֲלֵיָּהּ, עַל אֵינוֹן גּוּפִין, רוּחִין אַחֲרָנִין, וְאִי זְכָאן בְּהוֹן, יְקוּמוֹן בְּעֲלָמָא בְּדָקָא יְאוּת, וְאִי לֹא, יְהוֹן קְטָמָא, תַּחֲוֹת רַגְלֵיהוֹן דְּצַדִּיקָא, דְּכְתִיב וּרְבִים מִיּוֹשְׁנֵי אֲדָמַת עֶפֶר יִקְיְצוּ וְגו'. וְכְלָא אַתְקֵם, וְאַתְעֵתֵד קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְכְלָהוּ בְּמִנְיָנָא הוּוּ, כִּד"א הַמוֹצִיא בְּמִסְפָּר צְבָאָם וְגו'.

211. תָּא חֲזִי, הָא אַתְמָר, כָּל אֵינוֹן מִתִּין דְּבִאֲרַעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל, יְקוּמוֹן בְּקְדָמִיתָא, בְּגִין, דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא יִתְעַר עֲלֵיָּהּ, וְיוֹקִים לוֹן, עֲלֵיָּהּ כְּתִיב יַחֲוֵי מִתֵּן, אֵלִין אֵינוֹן דִּי בִאֲרַעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל. נִבְלָתִי יְקוּמוֹן, אֵלִין אֵינוֹן דְּבָגוּ אֲרַעָאן אַחֲרָנִין, דְּלֹא כְּתִיב בְּהוּ תַּחֲוִיָּה, אֵלָא קִימָה. דְּהָא רוּחָא דְחַיִּי, לֹא תִשְׂרִי אֵלָא בִּאֲרַעָא קְדִישָׁא דִּישְׂרָאֵל, וּבְגִין כֵּן, כְּתִיב בְּהוּ, יַחֲוֵי מִתֵּן, וְאֵינוֹן דְּלִבְרִי, יִתְבָּרִי גּוּפָא דְלֵהוֹן, וְיוּקוּמוֹן גּוּפָא, בְּלֹא רוּחָא, וּלְבַתֵּר יִתְגַּלְגְּלוֹן תַּחֲוֹת עֶפְרָא, עַד דִּימְטוֹן לֹא"י, וְתַמָּן יִקְבְּלוֹן נִשְׁמָתָא, וְלֹא בְּרִשׁוֹ אַחֲרָא, בְּגִין דִּיתְקִימוֹן בְּעֲלָמָא בְּדָקָא חֲזִי.

212. Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Yesa were sitting one night, studying Torah. Rabbi Elazar said, Come and behold: In the future, when the Holy One, blessed be He, resurrects the dead, all the souls that will be aroused before Him will stand before Him in the very shape they had in this world. And the Holy One, blessed be He, will bring them down TO THEIR BODIES and call them by name, as written: "He calls them all by names" (Yeshayah 40:26). Each soul will enter its place IN THE BODY and be properly revived in the world. Then, the world will be perfected. Of that time it is written: "And the disgrace of his people shall He take away" (Yeshayah 25:8). What is "the disgrace of his people shall He take away"? It is the Evil Inclination THAT HE WILL REMOVE FROM THE WORLD, which darkens the faces of the people and rules over them.

213. Rabbi Yosi said, We see that whenever the spirit is in a man, he is not defiled. Once his soul leaves him, he is defiled. HE WANTED TO KNOW THE MEANING OF THIS. He said to him, Assuredly this is so. We have also learned that when the Evil Inclination, WHICH IS THE ANGEL OF DEATH, takes the spirit of man, he becomes defiled and the body remains unclean. FOR WITH THE STRENGTH OF POLLUTION OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, THIS STRENGTH BEING THE ROOT OF ALL DEFILEMENT, IT TAKES AWAY MAN'S SOUL. THE REVERSE IS TRUE for the heathen nations. They are unclean while they live because their souls are drawn from the side of defilement. Once their bodies are emptied of that defilement, NAMELY WHEN THEY DIE AND THE SOUL LEAVES, the body stays without unholiness AND THEREFORE DOES NOT CAUSE DEFILEMENT. RABBI SHIMON SAID THAT THE CANOPIED GRAVES OF THE HEATHEN DO NOT DEFILE.

214. For that reason, he who cleaves to a woman from the heathen nations is defiled, and the child that she bears him receives the spirit of defilement. You may ask, Is it not of Yisrael from the side of its father? If so, why should it receive the spirit of defilement? Come and behold: First its father was besmirched when he united with that tainted woman. All the more so, the child that she bears will receive the spirit of defilement upon it. Furthermore, he also transgressed the Torah, as it is written: "For you shall worship no other El; for Hashem whose name is jealous, is a jealous El" (Shemot 34:14), which means that He is zealous of the covenant, SO THAT IT WILL NOT BE TAINTED BY HEATHEN WOMEN.

212. רבי אלעזר ורבי ייסא, הוו יתבי ליליא חד, ועסקי באוריותא. אמר רבי אלעזר, תא חזי, בשעתא דקודשא בריך הוא, זמין לאחויא מתייא, כל אינון נשמתין דיתערון קמיה, בלהו קיימין, דיוקנן דיוקנן קמיה, בההוא דיוקנא ממש, דהוּוּ בְּהַאי עֲלֵמָא, וְנַחֲתִית לֹון קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְיִקְרִי לֹון בְּשִׁמְהוֹ, כְּמָה דָּאֵת אֲמַר לְכֻלָּם בְּשֵׁם יִקְרָא. וְכָל נִשְׁמָתָא תִּיעוּל לְדוּכְתָּהּ, וְיִקּוּמוּן בְּקִיּוּמָא בְּעֲלֵמָא כְּדָקָא חֲזִי, וְכִדִּין יְהֵא עֲלֵמָא שְׁלִים, וְעַל הֵהוּא זְמַנָּא כְּתִיב, וְחִרְפַּת עֲמוֹ יִסִּיר וְגו', מֵאִי וְחִרְפַּת עֲמוֹ יִסִּיר. דָּא יֵצֵר הָרַע, דֹּאחֲשִׁין אֲנָפִי בְּרִיין, וְשְׁלִיט בְּהוּ.

213. אֲמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָא חֲמִינָן, כָּל זְמַנָּא דְּבֵר נֶשְׁ קָאִים בְּרוּחָא דָּא. לֹאוּ אִיהוּ מְסַאב, נִמְקָא נִשְׁמָתִיהָ מִנִּיהָ, אִיהוּ מְסַאב. אֲמַר לִיה וְדָאִי הָכִי הוּא וְהָכִי אֲתָמֵר, דִּהָא הֵהוּא יֵצֵר הָרַע, כִּד נָטִיל רוּחָא דְּבֵר נֶשְׁ, סָאִיב לִיה וְאֲשִׁתָּאֵר גּוּפָא מְסַאב, וְשָׂאֵר עֲמִין עַעְכוּ"ם, כִּד אִינוּן בְּחִיּהוֹן אִינוּן מְסַאבִּין, דִּהָא מְסַטְרָא מְסַאבָא אִית לֹון נִשְׁמָתִין, וְכִד אֲתִרִיק מִנִּיהָ הֵהוּא מְסַאב, אֲשִׁתָּאֵר גּוּפָא בְּלֹא מְסַאבּוּ בְּלָל.

214. בְּגִין כִּךְ מֵאֵן דֹּאֲתַדְבֵּק בְּאַתָּתָא דְּשָׂאֵר עֲמִין עַעְכוּ"ם, אֲסַתָּאב אִיהוּ. וְהֵהוּא בְּרָא דֹּאֲתִילִיד לִיה, יִקְבֵּל עֲלִיהָ רוּחַ מְסַאבָא. וְאִי תִימָא, הָא בְּסַטְרָא דְּאָבוּי מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל קָא אֲתִיָּא, אֲמַאי יִקְבֵּל עֲלִיהָ רוּחַ מְסַאבָא. תָּא חֲזִי, דִּהָא בְּקִדְמִיתָא אֲסַתָּאב אָבוּי, בְּשִׁעְתָּא דֹּאֲתַדְבֵּק בִּהְיָא אֲתָתָא, דֹּאִיהִי מְסַאבָא, וְכִיּוֹן דָּאב אִיהוּ אֲסַתָּאב, בִּהְיָא אֲתָתָא דֹּאִיהִי מְסַאבָא, כָּל שְׁכֵן דֹּאִיהוּ בְּרָא דֹּאֲתִילִיד מִנֶּה, יִקְבֵּל עֲלִיהָ רוּחַ מְסַאבָא. וְלֹא עוֹד, אֶלָּא דְּעֵבֵר עַל אוּרִייתָא דְּכְתִיב, כִּי לֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל אֲחֵר כִּי ה' קָנָא שְׁמוֹ, בְּגִין דְּקָנִי עַל הָאִי בְּרִית קִדְּשָׁא.

21. "You shall not take a wife... of the daughters of the Canaanite"

The rabbis discuss the dangers of a man marrying a woman of the heathen nations, and Avraham's desire that Yitzchak remain in the Central Column, where he would learn the ways of the Holy One.

The Relevance of this Passage

This pertains to the importance of our relationships in life, including, their effect on the spiritual state of things. Marriage is the union of two halves of one soul, and is considered an important tool for drawing the Light of the upper worlds [husband] into the lower world [wife]. All our actions in this material realm, including marital transactions, are a microcosm of the ebb-and-flow relationship endlessly playing out between the physical and metaphysical worlds. To secure a personal connection to the macrocosmic level of reality, thus ensuring its positive influence in our life, we must surround ourselves with those in whom the love of The Creator burns strongly, rather than those whose godlessness seeks to infect us with unbelief. Consciousness creates reality. People who are not conscious of the Creator create for themselves a Godless reality devoid of spiritual Light. Whether in business, social, or marital relationships, the Zohar helps prevent us from becoming entangled with negative partners, and to attract like-minded, virtuous people into our life.

215. Rabbi Elazar said, Come and behold: We have learned that because Avraham had wisdom, he wanted to be separated from and not cleave to all other nations. Therefore it is written: "And I will make you swear by Hashem, the Elohim of heaven, and the Elohim of the earth, that you shall not take a wife to my son..." (Beresheet 24:3). The phrase "of the daughters of the Cna'anite" (Ibid.) surely contains a secret, as it is written: "And has married the daughter of a strange El" (Malachi 2:11). In the phrase: "Among whom I dwell" (Beresheet 24:3), the "I" is exactly the same as that mentioned in "I have made the earth" (Yeshayah 45:12). THE "I" IN THE FIRST CASE REFERS TO THE SHECHINAH AS IT IN THE SECOND CASE, BECAUSE SHE WAS IN EXILE. HE MADE HIM SWEAR all that so to prevent him from being defiled by them.

216. Come and behold: Whoever puts the holy covenant in a woman of a heathen nation causes another place to be defiled; NAMELY, HE BLEMISHES THE SUPERNAL COVENANT AND CAUSES IT TO GIVE PLENTY TO THE HANDMAID. Thus, it is written: "For three things the earth is disquieted..." (Mishlei 30:21). And though he made him swear by the covenant, Avraham did not yet trust him, but prayed before the Holy One, blessed be He, saying "Hashem, Elohim of the heaven...He shall send his angel before you" (Beresheet 24:7). His angel assuredly MEANS the angel of the covenant, whom He shall send so that the covenant will be kept and not defiled among the nations.

217. He asks the meaning of the verse: "Only bring not my son back there" (Beresheet 24:8). HE RESPONDS that Avraham alone-and no one else IN HIS FAMILY-recognized the Holy One, blessed be He. Avraham did not want Yitzchak to dwell among the heathen nations, but wanted him to remain with him, where he would learn the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He. Avraham did not want Yitzchak to turn right or left, BUT RATHER TO REMAIN IN THE CENTRAL COLUMN. For that reason Avraham did not want Yitzchak's dwelling place to be among the heathen nations.

218. Rabbi Yesa said, Assuredly the merit of Avraham was with the servant, for he arrived at the well that very day he went, as is written: "And I came this day to the well" (Beresheet 24:42). This has already been explained.

215. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, תָּא חֲזִי, דְּהָא אֲתָמֶר, דִּכְיוֹן דִּידַע אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ חֲכָמָתָא, בְּעָא לְהַתְפָּרְשָׁא מִכָּל שָׂאָר עַמִּין, וְלֹא לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא בְּהוּ, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ כְּתִיב, וְאֶשְׁבִּיעֶךָ בַּה' אֱלֹקֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹקֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי וּגו', מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהָאִי רְזָא אִיהוּ, כְּדָבָר אַחֵר וּבִעַל בֵּת אֶל נָכָר. אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבּוֹ, אֲנֹכִי דְיִיקָא, כְּתִיב הִכָּא אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי, וְכְתִיב הֵתָם אֲנֹכִי עֲשִׂיתִי אֶרֶץ. וְכָל דָּא, בְּגִין דְּלֹא לְאַסְתָּאבָא בְּהוּ.

216. תָּא חֲזִי, הָאִי מֵאֵן דְּאֵעִיל הָאִי בְּרִית קְדִישָׁא, בְּהֵיא אֲתָתָא דְשָׂאָר עַמִּין עַעְכוּ"ם, גְּרִים לְאַסְתָּאבָא אַתָּר אַחֲרָא, וְעַל דָּא כְּתִיב תַּחַת שְׁלֹשׁ רִגְזָה אֶרֶץ וּגו'. וְאַף עַל גְּבֻדָּאוּמֵי לִיה בְּהָאִי בְּרִית, לֹא אֲבִטַח בֵּיה אַבְרָהָם, עַד דְּרַצְלִי צְלוּתִיה קָמִי קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, וְאָמַר ה' אֱלֹקֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וּגו' הוּא יִשְׁלַח מַלְאָכוֹ, וְהָאִי דָּא מַלְאָךְ הַבְּרִית, בְּגִין דִּיתְנַטִּיר הָאִי בְּרִית, וְלֹא יִתְחַלֵּל בֵּין אִינוּן עַמִּין.

217. רַק אֶת בְּנִי לֹא תִשָּׁב שְׁמָה. מ"ט, בְּגִין דִּידַע אַבְרָהָם, דְּהָא בְּכֻלְהוּ, לֹא הוּהּ מֵאֵן דְּאֶשְׁתַּמוּדַע לִיה לְקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, בַּר אִיהוּ בְּלַחוּדוּי, וְלֹא בְּעָא דְלֵהוּ מְדוּרִיה דִּיצְחָק בִּינִייהוּ, אֶלָּא דִּיהָ מְדוּרִיה עַמִּיָּה, וְיִצְחָק יוֹלִיף מִנִּיה תְּדִיר אֶרְחוּי דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְלֹא יִסְטִי לִימִינָא וְלִשְׁמָאלָא. וְעַל דָּא לֹא בְּעָא אַבְרָהָם דְּלֵהוּ מְדוּרִיה דִּיצְחָק תַּמָּן.

218. אָמַר רַבִּי יִיסָא, וְהָאִי זְכוּתִיה דְּאַבְרָהָם, אֶעְרַע קָמִיָּה דְּהָהוּא עֲבָדָא, דְּהָהוּא יוֹמָא נָפֵק, וְהָהוּא יוֹמָא מְטָא לְעִינָא דְּמִיָּא, דְּכְתִיב וְאָבָא הַיּוֹם אֶל הָעֵין. וְהָאִי אֹקְמוּהָ.

22. In Torah is the whole life

Rabbi Elazar, here, emphasizes the importance of Torah study, saying that the Angel of Death has no power over those who are diligent in their study of the scriptures. Rabbi Yesa asks why, if this is so, Moshe died. We learn that although Moshe did indeed die, his death was not caused by the Angel of Death; instead, he cleaved directly to the Shechinah, the Divine presence of the Creator, and went on to eternal life. All those who seek and approach The Creator, we're told, are called 'living.' Because of their diligent study of Torah, no reckoning is demanded of them in the World To Come.

The Relevance of this Passage

People regularly experience some form of death. We die a little bit each day, whether financially, emotionally, spiritually, or physically. The death of the body, the loss of an individual's sanity, or the end of one's career-are all likewise executed by one Angel of Death. The intent of these verses is to help ease these transitions from death to rebirth, from the end of one phase in our life, into a new phase filled with continuity and Light.

219. Rabbi Elazar opened with the verse, "Open you my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Torah" (Tehilim 119:17). How foolish men are, for they do not know, and do not seek to be occupied with, Torah. Torah is the whole life. All freedom and all goodness in this world and in the world to come are contained within it. HE EXPLAINED THAT it is life in this world; namely, they may merit full days in this world, as it is written: "The number of your days I will fulfill" (Shemot 23:26). And one will merit long days in the world to come, for this whole life is a life of joy, life without sadness, life that is real life, freedom in this world, freedom from everything, because other nations cannot rule over anyone who is engaged in the study of Torah.

220. You may say that there were those who were persecuted, NAMELY THE MARTYRS WHO WERE EXECUTED FOR STUDYING TORAH WHEN SUCH STUDY WAS FORBIDDEN. HE ANSWERS THAT this is a decree from above, such as the one for Rabbi Akiva and his companions, WHO WERE KILLED FOR STUDYING TORAH, and so it came to THE SUPREME mind WHEN THE WORLD WAS CREATED. BUT USUALLY, STUDYING TORAH MEANS freedom from the Angel of Death, who cannot have sway over him. Assuredly this is so. If Adam had cleaved to the Tree of Life, which is Torah, death would not have been brought upon him and the whole world. BUT BECAUSE HE FORSOOK THE TREE OF LIFE, WHICH IS TORAH, AND ATE FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, HE BROUGHT DEATH UPON HIMSELF AND THE WHOLE WORLD. It was "engraved upon the tablets" (Shemot 32:16) when the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Torah to Yisrael. This has already been explained. DO NOT PRONOUNCE IT "ENGRAVED" (HEB. CHARUT), BUT FREEDOM (HEB. CHERUT), BECAUSE THERE WAS FREEDOM FROM THE ANGEL OF DEATH. If it were not for THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL committing the sin OF THE CALF and leaving the Tree of Life, WHICH IS TORAH, they would not have brought death back to the world. And the Holy One, blessed be He, said, "I had said, 'You are angels, all of you sons of the most High'" (Tehilim 82:6), NAMELY AT THE GIVING OF TORAH. You defiled yourself BY SINNING, "therefore, you shall die like a man" (Ibid. 7). Therefore, the evil serpent which darkened the world cannot have power over anyone occupied in the study of Torah.

221. Rabbi Yesa said, If this is so, it should be true that he who does not sin will not die. If so, why then did Moshe die? He said to him, Moshe died, but THE ANGEL OF DEATH had no sway over him. He did not die by him, nor was he defiled by him. Therefore, it is considered that Moshe did not really die, but rather that he cleaved to the Shechinah and has gone on to life eternal.

222. As such, he is called "living", as we have explained in discussing the verse: "And Bnayahu, son of Yehoyada, the son of a valiant (lit. 'living') man" (II Shmuel 23:20). WHOEVER APPROACHES HASHEM IS CALLED LIVING. Thus, he who is occupied in studying Torah has freedom from everything, including freedom in this world from the enslavement of heathen nations and freedom in the world to come, for no reckoning will be demanded from him in that world at all.

219. רבי אלעזר פתח ואמר, גל עיני ואביטה נפלאות מתורתך. במה אינן בני נשא טפשינן, דלא ידעין, ולא מסתבלין, לאשתדלא באורייתא, בגין דאורייתא, כל חיינן וכל חירו, וכל טוב, בעלמא דין ובעלמא דאתי. חיינן אינן בעלמא דין, דיזבון ליומין שלמין, בהאי עלמא, כד"א את מספר ימין אמלא. וליומין אריכין בעלמא דאתי. בגין דאינן חיינן שלמין, אינן חיינן דחידו חיי בלא עציבו, חיינן דאינן חיינן, חירו בעלמא דין, חירו דכלא, דכל מאן דאשתדל באורייתא, לא יכלין לשלטא עלוי כל עמין דעלמא.

220. ואי תימא אינן בני שמד. גזרה היא מלעילא, כגון רבי עקיבא וחבריו, וכך סליק במחשבה. חירו דמלאך המות, דלא יכיל לשלטא עלוי, והכי הוא ודאי, דאי אדם הוה אתדבק באילנא דחיי, דאיהו אורייתא, לא גרים מותא ליה ולכל עלמא. ובגין כך, כד יתב קודשא בריך הוא אורייתא לישראל, מה בתיב בה חרות על הלוחות והא אוקמוה. ואלמלא אינן לא חטו ושבקו אילנא דחיי, לא גרמו מותא לעלמא במלקדמין. וקודשא בריך הוא אמר אני אמרתי אלהים אתם ובני עליון כלכם. חבלתון גרמיכון, אכן כאדם תמותון וגו'. ועל דא, כל מאן דאשתדל באורייתא, לא יכיל לשלטא עלוי ההוא חוץ בישא, דאחשיך עלמא.

221. אמר רבי ייסא, אי הכי, משה אמאי מית, דאי הכי ביון דלא חב לא ימות. אמר ליה, ודאי מית, אבל לא שלטא ביה קאמרינן, אלא לא מית על ידוי, ולא אסתאב ביה, ולא מית ודאי, אלא אתדבק בשכינתא, ואזיל לחיי עלמא.

222. והאי חי אקרי, במה דאוקימנא, דכתיב, ובניהו בן יהודע בן איש חי וגו'. ועל דא, כל מאן דאשתדל באורייתא, חירו אית ליה מכלא, בעלמא דין, משעבודא דשאר עמין עעכו"ם, חירו בעלמא דאתי, בגין דלא יתבעון מניה דינא בההוא עלמא כלל.

223. Come and behold how many supernal mysteries exist in the Torah. For that reason, it is written: "She is more precious than pearls" (Mishlei 3:15). How many hidden treasures there are in it. For that reason, when David looked AT THE TORAH in the spirit of wisdom, he said, "Open you my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Torah."

223. תָּא חֲזִי, בְּאוֹרֵיתָא בְּמָה רְזִין עֲלָאין סְתִימִין, אֵית בָּהּ, בְּגִין כֶּךָ כְּתִיב יִקְרָה הִיא מִפְּנִינִים. בְּמָה גְּנִיזִין טְמִירִין אֵית בָּהּ, וְעַל דָּא כִּד אֶסְתַּבֵּל דְּוֹד, בְּרוּחָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא, וְיִדַּע בְּמָה פְּלִיאן נִפְקִין מֵאוֹרֵייתָא, פִּתַּח וְאָמַר, גַּל עֵינֵי וְאִבִּיטָה נִפְלְאוֹת מִתּוֹרַתְךָ.

23. "Behold, Rivkah came out"

The Zohar explains that although Rivkah was brought up in an evil town and an evil home, she was protected by her exceptional soul. Rivkah is preparing to marry Yitzchak. The Torah story shows that a connection existed between Yitzchak and Rivkah before they were married; this is indicated by her coming out at evening time. Here evening refers to the time of afternoon prayer, and we learn that Yitzchak was in fact performing his afternoon prayers. The phrase 'came out' also refers to Rivkah's liberation from the house of evil owing to the elevation of her soul.

The Relevance of this Passage

Man is born into this world with untamed desires and animal instincts. The will of a man's body is given dominion over his soul, so that man can work and strive toward spiritual transformation. The evil setting in which Rivkah was raised symbolizes the physical world and our self-indulgent desires. Each of us can 'come out' of our own 'house of evil'--that is, remove our own self-centered desires--through the energy of Rivkah's soul and the power of the patriarch Yitzchak. All this can be gained through a meditative reading of this passage.

224. Come and behold: "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rivkah came out" (Beresheet 24:15). HE ASKS, WHY IS IT WRITTEN "came out"? It should have been written 'came', AS IT IS WRITTEN: "RACHEL CAME WITH HER FATHER'S SHEEP" (BERESHEET 29:6). Why is it written "came out"? HE RESPONDED, IT INDICATES that the Holy One, blessed be He, brought her away from the people of the town who were all evil. She was separated from THE TOWNSPEOPLE BECAUSE SHE WAS RIGHTEOUS. The verse: "And she went down to the well (Heb. ha'eynah)" (Beresheet 24:16) is spelled with a Hei. This is a secret because Miriam's well, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN SHINING BY THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, chanced before her there. For that reason "to the well" is written with a Hei, WHICH ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA, THE SECRET OF THE LOWER HEI OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. ALSO THE WORD HA'EYNAH IS DERIVED FROM THE WORD FOR EYES (HEB. EYNAYIM), WHICH IS A NAME OF CHOCHMAH. And the water rose toward Rivkah.

224. תָּא חֲזִי, וַיְהִי הוּא טָרַם כָּלָה לְדַבֵּר וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יוֹצֵאת. יוֹצֵאת, בָּאָה מִבְּעֵי לֵיהּ, מֵאֵי יוֹצֵאת. דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא אֲפִיק לָהּ, מִכָּל אִינוּן בְּנֵי מֵתָא, דְּכָלְהוּ חֲיִיבִין, וְהִיא יוֹצֵאת מִכָּלְלָא דְּלֵהוּן. וְתִרְדּוּ הָעֵינָה, כְּתִיב בָּהּ "א, רָזָא אִיהוּ, דְּאֶעֱרַעַת תַּמָּן בִּירָא דְּמַרְיָם, וּבְגִין כֶּךָ, כְּתִיב הָעֵינָה בָּהּ" א, וְסָלִיקוּ לָהּ מֵיָא.

225. Another explanation is that in the verse: "And, behold, Rivkah came out," the words "came out" have a similar meaning to that in the verse "AND THE DAUGHTERS OF THE CITY come out to draw water" (Beresheet 24:13). Why is it written: "Come out", rather than 'go' or 'come'? This is an allusion to their proper conduct. They remained at home all day and came out at a specific time toward evening to draw water. Avraham's servant recognized her by this sign.

225. דְּבַר אַחֵר, וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יוֹצֵאת, בְּמָה דְּכְתִיב, יוֹצֵאוֹת לְשֹׂאבוּ מַיִם, אֲמַאי יוֹצֵאוֹת, וְלֹא הוֹלְכוֹת, וְלֹא בָאוֹת. אֶלָּא בְּגִין דְּטְמִירִין הָווּ כָּל יוֹמָא, וּבִהִיא שַׁעְתָּא, נִפְקִין לְשֹׂאבֵי מֵיָא, וְסִימְנָא נְקִיט בִּידֵיהּ.

226. Come and behold: When the servant reached Charan and found Rivkah "at the time of evening" (Beresheet 24:11), it was time for the afternoon prayer. At the exact time when Yitzchak said his afternoon prayer, the servant reached Rivkah. Rivkah came to him again at that time when he prayed Minchah. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VERSE: "AND YITZCHAK WENT OUT TO MEDITATE IN THE FIELD AT THE EVENING TIME" (IBID. 63). This happened so that everything would be in its proper place, as indicated by the supernal Wisdom. Therefore, the servant reached the well of water, which is the secret of the verse "a fountain of gardens, a well of living water, and streams from Lebanon" (Shir Hashirim 4:15). We established everything to pertain to that secret.

226. תָּא חֲזִי, כִּד מָטָא עֲבָדָא לַחֲרָן וְאִשְׁכַּח לָהּ לְרִבְקָה לַעֲת עֶרֶב, הָוָה עֵידָן צְלוֹתָא דְּמִנְחָה. בְּהִיא שַׁעְתָּא, דְּמָטָא יִצְחָק לְצִלָּאָה צְלוֹתָא דְּמִנְחָה, בְּהִיא שַׁעְתָּא מָטָא עֲבָדָא לְגַבָּה דְּרִבְקָה. וּבִהִיא שַׁעְתָּא, דְּמָטָא יִצְחָק, לְצְלוֹתָא דְּמִנְחָה כְּמִלְקָדְמִין, מָטָא רִבְקָה לְגַבִּיהּ. לְאִשְׁתַּכַּח כָּלָא בְּאַתְרֵיהּ דְּאַצְטְרִיךְ, כְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, וְכָלָא מָטָא בְּרָזָא דְּחֻכְמָתָא, וְעַל דָּא, אֲתָא הָהוּא עֲבָדָא, לְבָאֵר הַמַּיִם, רָזָא דְּכְתִיב מַעֲיֵן גָּנִים בְּאֵר מַיִם חַיִּים וְנוֹזְלִים מִן לְבָנוֹן. וְאוֹקִימָנָא, וְכָלָא רָזָא אִיהוּ.

24. Prayer, cry, tears

While walking to Tiberias, Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Aba are approached by a Jew who has come to seek Rabbi Shimon's wisdom on the subject of prayer. As the great rabbi discourses on the threefold nature of prayer, the man asks why the prayers of the patriarchs, composed before the Temple existed, are still considered most important. He is told that these prayers are designed to unite Zeir Anpin [the upper world] with his fate, the Nukva [our lower world]. After this, all else is superfluous.

The Relevance of this Passage

Prayer is often misunderstood as an offering of thanks and praise to our Creator. Kabbalistically, an omnipotent Force of Creation has no need for thanks or praise. It is because of this misunderstanding that many prayers go unanswered. In truth, prayer creates a connection between the lower and upper worlds. Once the connection is established, the person 'praying' can draw from a wellspring of spiritual energy to remove unwanted traits and negative attributes from his own nature. It is our own negative qualities that prohibit us from attaining permanent fulfillment. By strengthening our connection to the upper worlds, reading this section endows our prayers with greater power.

227. Rabbi Shimon was walking to Tiberias with Rabbi Aba. Rabbi Shimon said, Let us go, because a man is about to come to us with new words of Torah. Rabbi Aba said, I already know that, wherever my master goes, the Holy One, blessed be He, sends flying angels to give him pleasure.

227. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן הָוָה אֶתִּי לְטַבְרִיָּה וְהָוָה עִמָּיָה רַבִּי אַבָּא. אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן לְרַבִּי אַבָּא, נֵזִיל, דְּהָא אֲנִן חֲמִינֵן, דְּבַר נֶשׁ חָד, יִמְטִי הַשְׁתָּא לְגַבְּן וּמְלִין חֲדָתִין בְּסוּמִיָּה, וְאִינוּן מְלִין דְּאוֹרִייתָא. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, הָא יִדְעָנָא, דְּבִכָּל אֲתֵר דְּמַר אֲזִיל, קוֹדֶשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא מְשַׁדֵּר לֵיהּ מַלְאכִין, טָסִין בְּגַדְפִין לְאַשְׁתַּעֲשָׂא בֵּיהּ.

228. While they were traveling, Rabbi Shimon lifted up his eyes and saw a man who was running. They sat down TO WAIT FOR HIM. When he arrived, Rabbi Shimon asked him, Who are you? He responded, I am a Jew from the city of Cappadocia and I am going to the hiding place of the son of Yochai, THAT IS, TO HEAR HIDDEN MATTERS FROM HIM. The friends determined AND EXPLAINED certain things, and sent me to him TO KNOW WHETHER HE AGREES WITH THEM. Rabbi Shimon said to him, My son, talk. He asked, You are the son of Yochai? He told him, I am the son of Yochai.

228. עַד דְּהָווּ אֲזִילִי, סָלִיק רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן עֵינָיו, וְחָמָא בַּר נֶשׁ, דְּהָוָה רָהִיט וְאֲזִיל. יָתְבוּ רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן וְרַבִּי אַבָּא. בַּר מָטָא גְבִייהוּ, אָמַר לֵיהּ רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, מָאן אַנְתָּ. אָמַר לֵיהּ יוֹדָאי אֲנָא, וּמִקְפּוּטְקִיָּא קְאִתִּינָא, וְאֲנָא אֲזִילָנָא אֶטִּיטְרִיהּ דְּבַר יוֹחָאי, דְּאִתְמַנּוּן חֲבֵרָיָא בְּמְלִין יִדְעֵן, וְשִׁדְרוּנִי גְבִיָּה. אָמַר לֵיהּ אִימָא בְּרִי. אָמַר לֵיהּ אַנְתָּ בַּר יוֹחָאי. אָמַר לֵיהּ אֲנָא בַּר יוֹחָאי.

229. The friends said that when a man prays nothing may come between him and the wall, as it is written: "Then Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall" (Yeshayah 38:2). When a man prays, no one may come within four cubits of him on every side. They said this means four cubits on every side except in front, AS IT IS FORBIDDEN TO COME BETWEEN HIM AND THE WALL. And they said that a man should not pray behind his Rabbi. They appointed me TO HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY about these matters.

229. אָמַר לֵיהּ הָא אוֹקִימָנָא דְּלֹא יַפְסִיק בַּר נֶשׁ בְּצִלּוֹתֶיהּ, בִּינִיָּה לְבִין כּוֹתֵלָא, בְּמָה דְּכְתִיב וַיִּסָּב חִזְקִיָּהוּ פָּנָיו אֶל הַקִּיר וְגו'. וּמָאן דְּצִלִּי, אָסִיר לְמַעַבְר אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת סָמִיךְ לֵיהּ, וְאוֹקְמוּהּ לְהַנִּי אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת לְכָל סֵטֶר, בַּר לְקַמִּיָּה. וְאוֹקְמוּהּ, דְּלֹא יִצְלִי בַּר נֶשׁ, אַחוּרֵי רַבִּיָּה וְכו'. וְאִתְמַנּוּן בְּכָל הַנִּי מִיָּלִי.

230. THE JEW opened with the verse, "Hear my prayer, Hashem, and give ear to my cry; keep not silence at my tears" (Tehilim 39:13). HE ASKS, Why is it written "hear" (Heb. shim'ah) and not 'sh'ma'? AND WHY is it written in one place: "Hear (Heb. sh'ma), Hashem, and be gracious to me" (Tehilim 30:11), and in another place, 'shim'ah'? The reason is that it is written now Shma referring to the male, NAMELY TO ZEIR ANPIN, and now Shim'ah referring to the female, NAMELY TO THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. For example, shim'ah is used in "Hear the right, Hashem" (Tehilim 17:1), WHERE THE RIGHT (HEB. TZEDEK) IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Sh'ma is used in "Hear (Heb. sh'ma) Hashem, and be gracious to me," AS HASHEM IS THE NAME OF ZEIR ANPIN. The masculine is also used in "Hear, Hashem" AS HASHEM IS THE NAME OF ZEIR ANPIN, "my son, hear (Heb. sh'ma) the instructions" (Mishlei 1:8) and "Take heed, and hearken (Heb. sh'ma)" (Devarim 27:9).

231. "Hear (Heb. shim'ah) my prayer, Hashem" REFERS TO THE NUKVA, which is the grade that receives all the prayers in the world. We learned that THE NUKVA creates a diadem from the prayers and puts in on the head of the Righteous the life of the world. This is the meaning of the verse: "Blessings are upon the head of the just" (Mishlei 10:6). Hence SCRIPTURE SAYS: "Hear (Heb. shim'ah) my prayer, Hashem."

232. "Hear my prayer, Hashem" refers to the silent prayer, NAMELY THE AMIDAH, WHICH WE WHISPER. IN CONTRAST, "And give ear to my cry" is a prayer cried out loud. A man raises his voice AND CRIES TO HASHEM in his trouble, as it is written: "And their cry rose up to the Elohim" (Shemot 2:23). What is the cry MENTIONED IN THE VERSE? It is the cry heard when one raises one's voice in prayer and lifts up one's eyes above, as it is written: "And a shouting to the mountains" (Yeshayah 22:5). This prayer breaks open all gates upon which he knocks to present his prayer BEFORE HASHEM. "Keep not silence at my tears," which enter before the King and cannot be stopped by any gate or turned away in vain.

233. There are three grades of prayer. They are prayer, cry, and tears, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "HEAR MY PRAYER...GIVE EAR TO MY CRY...KEEP NOT SILENCE AT MY TEARS." These correspond to three other grades mentioned at the end of the verse: "For I am a stranger with you," then "a sojourner," and then "all my fathers" (Tehilim 39:13), who were the main founders of the world. A STRANGER CORRESPONDS TO A PRAYER, A SOJOURNER TO A CRY, AND ALL MY FATHERS TO A TEAR.

234. Come and behold: A man's prayer is done standing up, for a man can pray in two ways, sitting down or standing up, which two are one, corresponding to the two grades of prayers, the hand Tfilin and the head Tfilin, also known as day and night. THEY CORRESPOND TO THE GRADE OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED HEAD TFILIN OR DAY, AND TO THE GRADE OF THE NUKVA, CALLED THE HAND TFILIN OR NIGHT, AND THEY ARE ONE IN THEIR UNION. A prayer said sitting down, NAMELY THE PRAYERS OF "WHO HAS FORMED THE LIGHT" BEFORE THE AMIDAH, is for the sake of the hand Tfilin, NAMELY, FOR THE NUKVA, to fix her as one prepares a bride and adorns her for the Chupah (marriage canopy). Thus, THE NUKVA is decorated in the secret of the Chariots and the troops ALLUDED TO IN THE WORDS: "Who formed ministering messengers, ministers who all do stand aloft" and "the Ofanim (wheels) and the holy living creatures." THESE ARE FOR THE ADORNMENT OF THE NUKVA.

230. פתח ואמר שמעה תפילתי ה' ושועתי האזינה אל דמעתי אל תחרש. מאי טעמא שמעה, ולא שמע, באתר חר כתיב שמע ה' וחנני וגו', ובאתר אחרא שמעה. אלא, בכל אתר, לזמנין שמע לדכורא, ולזמנין שמעה לנוקבא. שמעה: במה דאת אמר שמעה ה' צדק וגו'. שמע: בדבר אחר שמע ה' וחנני. שמע בני. הסכת ושמע.

231. והכא שמעה תפילתי ה', בגין דהאי דרגא, דמקבלא כל צלותין דעלמא. והא תנינן, דעבדא מנייהו עטרה, ושוי לה ברישא דצדיק חי עולמים, דכתיב ברכות לראש צדיק. ועל דא שמעה תפילתי ה'.

232. שמעה תפילתי ה', דא צלותא די בלחש. ושועתי האזינה, דא צלותא, דארים בר נש קליה בעקתיה, בדבר אחר ותעל שועתם אל האלקים. ומהו שועתם, אלא דבצלותיה, ארים קליה, וקוף עינוי לעילא, בדבר אחר ושוע אל ההר. וצלותא דא מתבר תרעין, ודפיק לון לאעלא צלותיה. אל דמעתי אל תחרש, דא אעיל קמי מלכא, ולית תרעא דקאים קמיה, ולעולם לא אהדרו דמעין בריקנא.

233. תו הא כתיב הכא תלת דרגין, תפלה, שועה, דמעה, לקביל אליו תלת אחרנין: כי גר אנכי עמך, לבתר תושב, לבתר בכל אבותי, עקרא דעלמא.

234. תא חזי, צלותא דבר נש מעומד, בגין דתרי צלותא נינהו: חר מיושב, וחר מעומד, ואינון חר. לקביל תרין דרגין: תפלה של יד ותפלה של ראש. לגבי יום ולילה, וכלא חר. אוף הכא, תפלה מיושב לגבי תפלה של יד, לאתקין לה במה דאתקין לכלה, וקשיט לה לאעלא לחופה, הכי נמי מקשטין לה, ברזא דרתיכאה ומשירייהא, ויצר משרתים ואשר משרתיו, והאופנים וחיות הקדש וכו'.

235. After the prayer said sitting down, WHICH IS THE DECORATED NUKVA, enters the presence of the Supreme King, ZEIR ANPIN, NAMELY, DURING THE AMIDAH PRAYER, and he comes to receive her, we stand before the Supernal King, BECAUSE THEN ZEIR ANPIN IS UNITED WITH THE NUKVA. For this reason, it behooves us not to stop between "redemption" and the prayer, as the prayer sitting down and the prayer standing up should be joined.

236. When a man stands before the Supernal King, he needs four cubits for his prayer. This is the length of a rope in "who forms all." In all that pertains to the side of the male, it behooves a man to stand up. In the same way, whoever kneels, kneels when pronouncing 'blessed', WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. Whoever stands up does so WHEN PRONOUNCING THE WORD 'Name,' WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE MALE, to show the superiority of the male over the female.

237. Come and behold: A man must not pray behind his Rabbi's back, as it is written: "You shall fear Hashem your Elohim" (Devarim 6:13). The particle Et before "Hashem" indicates that he should fear his Rabbi as much as he fears the Shechinah, and the disciple fears his Rabbi. But at the time of prayer, he should place before himself only the fear of the Holy One, blessed be He, and not any other fear.

238. Come and behold: Yitzchak composed the afternoon prayer, as Avraham composed the morning prayer in relation to the grade to which he cleaved, NAMELY THE GRADE OF CHESED AND THE RIGHT COLUMN. So Yitzchak composed the afternoon prayer in relation to the grade to which he cleaved, THE GRADE OF GVURAH AND THE LEFT COLUMN. Therefore, THE TIME OF the afternoon prayer service is when the sun sets down with its grades to the west; NAMELY, IMMEDIATELY AFTER MIDDAY.

239. As long as the sun does not set toward the west, it is day-that is, from morning till noon-as it is written: "The kindness of El endures for all time (lit. 'all the day')" (Tehilim 52:3). You may say that it is considered day until dark. But come and study the verse: "Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of the evening are lengthened" (Yirmeyah 6:4). "For the day declines" refers to the morning service, as it is written: "The kindness (Lit. 'Chesed') of El endures for all the day," for then the sun is to the east. Once the sun sets and declines toward the west, it is time for the afternoon prayer, because "the day declines, for the shadows of the evening are lengthened," and harsh Judgment is upon the world.

235. ועל דא צלותא מיושב בין דעאלת לגבי מלכא עלאה, ואיהו אתי לקבלא לה, ברין אנן קיימין קמי מלכא עלאה, דהא ברין דכורא אתחבר בנוקבא, ובגין כך לא יפסיק בין גאולה לתפלה.

236. ובגין דבר נש קאים קמי מלכא עלאה, נטל ארבע אמות לצלותיה, ואוקמוה דבשיעורא דסורטא דיוצר כלל. וכל מה דאתי בסטרא דדכורא, בעי ליה לאיניש למיקם בקיומיה ואזדקף. כגוונא דא, כד איהו כרע, כרע בכרוך, וכד איהו זקיף, זקיף בשם, בגין לאחזאה שבחא דדכורא על נוקבא.

237. ותא חזי, דהא אוקמוה, לא יצלי בר נש אחורי רביה, ואתמר, כמה דכתיב, את ה' אלקיך תירא. את לאכללא דבעי למדחל מרביה כמורא דשכינתא, ודחילו דתלמיד, רביה איהו. בגין כך, בשעתא דצלותא, לא ישוי ההוא מורא לקמיה, אלא מורא דקודשא בריך הוא בלחודוי, ולא מורא אחרא.

238. ותא חזי, צלותא דמנחה, אתקין ליה יצחק. ודאי כמה דאתקין אברהם צלותא דצפרא, לקבל ההוא דרגא דאתדבק ביה. וכן יצחק, אתקין צלותא דמנחה, לקבל ההוא דרגא דאתדבק ביה. וע"ד צלותא דמנחה, מכי נטי שמשא לנחתא בדרגוי לסטר מערב.

239. דהא עד לא נטה שמשא לצד מערב, אקרי יום, מצפרא עד ההוא זמנא, דכתיב חסד אל כל היום. ואי תימא עד חשכה, תא חזי, דכתיב אוי נא לנו כי פנה היום כי ינטו צללי ערב. כי פנה היום, לקבל צלותא דצפרא, דכתיב חסד אל כל היום, דהא ברין, שמשא איהו לסטר מזרח, בין דנטה שמשא, ונחתא לסטר מערב, הא ברין איהו זמן צלותא דמנחה, וכבר פנה היום, ואתי צללי ערב, ואתער דינא קשיא בעלמא.

240. "The day declines" refers to the grade of Chesed, while "the shadows of the evening are lengthened" refers to the grades of the harsh Judgment. Then the Temple was destroyed and the Holy of Holies burned. Therefore, it behooves a man to be careful to attend the afternoon prayer service, because it is the time when harsh Judgment hovers about the world.

241. Ya'akov composed the evening service, because he fixes THE NUKVA and nourishes her with whatever she needs. For the Vav OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH REPRESENTS TIFERET, corrects the Hei OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and the Hei is nourished by the Vav, as THE NUKVA has nothing of herself. SHE RECEIVES EVERYTHING FROM TIFERET, WHICH IS THE VAV OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI CALLED YA'AKOV.

242. The evening service is optional for this reason, for only as a continuation of the afternoon service does it shine. But now AT NIGHT, there is no time for that. And we have explained that daylight does not shine upon THE NUKVA, and she rules in the dark until midnight, when the Holy One, blessed be He, enjoys Himself with the righteous in the Garden of Eden. Then it is time for man to study Torah.

243. Come and behold: David came and said, There are three times for services, as it is written: "Evening, and morning, and at noon, I PRAY, AND CRY ALOUD, AND HE HEARS MY VOICE" (Tehilim 55:18). There are three times in all, but David prayed at only two of them, as is written: "I pray, and cry aloud" and no more. One is the morning service and the other the afternoon service. Therefore he said, "I pray, and cry aloud" because "I pray" suffices for the morning itself, the time of Chesed, but there is need for crying aloud during the afternoon, AS IT IS A TIME OF HARSH JUDGMENT. Therefore he added, "And cry aloud." BUT HE DID NOT PRAY AT THE EVENING SERVICE. At midnight, he would rise and sing chants and praises, as it is written: "And in the night His song shall be with me" (Tehilim 42:9). This has already been explained.

244. Rabbi Shimon rose and they traveled with that man until Tiberias. While they were walking, Rabbi Shimon said, Come and behold that prayers correspond to the daily offerings. This was established by the sages of the Great Assembly. There are two DAILY OFFERINGS, as it is written: "The one lamb shall you offer in the morning, and the other lamb shall you offer at evening" (Bemidbar 28:4), and they are offered at the same times each day, the times of prayer. THEY ESTABLISHED TWO ESSENTIAL PRAYERS, THE MORNING SERVICE AND THE AFTERNOON SERVICE. THE EVENING SERVICE IS OPTIONAL.

245. The man said, But the patriarchs composed these prayers before THE MEN OF THE GREAT ASSEMBLY DID, AND THEY DID NOT ADJUST THEM TO CORRESPOND TO THE DAILY OFFERINGS. Why is what Avraham and Yitzchak established more important? And why is that what Ya'akov, who is chosen among the patriarchs, composed is considered optional and not as essential as those?

240. וּמִנָּה הַיּוֹם, דְּאִיהוּ דְּרָגָא דְּחֶסֶד, וְנִטּוּ צִלְלֵי עָרֵב, דְּאִינוּן דְּרָגָא דְּדִינָא קִשְׁיָא, וּכְדִין אֲתַחֲרַב בֵּי מִקְדָּשָׁא, וְאֲתוּקֵד הֵיכְלָא. וְעַד תְּנִינָן, דִּיהָא בִּ"נ זְהִיר בְּצִלּוֹתָא דְּמִנְחָה, דְּאִיהוּ זְמַנָּא דְּדִינָא קִשְׁיָא, שְׂרִינָא בְּעֵלְמָא.

241. יַעֲקֹב אֲתַקִּין צִלּוֹתָא דְּעֶרְבִית, דְּהָא אִיהוּ אֲתַקִּין לָהּ, וְזֶן לָהּ, בְּכָל מָה דְּאֶצְטְרִיךְ, וְדָא, וְאִ"ו אֲתַקִּין לָהּ"א, וְהָא אֲתַזְנֵת מִן וְאִ"ו, דְּלִית לָהּ נְהוּרָא מִגְרָמָה כָּלֵל.

242. וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ, תַּפְלֵת עֶרְבִית רְשׁוֹת, דְּהָא אֲתַבְלִילת בְּצִלּוֹתָא דְּיוֹמָא, בִּגִּין לְאֲתַנְהֵרָא, וְהִשְׁתָּא לָאו זְמַנָּא אִיהוּ. וְאוּקִימָנָא לָהּ, דְּהָא לֹא אֲתַגְלוּיָא נְהוּרָא דְּיוֹמָא, דִּינְהִיר לָהּ, וְאִיהוּ שְׁלֵטָא בְּחִשּׁוּכָא, עַד זְמַנָּא דְּפִלְגוּת לֵילִיא, דְּאִשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עִם צְדִיקָיָא, בְּגִנְתָּא דְּעֶדֶן, וּכְדִין אִיהוּ זְמַנָּא לְאִשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע בְּרִיךְ נֶשׁ בְּאוֹרֵייתָא, כְּמָה דְּאֲתַמַּר.

243. תָּא חַזִּי, דּוֹר אֲתָא, וְאִמַּר אֱלִין תֵּלַת זְמַנִּין דְּצִלּוֹתֵי, דְּכְתִיב עָרֵב וּבֹקֵר וְצַהֲרַיִם, הָא תֵּלַתָּא, וְאִיהוּ לֹא צִלִּי, אֶלָּא תְּרֵי מְנִיָּהוּ, דְּכְתִיב אֲשִׁיחָה וְאַהֲמָה, וְלֹא יִתִּיר, דָּא לְצִלּוֹתָא דְּצַפְרָא, וְדָא לְצִלּוֹתָא דְּמִנְחָה, בִּגִּין כֶּךָ אֲשִׁיחָה וְאַהֲמָה דִּינִיקָא, בְּצַפְרָא, דְּאִיהוּ שְׁעָתָא דְּחֶסֶד, סִגִּי לִיהּ בְּחֶסֶד בְּאֲשִׁיחָה, וּבְמִנְחָה, דְּהוּא שְׁעָתָא דְּדִינָא קִשְׁיָא, בְּעֵי הַמִּיָּה, וּבִגִּין כֶּךָ וְאַהֲמָה, וּלְבַתֵּר כֶּד אֲתַפְלִיג לֵילִיא, הוּא קָם בְּשִׁירִין וְתוֹשְׁבָחִין, כְּדָקָא יָאוֹת, דְּכְתִיב וּבִלְיָלָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי, וְהָא אֲתַמַּר.

244. קָם ר' שְׁמַעוֹן וְאֶזְלוּ. אֶזְלָהּ הוּא בְּרִיךְ נֶשׁ בְּהִרְיָה, עַד טְבִרְיָה. עַד דְּהוּוּ אֶזְלוּ, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, תָּא חַזִּי, תַּפְלֵת כְּנֶגֶד תַּמִּידִין, תְּקִנּוּם רַבָּנָן דְּאֲנָשֵׁי כְּנֶסֶת הַגְּדוֹלָה, בִּגִּין דְּאִשְׁבַּחַן תְּרֵי, דְּכְתִיב אֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בַּבֹּקֶר וְאֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים. וְאִינוּן מִתְקַרְבִּין בְּהֵנִי תְּרֵי זְמַנֵּי דְּיוֹמָא, דְּאִינוּן זְמַנִּין לְצִלּוֹתָא.

245. אָמַר הוּא גְבֵרָא הָא בְּקִדְמִיתָא, אָבוֹת תְּקִנּוּם לְהֵנִי צִלּוֹתֵי, וּמָה דְּאֲתַקִּינוּ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּצְחָק, הוּא עֲקָרָא, וּמָה דְּאֲתַקִּין יַעֲקֹב, דְּאִיהוּ שְׁבַחָא דְּאַבְהָן, אִמָּאֵי אִיהוּ רְשׁוֹת, וְלֹא עֲקָרָא כְּהֵנִי.

246. Rabbi Shimon responded, this has already been explained, yet come and behold, the times for the morning and afternoon services are designed to unite Ya'akov, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, with his fate, THE NUKVA. Once they are united, we do not have to do anything else. AS THE NUKVA is put between the two arms-AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS-she is joined to the body, AS THE TORSO IS BUT THE INCLUSION OF THE TWO ARMS, and there is no more need to amend anything else. Thus, we should encourage the union of the two arms BY OBSERVING MORNING AND AFTERNOON PRAYER SERVICES, because THE NUKVA was put between them. ONE NEEDS TO DRAW ILLUMINATION INTO THE NUKVA. After she is put between them, then the body, THE CENTRAL COLUMN CALLED YA'AKOV, and the Nukva whisper, so as not to mention THE ASPECT OF JUDGMENT IN HER.

247. For that reason, THE WORDS ARE WHISPERED AND HER VOICE IS NOT HEARD, and Ya'akov serves up high. We learned the meaning of "up high" is as written in the verse: "And you, Hashem, are most high for evermore" (Tehilim 92:9). All this is a secret known to those who understand Judgment NAMELY FOR THOSE VERSED IN THE MYSTERIES OF THE TORAH. Rabbi Aba and the Jew came and kissed the hands of Rabbi Shimon. Rabbi Aba said, Until this day, I did not understand this matter. Only now do I comprehend its meaning. Blessed is my fate, that I deserved to hear it.

25. "And Yitzchak brought her into his mother Sarah's tent"

As Rabbi Yosi opens the discussion of this difficult verse, we learn that the images of Yitzchak and Rivkah were exactly the same as the images of Avraham and Sarah, in both physical and spiritual terms. The rabbis then reveal the hidden meaning in the stories of the patriarchs. They, we are told, all lived by the secret of Zeir Anpin, and thus each had four wives representing the Sfirot of Chochmah, Binah, Tiferet, and Malchut of the Nukva of Zeir Anpin. The entire physical world of the patriarchs was designed to mirror the structure and form of the spiritual dimension, thereby creating affinity and attachment to the Light of the Creator. Finally, we hear Rabbi Shimon's succinct explanation of the secret of holiness, and how all mysteries are really one secret, included within the secret of the Nukva of Zeir Anpin alone.

The Relevance of this Passage

Succeeding generations of mankind are not on the same spiritual level as the patriarchs. Nevertheless, we can still create affinity and attachment to their world and its superior spiritual structure, through the mystical words that bespeak their wonders, a privilege afforded to us through a thoughtful reading of this passage. This attachment invokes the Light of Creator, removing darkness and iniquity from our existence.

248. "And Yitzchak brought her into his mother Sarah's tent" (Beresheet 24:67). Rabbi Yosi said that this is a difficult verse. It is literally written: "...to the tent, Sarah his mother," but it should have been written 'Sarah's tent.' What is the meaning of "to the tent"? He says that the Shechinah returned, THAT IS CALLED TENT. THEREFORE IT SAYS 'HA'OHLELAH (TO THE TENT), WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, for the Shechinah never left Sarah as long as she was in the world. And the candle burned in the tent all the days of the week, from Shabbat eve to Shabbat eve. After she died, the candle was extinguished. Since Rivkah came, the Shechinah returned and the candle burned again. "Sarah his mother" means that she resembled Sarah in everything she did.

249. Rabbi Yehuda said, "SARAH HIS MOTHER" MEANS THAT because the image of Yitzchak was the same as the image of Avraham, whoever saw Yitzchak said it was Avraham. Of course, they knew that Avraham begot Yitzchak, so the image of Rivkah was exactly the same as the image of Sarah. For that reason it is written, "Sarah his mother." THE IMAGES OF YITZCHAK AND RIVKAH WERE EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE IMAGES OF AVRAHAM AND SARAH. IT WAS APPARENT THAT AVRAHAM BEGAT YITZCHAK AND SARAH BORE RIVKAH.

246. אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן, הָא אֲתָמֶר. אָבֵל תָּא חֲזִי, הֲנִי תְּרִי זְמַנִּי, דְּתֵרִי צְלוֹתִי לָאו אִינוּן, אֱלָא לְחַבְרָא לִיעָקֵב בְּעֵדְבֵיהּ, בֵּינָן דְּאֲתַחְבְּרוּ דָא בְּדָא, אֲנָן לֹא צְרִיכִין יְתִיר, דְּכֵינָן דְּאֲתִיְהִיבַת אֲתָתָא בֵּין תְּרִין דְּרוּעִין, וְאֲתַחְבְּרַת בְּגוּפָא, לֹא אֲצַטְרִיךְ יְתִיר, וְעַל דָּא אֲנָן בְּעֵינָן לְאֲתַעְרָא תְּרִין דְּרוּעִין, בְּגִין דְּאֲתִיְהִיבַת בִּינִייהוּ, בֵּינָן דְּאִיְהִי בִּינִייהוּ, גּוּפָא וְאֲתָתָא מְלִייהוּ בְּלַחֲשֵׁי, דְּלֹא לְאֲדַכְרָא.

247. וּבְגִין כֵּךְ, יַעֲקֹב מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בְּמֶרוֹם תְּנִינָן, מֵאֵי בְּמֶרוֹם. כִּמָּה דָּאֵת אָמַר וְאֲתָה מֶרוֹם לְעוֹלָם ה'. וְכֹלֵא אִיְהוּ רָזָא לִידְעֵי מִדִּין. אֲתוּ רַבִּי אַבָּא, וְהוּא יוֹדָאי, וְנִשְׁקֻי יְדֵי. אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא, עַד יוֹמָא דִּין, לֹא קְאִימְנָא בְּמַלְהָ דָּא, בַּר הַשְׁתָּא. זָכָאָה חוּלְקִי, דִּזְכִּינָא לְמִשְׁמַע לִיה.

248. וַיְבִיֶּאֱהָ יִצְחָק הָאֵהֱלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הָאִי קָרָא קְשִׁיָּא, הָאֵהֱלָה, לְאֵהֱלָ שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ מִבְּעֵי לִיה, מֵאִי הָאֵהֱלָה. דְּאֵהֱדַרַת תִּמְנָן שְׂכִינְתָּא, בְּגִין דְּכָל זְמַנָּא דְּשָׂרָה קְיִימָא בְּעֵלְמָא, שְׂכִינְתָּא לֹא אַעֲדִי מִינָהּ, וְשָׂרְגָא הוּא דְּלִיקַת, מְעַרְבַּ שַׁבַּת לְעַרְבַּ שַׁבַּת, וְהוּא נְהִיר כָּל אִינוּן יוֹמֵי דְּשַׁבְּתָא, בְּתַר דְּמִיתַת, כְּבִתָּהּ הָיָא שָׂרְגָא, בֵּינָן דְּאֲתַת רַבְּקָה, אֵהֱדַרַת שְׂכִינְתָּא, וְשָׂרְגָא אֲדִלִיקַת. שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ: דְּדִמִּיא לְשָׂרָה בְּכָל עוֹבְדָהָ.

249. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר כִּמָּה דְּדִיוֻקְנִיהָ דִּיִּצְחָק, הוּא כְּדִיוֻקְנִיהָ דְּאַבְרָהָם, וְכָל מֵאן דְּחָמִי לִיִּצְחָק, אָמַר דָּא אַבְרָהָם, וְדָאי, אַבְרָהָם הוּלִיד אֶת יִצְחָק, הָכִי נָמִי רַבְּקָה, דִּיוֻקְנָהּ מִמֶּשׁ הוּא דִּיוֻקְנָא דְּשָׂרָה, וּבְגִין כֵּךְ שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וְדָאי.

250. Rabbi Elazar said, This EXPLANATION is exactly right, but come and behold this secret. Although Sarah died, her image did not leave the house. It remained unseen from the day she died until Rivkah came. Once Rivkah came, the image of Sarah was seen again, as it is written: "And Yitzchak brought her into his mother Sarah's tent", but it was seen only by Yitzchak when he entered the tent. Therefore, "Yitzchak was comforted after his mother" (Beresheet 24:67), because his mother was seen and chanced before him in the house. Therefore it is not written: 'After his mother's death', but rather "after his mother", BECAUSE SHE NEVER DIED FOR YITZCHAK.

251. Rabbi Shimon then discoursed on the difference in verse that is written of Yitzchak: "And took Rivkah, and she became his wife; and he loved her" (Beresheet 24:67). Because it is written that "she became his wife", we should assume that he loved her as all the inhabitants of the world love their wives. What was different here, that made it necessary to add, "And he loved her"?

252. HE ANSWERS, Assuredly the awakening of the love of the male for the female is from the Left COLUMN, as it is written: "His left hand is under my head" (Shir Hashirim 8:3). Darkness, THE LEFT COLUMN, and night, THE NUKVA, are as one, because the left always arouses love to the Nukva and holds on to her. Therefore, although Avraham loved Sarah, it is not written of him: "And he loved her", but only of Yitzchak, WHO IS THE LEFT COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN. If you say, however, that it is written: "And Ya'akov loved Rachel" (Beresheet 29:18); THOUGH HE IS NOT OF THE LEFT COLUMN, it is because that side of Yitzchak was included within him.

253. Come and behold: When Avraham, THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, saw Sarah, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, he only embraced her, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND HIS RIGHT HAND EMBRACES ME" (SHIR HASHIRIM 8:3). But Yitzchak, THE LEFT COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, her husband, took her and put his arm under her head, as it is written: "His left hand is under my head" (Ibid.). When Ya'akov, THE CENTRAL COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, arrived afterward, he performed his marital duty and begot twelve tribes. All is as it should be.

254. Come and behold: The patriarchs all lived by one secret, NAMELY THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN. Therefore, they each had four wives REPRESENTING CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Avraham also had four wives-Sarah, Hagar, and two concubines-as it is written: "But to the sons of the concubines, which Avraham had" (Beresheet 25:6). IT IS WRITTEN concubines, WHICH MEANS two, AND TOGETHER WITH SARAH AND HAGAR, there were four.

255. Yitzchak also had four WIVES, all contained within Rivkah, as it is written: "And took Rivkah", which is one, "and she became his wife," which is two; "and he loved her," which is three "and Yitzchak was comforted after his mother," which is four. Correspondingly Ya'akov had four wives, and all of them, THE TWELVE WIVES, are one secret, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN ALONE, WHO CONTAINED ALL TWELVE ASPECTS.

250. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, בְּכָל־הַכִּי הוּא, אֲבָל תָּא חַזִּי, רְזָא אִיהוּ, דָּאֵף עַל גַּב דְּשָׂרָה מִיתָת, דְּיוֹקְנָה לָא אַעֲדִי מִן בֵּיתָא וְלֹא אֶתְחַזִּי תַמָּן, מִיּוֹמָא דְּמִיתָת, עַד דְּאַתָּת רַבֵּקָה, בֵּינָן דְּעֶאֱלֵת רַבֵּקָה, אֶתְחַזִּיאַת דְּיוֹקְנָא דְּשָׂרָה, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּבִּיֶאֱהָ יִצְחָק הָאֵהָלָהּ וּגּו', מִיַּד שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ אֶתְחַזִּיאַת תַּמָּן, וְלֹא הָוָה חֲמִי לָהּ בְּרִי יִצְחָק בְּלַחֲדוּי, כִּד אַעִיל תַּמָּן, וְעַל דָּא וַיִּנָּחֵם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ. דְּאִמּוֹ אֶתְחַזִּיאַת וְאִזְדַּמְנָא בְּבֵיתָא, וְעַל דָּא לֹא כְתִיב אַחֲרֵי מִיתָת אִמּוֹ, אֲלֵא אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ.

251. רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אָמַר, מֵאִי שָׁנָא דְּכְתִיב בֵּיהּ בִּיצְחָק, וַיִּקַּח אֶת רַבֵּקָה וַתְּהִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ. בֵּינָן דְּאָמַר וַתְּהִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה, לֹא יִדְעָנָא דְּהוּא רַחִים לָהּ, דְּהָא כָּל בְּנֵי עֲלָמָא רַחֲמֵי לְנִשְׁיֵיהּ. מֵאִי שָׁנָא בִּיצְחָק, דְּכְתִיב בֵּיהּ וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ.

252. אֲלֵא וַדַּאי אֶתְעֵרוּתָא דְּרַחֲמֵי דְּדְכוּרָא לְגַבֵּי אֶתְתָּא, לֹאֻ אִיהוּ אֲלֵא שְׂמָאֲלָא, דְּכְתִיב שְׂמָאֲלוֹ תַחַת לְרֵאשִׁי. וְחֲשָׁךְ וְלִילָה כְּחַד אֵינּוֹן, וְשְׂמָאֲלָא אֶתְעַר רַחֲמֵי תְדִיר, לְגַבֵּי נּוֹקְבָא, וְאַחִיד בָּהּ, וְעַל דָּא אָף עַל גַּב דְּאַבְרָהָם רַחֲמֵי לָהּ לְשָׂרָה, לֹא כְתִיב בֵּיהּ וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ, אֲלֵא בִיצְחָק. וְאִי תִימָא וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ יַעֲקֹב אֶת רַחֵל, סְטָרָא דִּיצְחָק, דְּהָוָה בֵּיהּ, קַעֲבִיד לִיהּ.

253. תָּא חַזִּי, אַבְרָהָם כִּד חֲמָא לְשָׂרָה, הָוָה מַחְבֵּק לָהּ, וְלֹא יָתִיר, אֲבָל יִצְחָק דְּאִיהוּ בַּעֲלָהּ, אַחִיד בָּהּ, וְשׁוּי דְּרוּעִיָּה תַחַת רִישָׁהּ, דְּכְתִיב שְׂמָאֲלוֹ תַחַת לְרֵאשִׁי וַיִּמְיֵנוּ תַחְבֻּקֵּנוּ. לְבַתָּר אֶתָּא יַעֲקֹב, וְשִׁמְשׁ עֶרְסָא, וְאוֹלִיד תְּרִיסַר שְׁבָטִין, כָּלָא כְדָקָא יָאוּת.

254. וְתָא חַזִּי, אָבֵהֵן כָּלָהּ בְּרָזָא חָדָא אֲזֻלָּהּ, וְכָלָהּ שְׁמִשּׁוֹ בְּאַרְבַּע נָשִׁין, כָּל חַד מְנִיָּהּ. אַבְרָהָם בְּאַרְבַּע: שָׂרָה, וְהָגָר, וְתָרֵי פְלֻגָּשִׁים. דְּכְתִיב וּלְבָנֵי הַפְּלֻגָּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאַבְרָהָם, פְּלֻגָּשִׁים תָּרֵי, הָא אַרְבַּע.

255. יִצְחָק בְּרָזָא דְּאַרְבַּע, דְּסְטִירוֹ דְּרַבֵּקָה, דְּכְתִיב וַיִּקַּח אֶת רַבֵּקָה חַד, וַתְּהִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה תָּרֵי, וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ תָּלַת, וַיִּנָּחֵם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ הָא אַרְבַּע. לְקַבֵּל דָּא, הָוָה לְיַעֲקֹב, אַרְבַּע נָשִׁין. וְכָלָא בְּרָזָא חָדָא.

256. Rabbi Chiya said that Avraham and Yitzchak each performed their marital duties with one wife on the side of holiness, BECAUSE HAGAR AND THE CONCUBINES WERE NOT OF HOLINESS. Avraham did so with Sarah, and Yitzchak with Rivkah. In comparison, Ya'akov had four wives, two each REPRESENTING THE HOLY AND THE NOT HOLY. LEAH AND RACHEL REPRESENTED HOLINESS, BILHAH AND ZILPAH REPRESENTED THE NOT HOLY THAT HE CHANGED TO HOLY. Rabbi Shimon said that these matters have reached their proper place IN HOLINESS. EVEN HAGAR AND THE CONCUBINES WERE PART OF THE SECRET OF HOLINESS, AS RABBI SHIMON EXPLAINS THAT THE TWELVE WOMEN WERE BUT TWELVE ASPECTS OF THE NUKVA. For everything is done in the secret of holiness, and all is one secret; NAMELY, ALL OF THEM ARE INCLUDED WITHIN THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN ALONE.

256. רבי חייא אמר, אברהם ויצחק, שמשו כל חד באתתא חדא, ברזא דקודשא. אברהם בשרה, ויצחק ברבקה, ולקבל תריוויהו, הוי ארבע נשין ליעקב, בתרין חולקין. רבי שמעון אמר סליקו מלין לאתרייהו. דהא בלא ברזא קדישא אתעבר, וכלא ברזא חדא.

26. "Then again Avraham took a wife"

Here we learn that Kturah, Avraham's wife, was really Hagar, who had atoned for her transgressions and had taken a new name reflecting this atonement. The rest of the discussion focuses on the meaning of Avraham's bequest to Yitzchak of "all that he had." We're told that the two patriarchs should be included one within the other, since they represent the Right and Left Columns in the secret of supernal faith, which is Binah. The Relevance of this Passage

Man is endowed with three unique forces of intelligence-the desire to receive, the desire to share, and the free will to choose and manage between the two. Desire to Share is termed 'Right Column' by the Zohar. Avraham is the embodiment of Right Column and its particular sharing intelligence. Desire to Receive is termed 'Left Column', and 'Yitzchak' is the vessel that expresses its energy of receiving. The absence of either Column creates an extreme imbalance. Thus, sharing without receiving quickly depletes our resources. If we pour water from a glass to share with others without replenishment, the glass will soon be empty. And receiving without sharing is like casting a dehydrated man into the middle of the sea. Though he is in desperate need of water, the overabundance eventually drowns him. Reading this section has a stabilizing effect on our spirituality and on the decisions we make. Intuitively, our choices begin to strike a delicate balance between knowing when to share and when to receive.

257. "Then again Avraham took a wife, and her name was Kturah" (Beresheet 25:1). Kturah is Hagar, for we learned that after Hagar separated from Avraham and whored after her father's idols, she repented and was associated with good deeds. For that reason, her name was changed to Kturah, which alludes to her good deeds, FOR KTURAH MEANS CONNECTED. Then Avraham sent and took her for a wife. From this, it is understood that changing a name atones for transgressions, because her name was changed TO KTURAH AFTER SHE ATONED FOR HER SINS.

257. ויוסף אברהם ויקח אשה ושמה קטורה. קטורה דא היא הגר. דהא תנינן, בתר דאתפרשא הגר מניה דאברהם, וטעת בתר גלולי דאבוי, לבתר, אתקשרא בעובדין דכשרן, ובגין כך, אשתני שמה, ואקרי קטורה, בעובדין דכשרן, ושדר אברהם, ונסבה ליה לאנתו. מכאן דשנוי שמה מכפר חובין, ועל דא אשתני שמה.

258. In the phrase: "Then again Avraham", what is meant by "again (lit. 'he added')"? If you say that Avraham took another wife in addition to Sarah, this is not so. Rather, in the days of Sarah he had already mated once with Hagar and then drove her away because of the deeds of Yishmael, WHO MOCKED YITZCHAK. The word "again" MEANS that he TOOK her again, a second time, because she atoned for her evil deeds. As a result, her name was changed AND SHE WAS CALLED KTURAH.

258. ויוסף אברהם, מאי ויוסף, אי תימא דעל שרה איהו דאוסוף, לאו הכי. אלא ביומא דשרה, אזדווג בהדה זמנא חדא, ולבתר תריך לה, על עסקי דישמעאל, ולבתר ויוסף כמלקדמין, זמנא אחרא, על מה דנסיב לה בקדמיתא. וכפום דשני עובדהא, הכי נמי שני שמה.

259. Come and behold: Rabbi Elazar said about the verse: "And Yitzchak brought her into his mother Sarah's tent" (Beresheet 24:67) that the image of Sarah was revealed WITH RIVKAH'S ARRIVAL, and Yitzchak was comforted by the image of his mother, which he saw every day. Although Avraham married, he did not enter Sarah's house, nor did he allow that woman to enter, because a handmaid cannot be heir to her mistress. No other woman was seen in Sarah's tent except for Rivkah.

259. תא חזי, דאמר רבי אלעזר, ויביאה יצחק האהלה שרה אמו. דאתגליא דיוקנא דשרה, ויצחק אתנחם, אחרי דאתגליא אמו, ודיוקנהא הוה חמי כל יומא. ואברהם אף על גב דאינסיב, לא עאל בההוא ביתא, ולא אעיל לה להאי אתתא תמן, בגין דשמחה לא תירש גברתה. ובאהל דשרה, לא אתחזי אתתא אחרא, אלא רבקה.

260. And although Avraham knew that Sarah's image was revealed there, he left the tent to Yitzchak, so he could see the image of his mother daily. Yitzchak, not Avraham, SAW HER IMAGE. This is the meaning of the verse: "And Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak" (Beresheet 25:5). "All that he had" alludes precisely to the image of Sarah that was inside the tent, FOR HE GAVE IT TO YITZCHAK TO LOOK AT HER.

261. Another explanation of the verse: "And Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak," IS THAT HE GAVE HIM the secret of the supernal faith, WHICH IS BINAH, so that Yitzchak would be attached to his appropriate grade. IF HE HAD NOT GIVEN HIM THE SECRET OF BINAH, HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CLEAVE TO THE LEFT COLUMN. Come and behold: Fire, WHICH IS LEFT, is here included within water, WHICH IS RIGHT. Assuredly fire took water, AS LEFT INCLUDED RIGHT WITHIN IT. This is understood from the verse: "And Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak." This is water included within fire, AS AVRAHAM, WHO IS THE SECRET OF WATER, GAVE HIS ASPECT TO YITZCHAK, THE SECRET OF FIRE. At first, fire was included within water. When was that? When Avraham bound Yitzchak to execute judgement upon him, NAMELY TO SACRIFICE HIM. Then, fire was included within water. Now, water is included within fire, so that all will be in the secret of the supernal faith, WHICH IS BINAH. FOR THE TWO COLUMNS-RIGHT AND LEFT-IN BINAH WERE INCLUDED WITHIN EACH OTHER, THEN THEY REACHED PERFECTION. THEREFORE, BOTH AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, WHO ARE DRAWN FROM THE TWO COLUMNS IN BINAH, SHOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED WITHIN ONE ANOTHER. FIRST, THE LEFT WAS INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT AT THE TIME OF SACRIFICE. AND NOW, WHEN AVRAHAM GAVE ALL HE HAD TO YITZCHAK, THE RIGHT WAS INCLUDED WITHIN THE LEFT.

260. וְאַבְרָהָם אָף עַל גַּב דְּהוּה יָדַע דְּדִיוֹקְנָא דְּשָׂרָה אֶתְגַּלְיָא תַּמָּן, שְׂבָקִיָּה לְיִצְחָק הָהוּא אָהֵל, לְמַחְמוּ דִּיוֹקְנָא דְּאִמְיָה כָּל יוֹמָא. יִצְחָק, וְלֹא אַבְרָהָם, הָדָא הוּא דְּכַתִּיב וַיִּתֵּן אַבְרָהָם אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ לְיִצְחָק. אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ דִּיִּיקָא, דָּא הָהוּא דִּיוֹקְנָא דְּשָׂרָה בְּהָהוּא מִשְׁכְּנָא.

261. דְּבַר אַחֵר, וַיִּתֵּן אַבְרָהָם אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ לְיִצְחָק, רָזָא דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה, לְאַתְדַּבְּקָא, יִצְחָק בְּדִרְגָּא דְּחוּלְקִיָּה בְּדָקָא יָאוּת. תָּא חַוִּי, הֵכָא אֶתְכַלִּיל אֲשָׁא בְּמִיָּא וְדָאִי, אֲשָׁא נָטִיל מִיָּא, מִשְׁמַע וַיִּתֵּן אַבְרָהָם אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ לְיִצְחָק, דָּא מִיָּא דְּאַתְכַלִּיל בְּאֲשָׁא, וּבְקַדְמִיתָא, אֶתְכַלִּיל בְּחָדָא אֲשָׁא בְּמִיָּא. אִימַתִּי, בְּשַׁעְתָּא דְּעֵקֶד לִיָּה לְיִצְחָק, לְמַעַבְדַּ בִּיָּה דִּינָא, כְּדִין אֶתְכַלִּיל אֲשָׁא בְּמִיָּא. וְהִשְׁתָּא אֶתְכַלִּילוּ מִיָּא בְּאֲשָׁא, לְמַהוּ כְּלָא רָזָא דְּמַהִימְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה.

27. "But to the sons of the concubines...Avraham gave gifts"

This very brief passage discusses questions relating to the concubines of Avraham. Rabbi Chiya maintains that the term does not allude to Kturah, one of Avraham's wives, but there is no unanimous agreement. In section 26 of the Zohar, we're told that Avraham gave "all that he had" to his son Yitzchak. Here it is said that Avraham now "gave gifts" to the "sons of the concubines." It is speculated that these sons then went on to become great sorcerers and mystics living "in the east."

The Relevance of this Passage

This seemingly simple section of Zohar sheds light on the origins of spiritual disciplines found in the Far East. The Zohar tells us that Avraham gave everything he had to his son Yitzchak. Thereafter, the patriarch gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them to live "in the east." Clearly, the Zohar is not referring to material items, for if Avraham gave away all his physical possessions to his son Yitzchak, there would be nothing left to give to the sons of his concubines. A candle flame provides an analogy: One candle can share its flame and light with countless others, without ever diminishing itself. The Zohar is referring to the light of wisdom when speaking of Abraham's possessions and gifts. The term "all that he had" pertains to the complete wisdom of Kabbalah, also known as the Three Column System. These Three Columns are the pillars of all spiritual wisdom. The "gifts" given to the sons of the concubines refer to other spiritual teachings that offered their own unique pathway to the Light of the Creator, described accordingly as One and Two Column spiritual systems. The sons of the concubines, we're told, were sent by Avraham to live "in the east" where, to this day, there exist spiritual doctrines that exemplify the Two Column system--such as the Ying/Yang principle of Taoist cosmology. A connection can be made between the name Avraham--or Abraham--and the Eastern religious concept of Brahman, which refers to the absolute reality or Self, as explained in the Hindu Upanishads. The words of wisdom portrayed in this passage strengthen our bond to the original seed of spiritual wisdom-Kabbalah-and its Three Column System of desire to share, desire to receive, and free will to choose and balance between the two. The wisdom to use our free will in a spiritually correct manner is instilled within us.

262. "But to the sons of the concubines, which Avraham had, Avraham gave gifts" (Beresheet 25:6). HE ASKS, What are these gifts? AND HE ANSWERS, These are all kinds of lower UNBALANCED grades OF UNHOLINESS, names of all sorts of impure spirits. HE GAVE THEM to perfect the grades, SO THAT THEY WOULD PURIFY THEM AND PERFECT THE GRADES OF HOLINESS. And Yitzchak was elevated above them all in the proper supernal faith, WHICH IS BINAH.

262. וְלִבְנֵי הַפִּילְגָּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאַבְרָהָם נָתַן אַבְרָהָם מַתָּנוֹת. מֵאֵי מַתָּנוֹת. אֵלֶיךָ סִטְרֵי דְּרִגּוֹן תַּתְּאִין, דְּאִינּוֹן שְׂמֵהּ דְּסִטְרֵי רוּחַ מִסְּאָבָא, בְּגִין לְאַשְׁלֵמָא דְּרִגּוֹן, וְאַסְתַּלַּק יִצְחָק עַל כָּלָא, בְּמַהִימְנוּתָא עֲלָאָה בְּדָקָא חַוִּי.

263. "The sons of the concubines" are the children of Kturah, WHO IS CALLED CONCUBINES because she was a concubine before AVRAHAM SENT HER AWAY and was a concubine now THAT HE TOOK HER BACK AGAIN. Rabbi Chiya said that this alludes to actual concubines AND IN NO WAY DOES IT ALLUDE TO KTURAH. "And sent them away from his son, Yitzchak" (Ibid.), so that they would not have control over Yitzchak "while he yet lived", while Avraham was alive and well in this world. This way, they would not quarrel with him later, and Yitzchak would be strengthened and subjugate everyone before him. "Eastward, to the east country," (Ibid.) because one finds there all kinds of witchcraft.

264. Come and behold: It is written, "And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country" (I Melachim 5:10). These are the sons of the concubines of Avraham. It was said that those who teach sorcery to men are found in these east mountains. And from the east country came Lavan, Beor, his son Bila'am and all the sorcerers, as has already been explained.

28. "Who gave Ya'akov for a spoil"

Here the rabbis discuss the above verse and its various, intricate meanings, which relate both to the time of the Exile and the time of the Resurrection, when The Creator will rebuild the Temple. We learn that these stories are all really metaphors for the spiritual work of unification, which is always here and now.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Torah and Zohar are not books of recorded history or mystical fables of antiquity. Rather, both are links to the upper world which connect man to the fountainhead and primal source of spiritual Light. Each passage offers a particular blend of energy that can be put to use in the present moment. Here, the spiritual influence to hasten the final Redemption, quicken the Resurrection, and accelerate the process of rebuilding the Temple, is summoned forth through the letters forming these verses. All three happenings will occur both individually and globally. Thus, every individual has his own "rock" in the Temple, which becomes manifest through personal acts of spiritual elevation.

265. Rabbi Chizkiyah opened with the verse, "Who gave Ya'akov for a spoil, and Yisrael to the robbers? Did not Hashem..." (Yeshayah 42:24). Come and behold: From the time the Temple was destroyed, no blessings hovered about the world. They stopped, as if detained above IN THE UPPER WORLDS and below IN THE LOWER WORLDS. All these lower grades were strengthened and ruled over Yisrael, because Yisrael had brought it about by their transgression. THIS ABSENCE OF BLESSINGS IN THE UPPER WORLDS OCCURRED BECAUSE THE LOWER ONES WERE NOT WORTHY OF RECEIVING THEM, AND ALL THE ABUNDANCE THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE GIVEN TO THE LOWER WORLDS WAS WITHHELD, FOR THERE WAS NO ONE TO GIVE TO.

266. This verse contains a contradiction. It is written: "Who gave Ya'akov for a spoil, AND YISRAEL TO THE ROBBERS? DID NOT HASHEM, HE AGAINST WHOM WE HAVE SINNED." After it said, "Who gave Ya'akov for a spoil, and Yisrael", why does it continue with "we have sinned"? It should have said, 'They sinned'; NAMELY, IT SHOULD HAVE USED THE THIRD PERSON AND NOT SPOKEN AS IF THEY WERE TALKING FOR THEMSELVES. Since it said, "We have sinned," NAMELY THEY REFER TO THEMSELVES, why does it continue with, "They would not walk" IN WHICH HE USES THE THIRD PERSON AGAIN, instead of saying, 'We would not walk', AS IF THEY WERE SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

263. בְּנֵי הַפִּילגְשִׁים אֵלֶּיךָ הָיוּ בְּנֵי קְטוּרָה, פִּלגְשִׁים בְּקִרְמִיתָא, וּפִלגְשִׁים הִשְׁתָּא. ר' חִיָּיא אָמַר, פִּילגְשִׁים מִמֶּשׁ. וַיִּשְׁלַח מֵעַל יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ, דְּלֹא לְשִׁלְטָא לְגִבְיָה דְּיִצְחָק. בְּעוֹרְנוֹ חֵי, בְּעוֹר דִּהּוּה אַבְרָהָם חֵי וְקָיִים בְּעֵלְמָא, דְּלֹא יִקְטָרְגֹן לִיה לְבִתָּר, וּבְגִין דִּיתְתַּקֵּן יִצְחָק בְּסִטְר דִּינָא קְשִׁיָּא עֲלָאָה, לְאַתְתַּקְפָּא עַל כָּלָהּ, וְכָלָהּ אֶתְבְּסִין קָמִיָּה. קְדָמָה אֶל אֶרֶץ קָדִם, בְּגִין דִּתְמֵן אֵינוֹן סִטְרֵי חֲרָשֵׁי מִסְּאֲבֵי.

264. תָּא חֲזִי, כְּתִיב וְתָרַב חֲכֻמַּת שְׁלֹמֹה מִחֲכֻמַּת כָּל בְּנֵי קָדִם. אֵלֶּיךָ אֵינוֹן דִּהּוּ מִבְּנֵי בְּנֵי פִילגְשִׁים דְּאַבְרָהָם, וְהָא אֹקִימָנָא, דְּהָא בְּאֵינוֹן הֲרָרִי קָדִם, אֵינוֹן דְּאוֹלְפִין חֲרָשִׁין לְבָנֵי נָשָׂא, וּמִהֵיא אֶרֶץ קָדִם, נִמְקוּ: לָבָן, וּבְעוֹר, וּבְלָעַם בְּנוֹ, וְכָלָהּ חֲרָשֵׁי, וְהָא אֹקִימָהּ.

265. רַבִּי חִזְקִיָּה פָּתַח וַאֲמַר, מִי נָתַן לְמַשִּׁיסָהּ יַעֲקֹב וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבוֹזִים הֵלֵא ה' וְגו'. תָּא חֲזִי, מִזְמָנָא דְּאַתְחָרַב בֵּי מַקְדָּשָׁא, בְּרַכָּאן לֹא שְׂרִיין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאַתְמָנְעוּ, כְּבִיכּוֹל, אֶתְמָנְעוּ מֵעִילָא וְתָתָא, וְכָל אֵינוֹן שְׂאָר דְּרִגִין, תְּתַאֲרִין מִתְתַּקְפִּי וְאֲזִלִּי וְשִׁלְטִי עֲלֵיהּ דִּישְׂרָאֵל, בְּגִין דְּאֵינוֹן גְּרָמוּ בְּחוּבֵיהּ.

266. הָאִי קָרָא לֹא אֶתְיִשְׁבֵּן מִלִּיה, דְּכְתִיב מִי נָתַן לְמַשִּׁיסָהּ יַעֲקֹב בֵּינוֹן דְּאָמַר מִי נָתַן לְמַשִּׁיסָהּ יַעֲקֹב וְיִשְׂרָאֵל, מִהּוּ חֲטָאנוּ לוֹ, חֲטָאוּ לוֹ מִבְּעֵי לִיה, וְאִי אָמַר חֲטָאנוּ לוֹ, מֵאִי וְלֹא אָבוּ, וְלֹא אָבִינוּ מִבְּעֵי לִיה.

267. HE ANSWERS THAT when the Temple was destroyed, the Holy of Holies burned and the people were exiled. The Shechinah wanted to move from Her place and go into exile with them. THE SHECHINAH said, I will first go and see my house and palace and visit the places of the priests and the Levites, who worshipped in my house.

268. Rabbi Elazar said that at the same time, the congregation of Yisrael, THE SHECHINAH, looked up and saw that Her husband, ZEIR ANPIN, had left Her and ascended up high. She went down, entered the Temple, and looked at places. SHE WEPT and the sound was heard up above IN HEAVEN and below ON EARTH. This is the meaning of the verse: "A voice was heard up high, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children" (Yirmeyah 31:14). This has been explained.

269. When She went into exile, She looked at the people and saw how they were pushed and trampled under the feet of other nations in exile. Then She said, "Who gave Ya'akov for a spoil..." And YISRAEL responded, "Did not Hashem, He against whom we have sinned." IN THIS IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT HE SPEAKS FOR HIMSELF. The Shechinah asked, "And in whose ways they would not walk, and to whose Torah they were not obedient?" (Yeshayah 42:24) THUS, THE QUESTION OF WHY IT IS WRITTEN IN THE THIRD PERSON IS AGAIN SETTLED.

270. When the Holy One, blessed be He, visits His people, the Congregation of Yisrael, TO TAKE THEM OUT OF EXILE, THE SHECHINAH will return first and go to the Temple, because the Temple will be built before THE GATHERING OF THE EXILES, WHERE THE DWELLING OF THE SHECHINAH RESTS. THEREFORE, THE SHECHINAH IS ALSO ANXIOUS TO GET OUT OF EXILE. And the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Her, "Rise from the dust." But the Shechinah responded, Whither do I go? My house is destroyed and my palace is burned. This will continue until the Holy One, blessed be He, will first rebuild the Temple, fix the palace, and establish the city of Jerusalem. Only then does He raise THE SHECHINAH from the dust, as it is written: "Hashem builds Jerusalem" (Tehilim 147:2). Then "He gathers together the outcasts of Yisrael" (Ibid.) and tells Her, "Shake yourself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem" (Yeshayah 42:2). Then He gathers the exiles of Yisrael. Thus it first says: "Hashem builds Jerusalem" and then "He gathers together the outcasts of Yisrael." Then: "He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds" (Tehilim 147:3), which refers to the resurrection of the dead. And it is written: "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to follow my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Yechezkel 36:27). Blessed is Hashem for ever. Amen, amen.

267. אֵלָא, בְּשַׁעֲתָא דְאַתְחָרַב מְקֻדָּשָׁא, וְאַתְוָקֵד הִיכְלָא, וְעָמָא אֲתַגְלִי, בְּעִיָּא שְׂכִינְתָּא לְאַתְעֵקְרָא מְדוּכְתָּהּ, וּלְמִיָּהֵר עֲמִהוֹן בְּגִלּוּתָא, אֲמַרְהָ אִיהֵךְ בְּקֻדְמִיתָא לְמַחְמִי בֵּיתָאִי וְהִיכְלָאִי, וְאַפְקוֹד עַל דּוּכְתֵּי דְכְּהָנִי וְלִיּוּאִי, דְּהוּוּ פְּלַחִין בְּבֵיתָאִי.

268. אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, בְּהָיָא שַׁעֲתָא, אֲסַתְבַּלְתָּ בְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעִילָא, וְחֲמַת דְּבַעֲלָה אֲסַתְלַק מִנָּה לְעִילָא לְעִילָא, נְחַתת לְתַתָּא, עָאלַת בְּבֵיתָא, וְאַסְתְּבַלְתָּ בְּכָל אֵינּוֹן דּוּכְתֵּי, וְאַשְׁתַּמַּע קָלָא, לְעִילָא לְעִילָא, וְאַשְׁתַּמַּע קָלָא לְתַתָּא, הָדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב קוֹל בְּרָמָה נִשְׁמַע נְהִי בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים רַחֵל מְבַכָּה עַל בָּנֶיהָ וְגו', וְאוּקְמוּהָ.

269. בֵּיוֹן דְּעָאלַת בְּגִלּוּתָא, אֲסַתְבַּלְתָּ בְּעָמָא, וְחֲמַת דְּרַחֲקֵי לֹון, וְרַמְסֵי לֹון בְּגִלּוּתָא, בֵּין רַגְלֵיהוּ דְּשָׂאָר עַמִּין, בְּדִין אֲמַרְתָּ מִי נָתַן לְמַשְׁסָה יַעֲקֹב וְגו'. וְאֵינּוֹן אֲמַרִּין, הֲלֹא ה' זֶו חֲטָאנוּ לוֹ. וְהִיא אֲמַרְתָּ וְלֹא אָבוּ בְּדַרְכֵּי הַלּוֹךְ וְלֹא שְׁמַעוּ בְּתוֹרָתוֹ.

270. וּבְשַׁעֲתָא דְּזַמִּין קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְמַפְקֵד עַל עַמִּיָּה, בְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּיתּוּב מִן גִּלּוּתָא בְּקֻדְמִיתָא, תֵּהֵךְ לְבֵיתָא, בְּגִין דְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ יִתְבַּנֵּי בְּקֻדְמִיתָא, וְיִימָא לָהּ קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, קוּמִי מִעַפְרָא. הִיא תִּבַּת וְאַמְרָה, לֹאן אֲתֵר אִיהֵךְ, בֵּיתָאִי חָרַב, הִיכְלִי אֲתוּקֵד בְּנוּרָא. עַד דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, יִבְנֵי בֵּי מְקֻדָּשָׁא בְּקֻדְמִיתָא, וְיִתְקִין הִיכְלָא, וְיִבְנֵי קִרְתָּא דְּיִרוּשָׁלַם, וּלְבַתֵּר יוֹקִים לָהּ מִעַפְרָא. הָדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב, בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם ה' וְגו'. בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם בְּקֻדְמִיתָא, וּלְבַתֵּר נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִכְנָס, וְיִימָא לָהּ הַתְּנַעֲרֵי מִעַפְרֵי קוּמִי שְׂבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם וְגו'. וְיִתְבַּנֵּי גִלּוּתְהוֹן דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. הָדָא הוּא דְכְּתִיב בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם ה' בְּקֻדְמִיתָא, וּלְבַתֵּר נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִכְנָס. וּכְדִין הָרֹמָא לְשְׂבוּרֵי לֵב וּמַחְבֵּשׁ לְעַצְבוֹתָם, דָּא תַּחֲוִית הַמֵּתִים. וְכְתִיב וְאֵת רוּחִי אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְעֲשִׂיתִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲקֵי תִלְכוּ וְגו'. בְּרִיךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם אָמֵן וְאָמֵן: