



LIKKUTEI TORAH • PARSHAS BECHUKOSAI • MAAMAR 2

ביאור אם בחקותי

An Explanation of “If You Walk in My Statutes”



Like the Torah, every soul has written letters, which clothe it as ink clothes parchment, and engraved letters, one with their source as an engraving is one with a gem. “If you walk in My statutes (bechukosai)” is G-d’s plea that the soul’s boundless ascent in prayer go through its engraved root, the Patriarchs’ attributes in Keser, and that the mitzvos keep its light.

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ”ל

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



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THE BIG IDEA

Like the Torah, every soul has written letters, which clothe it as ink clothes parchment, and engraved letters, one with their source as an engraving is one with a gem. “If you walk in My statutes (bechukosai)” is G-d’s plea that the soul’s boundless ascent in prayer go through its engraved root, the Patriarchs’ attributes in Keser, and that the mitzvos keep its light.

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

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

Explaining the root of the preceding discourse, the maamar asks why the “walking” must be “in My statutes,” read as engravings. Ink letters only clothe the parchment and remain a thing apart; letters engraved in a gem belong to its very body, though they are not its simple essence. In the soul, thought and speech are written letters, garments, while the form of the twenty-two letters, rooted in the hidden intellect and will, is engraved. Above, the Sefiros of Atzilus, with their revealed vessels, are writing; Keser, Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, is the Zohar’s “He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness,” beyond even Moshe’s Chochmah, as the answer about Rabbi Akiva shows. So the Written Torah was clothed in the letters of Binah, while the Tablets, given on Shavuot when Keser shines, were engraved. The souls of Israel too have an engraved root “beyond the River,” in the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin, and a written descent to refine the sparks. Their essential love, above knowledge, comes from that root: “walking” is its boundless ascent in prayer, and “keeping My commandments” draws its light into the vessels of the mitzvos.

OUTLINE

- 1 Writing and engraving: the analogy** ¶1-7
Why the “walking” is “in My statutes”: ink letters clothe the parchment and stay a separate thing, while engraved letters belong to the stone itself; in the soul, the letters of thought and speech are such garments, foreign to it yet joined to it.
- 2 Engraved letters in the soul** ¶8-14
Higher thought holds letters absorbed in the concept, yet the analogy falls short; truer still, the form of the twenty-two letters, rooted in the hidden intellect and will, as Iggeres HaKodesh explains, is engraved, while the breath of speech is its writing.

3 Engraving Above: Keser

¶15-22

G-d's letters of speech and thought are garments; the Zohar's "He engraved engravings" is Keser, Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, the Arizal's intermediary, united with the Infinite Light. Moshe's question about Rabbi Akiva shows how far it is above Atzilus, whose revealed vessels are like ink.

4 The Written Torah and the Tablets

¶23-24

The Torah, from Chochmah, was clothed in the letters of Binah; the Tablets, from Keser revealed on Shavuot, were engraved, and their 620 letters equal Keser.

5 The soul's root beyond the River

¶25-30

Why "it is pure" precedes "You created it": Yehoshua's "beyond the River" is Israel's root in hidden thought, the Patriarchs' root in the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin, drawn down through Atzilus to refine the sparks; an engraved root and a written descent.

6 Walking in My statutes

¶31-32

The soul's essential love, above knowledge, comes from its root; walking through the three engravings has no limit, every soul will reach its root, above all in the days of Moshiach, and "If" is G-d's plea that the walking be in these alone.

7 Keeping My commandments

¶33-36

The mitzvot are vessels, the "diverse vessels" for the royal wine; a mitzvah joins the light to us; running and returning; the land's produce and the tree's fruit; each day's prayer as the general intention, the blessing over each mitzvah as the particular.

KEY CONCEPTS

Letters of writing (osiyos hakesivah) אותיות הכתיבה

Letters written in ink, a thing apart from the parchment, joined to it only as a garment: the model for thought and speech, for the Sefirot of Atzilus with their vessels, for the Written Torah and for the soul's descent through the worlds.

Letters of engraving (osiyos hachakikah) אותיות החקיקה

Letters cut into a stone, adding nothing foreign to it: the model for the form of the letters in the soul's essence, for Keser, for the Tablets and for the soul's root. The maamar reads bechukosai, "My statutes," as engravings.

The supernal brightness (tehiru ila'ah) תהירו עילאה

The radiance of the Infinite Light in which, the Zohar says, G-d first "engraved engravings," the coming into being of Keser. The word tehorah, "pure," in the morning blessing over the soul alludes to it.

Keser as intermediary ממוצע

Following the Arizal, Keser has two levels: Atik Yomin, which holds the lowest level of the Infinite One, and Arich Anpin, the hidden root of the Sefirot. Together they stand between the Emanator and the emanated; its hidden Chochmah is beyond the Chochmah of Atzilus.

Beyond the River בעבר הנהר

Above Binah, "the river going out of Eden": the root of the Patriarchs and of Israel's souls in the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin, from which they were led down "through all the land of Canaan."

Very (me'od) מאד

Without limit, at the level of the Infinite One: the walking of love "with all your might," growing day by day, which every soul will reach and which will be revealed in the days of Moshiach.

Mitzvah as joining (tzavta) צוותא

The mitzvot are the vessels that hold the light drawn down from Keser, as a vessel holds wine and a wick holds a flame; when the light enters the vessel it is joined to us.

SECTION 1 • 11-7

Writing and engraving: the analogy

1 ביאור אם בחקותי

An explanation of “If [you walk] in My statutes.”

The heading marks what follows as an explanation (biur) of the preceding discourse on the opening verse of the parsha, “If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments” (Leviticus 26:3). It goes back over the same themes and explains their roots.

2 להבין שרש הדברים הנ”ל. הנה להבין ענין אם בחקותי תלכו שבחי ההליכה היא בחקותי דוקא בבחי אותיות החקיקה.

To understand the root of the matters mentioned above. Now, to understand the meaning of “If you walk in My statutes” (bechukosai): that the level of “walking” is specifically “in My statutes,” at the level of the letters of engraving (chakikah).

The discourse sets out to explain the roots of what the preceding discourse said. Its central claim is that the “walking” of the verse comes specifically through “My statutes” (bechukosai), a word the Alter Rebbe connects with chakikah, engraving, so that it points to letters that are engraved rather than written.

יש להקדים תחלה שרש ענין ההפרש בין תורה שבכתב שנתלכשה באותיות הכתב בדיו על הקלף. לבחי מכתב אלהים חרות על הלוחות שהוא אותיות החקיקה.^{1,2}

We must first set out the root of the difference between the Written Torah, which is clothed in the letters of writing, in ink on parchment, and the level of “the writing of G-d, engraved upon the Tablets,” which is the letters of engraving.

Before explaining the verse he lays a foundation: the difference between the Written Torah, whose letters are written in ink on parchment, and the Ten Commandments on the Tablets, which Scripture calls “the writing of G-d, engraved upon the Tablets.” Written letters and engraved letters will be the two models for everything that follows.

3 וההפרש בין כתיבה לחקיקה. בגשמיות הוא פשוט דבאותיות הנכתבים בדיו הנה הדיו הוא דבר בפ”ע [בפני עצמו] ואינו מגופו ומהותו של הקלף.

And the difference between writing and engraving: in physical terms it is simple. In letters written in ink, the ink is a thing by itself and is not of the body and being of the parchment.

He begins with the physical case. Ink is a substance of its own; it is not made of the parchment it is written on.

אך כשמצטייר הדיו בצורות אותיות על הקלף ידבקו והיו לאחדים ונראה כאלו הם דבר א', שהרי הקלף הלבן ישנו תחת האות ועליו ממש נכתב האות והוא סובלו.

But when the ink takes shape in the forms of letters on the parchment, they cleave together and become one, and it looks as though they are one thing, for the white parchment is there beneath the letter, and the letter is written right upon it, and it bears it.

Once the ink is formed into letters on the parchment, the two look like a single thing. The parchment lies beneath every letter and carries it.

אבל מ"מ באמת הם שני דברים שהרי הקלף הוא דבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] והדיו הוא דבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] לגמרי

Nevertheless, in truth they are two things, for the parchment is a thing by itself and the ink is entirely a thing by itself,

Yet in fact the parchment and the ink remain two separate things.

רק שהלביש את הקלף הלבן להיות נראה על הקלף צורות אותיות מדיו וא"כ אין זה רק דרך הלבשה בלבד שהלבוש הוא דבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] ממש.

only that it has clothed the white parchment, so that forms of letters made of ink are seen on the parchment. If so, this is nothing but a manner of clothing alone, for a garment is truly a thing by itself.

The ink only covers the white parchment so that letter-shapes appear on it. That is how a garment relates to what it clothes, and a garment is a thing separate from its wearer.

4 ואף לבוש המחובר תמיד מ"מ מצד עצמו הוא דבר בפני עצמו. וכך הוא ענין אותיות הנכתבים בדיו הן מלבישים את הקלף בחי' לבוש לבד משא"כ באותיות החקיקה שנחקקים ונחרצים ע"ג [על גביו] אבן טוב וכה"ג [וכהאי גוונא]

Even a garment that is always attached is nevertheless, in itself, a thing by itself. So it is with letters written in ink: they clothe the parchment as a garment alone. This is not so with the letters of engraving, which are engraved and incised upon a precious stone and the like:

Even a garment that never comes off is still, in itself, a separate thing, and ink letters relate to the parchment in just this way. Engraved letters, cut into a precious stone or the like, are different.

הנה אין האותיות חשובים בחיי לבד אלא הן מעצמיותן ומהותן של האבן טוב ומגופו ממש יחשבו.

there the letters are not considered a garment alone; rather, they are of the essence and being of the precious stone, and are considered of its very body.

Engraved letters are not a covering on the stone. Nothing has been added to it, so the letters count as part of the stone's own essence and body.

5 והגם שמ"מ אינו דומה ממש לכמו שהיה האבן טוב מצד עצמו קודם החקיקה שמתחלה היה פשוט בלא ציור אותיות כלל וע"י החקיקה נולדו בו אותיות

And although, nevertheless, it is not exactly like the precious stone as it was in itself before the engraving, for at first it was simple, without any form of letters at all, and through the engraving letters were born in it,

He concedes a qualification. An engraved stone is not exactly as it was before: it used to be plain and formless, and the engraving brought letters into being in it.

והרי א"כ צורות האותיות אלו אינן עצמות ומהות האבן טוב שהוא מצד עצמו פשוט בלא ציור אותיות. it follows, then, that these forms of letters are not the essence and being of the precious stone, which in itself is simple, without any form of letters;

In that sense the letter-forms are not the stone's own essence, since the stone as such is simple and has no letters.

אך הגם שצורת האותיות היא הוי' חדשה אבל עכ"פ [על כל פנים] אותיות אלו הם בגוף האבן טוב ממש ואינו דבר נפרד ממנו רק חרותים וחקוקים בגופו ממש

yet although the form of the letters is a new existence, at any rate these letters are in the very body of the precious stone and are not a thing separate from it; rather, they are incised and engraved in its very body,

Still, although the letter-forms are something new, they exist within the stone's own body: they are not a separate thing but are cut into the stone itself.

ולא כאותיות שעושים בדיו שהם דבר נפרד חוץ מהקלף וחשובים לבד and not like letters made with ink, which are a separate thing, outside the parchment, and are considered a garment alone.

In this they are unlike ink letters, which remain a separate thing outside the parchment and count only as a garment.

אבל אותיות החקיקה אע"פ [אף על פי] שהן ג"כ אותיות ולא כקלף הלכן ואכן טוב במהותו ועצמותו שמופשט מכל צורה ממש אבל עכ"פ [על כל פנים] הם מגופו ומהותו של הדבר הנחקק ולמעלה מעלה מבחי' לבוש:

But the letters of engraving, although they too are letters, and are not like the white parchment, or the precious stone in its being and essence, which is utterly free of all form, are at any rate of the body and being of the thing engraved, and far, far above the level of a garment.

The conclusion: engraved letters really are letters, so they are not the formless essence of the stone (or of the white parchment). But they belong to the body and being of what is engraved, and are far above the status of a garment.

6 והנה עם היות המשל הנ"ל הוא ענין גשמי מ"מ ממנו יובן הנמשל למעלה בענין שרש מעלת הלוחות וכמשי"ת [וכמו שיתבאר] אי"ה [אם ירצה השם].

Now, although the analogy above is a physical matter, nevertheless from it will be understood what it represents Above, regarding the root of the superiority of the Tablets, as will be explained, G-d willing.

The physical analogy is meant to explain something Above: the root of the Tablets' superiority. That application comes later in the discourse.

אך מקודם יש לבאר עוד איך שדוגמת המשל הנ"ל באותיות הכתיבה ואותיות החקיקה הגשמיים. יש דוגמתם ממש ברוחניות באותיות שכנפש המדכרת שבאדם.

But first we must further explain how the likeness of the above analogy, in physical letters of writing and letters of engraving, has its exact counterpart in spirituality, in the letters that are in the speaking soul in man.

First he shows that the same two kinds of letters have a spiritual counterpart within the human soul, which is called the "speaking" soul because it expresses itself in thought and speech.

דהנה עם היות שהנפש מלאה אותיות³ וכמ"ש ויהי האדם לנפש חיה⁴ ותרגם אונקלוס לרוח ממללא⁵ וכדלקמן אי"ה [אם ירצה השם]

For although the soul is full of letters, as it is written, "And man became a living soul," which Onkelos translates "a speaking spirit," as will be explained below, G-d willing,

The soul itself is full of letters. Onkelos renders "man became a living soul" as "a speaking spirit," so the power of speech, and with it letters, belongs to the human soul; the discourse returns to this point later. In Likkutei Torah, Nasso, the Alter Rebbe explains that the soul is full of letters because G-d breathed it into man with "the breath of His mouth," which brings all things into being through the letters of the Ten Utterances.

מ"מ הנה נביעת האותיות שבמחשבה ודבור אף שנובעים מהנפש מ"מ גשם מהות אותיות הדבור שהם מבחי' קול והבל הלב הגשמי היוצא מן הקנה כמו דבר זר ממש נחשב לגבי מהות ועצמות הנפש

nevertheless, as for the welling forth of the letters that are in thought and speech: although they well forth from the soul, still the coarse being of the letters of speech, which are of the level of the voice and the physical breath of the heart that comes out of the windpipe, is considered like a truly foreign thing relative to the being and essence of the soul.

Even so, when letters well forth from the soul as thought and speech, the letters of speech, made of voice and the physical breath that rises from the heart through the windpipe, are like something foreign to the soul's own being and essence.

כי מה ענין קול גשמי למהות הנפש הרוחניות ואפי' [ואפילו] מהות האותיות שבמחשבה שחושב ומהרהר אותיות א"ב ג"ד כו' מהות מחשבה זו ואותיות אלו

For what does a physical voice have to do with the being of the spiritual soul? And even the being of the letters that are in thought, when one thinks and ponders the letters alef, beis, gimme, dalet, etc., the being of this thought and of these letters

A physical voice has nothing in common with the spiritual soul. Even the letters of thought, as when a person silently runs through the letters alef, beis, gimme, dalet, are not of the soul's own being.

כמו דבר זר ממש נחשב לגבי הנפש ע"ד אותיות הדבור דאע"פ [דאף על פי] שהם רוחניים יותר ממהות הקול הגשמי מ"מ בנקל לצייר שאין זה כלל מערך מהות רוחניות הנפש

is considered like a truly foreign thing relative to the soul, in the manner of the letters of speech. For although they are more spiritual than the being of the physical voice, nevertheless it is easy to picture that this is not at all comparable to the spiritual being of the soul.

The letters of thought are subtler than the physical voice, but one can easily see that they are still in no way comparable to the spiritual being of the soul.

ולכן מחשבה ודבור נקראו רק לבושין בלבד לגבי הנפש כמו הלבוש שאינו כלל ממהות הדבר רק דבר אחר ממש

Therefore thought and speech are called no more than garments in relation to the soul, like a garment, which is not at all of the being of the thing but truly something else,

This is why thought and speech are called the soul's "garments": like clothing, they are not part of the being of the one who wears them but something else entirely.

וכנ"ל במשל שאותיות הכתיבה הן לבושים לפי שהדיו הוא דבר זר ואינו כלל ממהות הקלף רק שמלבישו ונראה כאלו הוא דבר אחד.

as mentioned above in the analogy, that the letters of writing are garments because the ink is a foreign thing and not at all of the being of the parchment; it only clothes it, and it looks as though it is one thing.

This matches the analogy of written letters: ink is foreign to the parchment and only covers it, even though the two look like one thing.

כך אותיות המחשבה ודבור הם דברים נפרדים. אותיות הדבור הן מקול גשמי. ואותיות המחשבה רוחניים יותר ומ"מ אינן כלל ממהות הנפש

So too, the letters of thought and speech are separate things. The letters of speech are of a physical voice. The letters of thought are more spiritual, yet nevertheless they are not at all of the being of the soul,

The letters of speech are made of physical voice, while the letters of thought are more spiritual. Both, however, are separate things, not part of the soul's own being.

וחשובים כמו לבוש לבד רק המחשבה היא לבוש המחובר והדבור הוא כחי לבוש הנפרד כמ"ש במ"א,⁶

and are considered like a garment alone, only that thought is an attached garment and speech is the level of a separate garment, as is explained elsewhere.

Both therefore count as garments: thought is called an "attached garment" and speech a "separate garment." In Likkutei Torah, Balak, on "Who can count the dust of Yaakov," the Alter Rebbe explains that thought is the inner garment, which unites with the soul itself, while speech brings out and spells out what thought holds at a glance.

ואעפ"כ [ואף על פי כן] הרי הם דבוקי' [דבוקים] ממש במהו' [במהות] הנפש ממש שהרי הנפש היא המדברת אותיות הדבור ומחשבת ומהרהרת באותיות המחשבה ובלעדה אין שום מציאות לאותיות המחשבה והדבור

Even so, they truly cleave to the very being of the soul, for it is the soul that speaks the letters of speech, and thinks and ponders the letters of thought, and without it the letters of thought and speech have no existence at all.

Even so, both cleave to the soul's very being, because it is the soul itself that speaks and thinks them; without the soul there would be no letters of thought or speech at all.

וזה ממש כמשל אותיות הנכתבים בדיו שאע"פ [שאף על פי] שאין הדיו ממהות הקלף מ"מ הוא דבוק בהקלף והקלף הוא הסובל ונושא עליו אותיות אלו

This is exactly like the analogy of letters written in ink: although the ink is not of the being of the parchment, it nevertheless cleaves to the parchment, and the parchment is what bears and carries these letters upon it.

Ink is the same: though it is foreign to the parchment, it adheres to it, and the parchment is what bears the letters.

וגם תחת שחרורית הדיו יש לבנונית הקלף ובלעדי הקלף אינו שייך שום מציאת אותיות מהדיו בעצמו.

Also, beneath the blackness of the ink is the whiteness of the parchment, and without the parchment there can be no existence at all of letters from the ink by itself.

The whiteness of the parchment also lies beneath the black of the ink, and without parchment the ink by itself could form no letters.

כך הנפש היא המדברת ומהרהרת וסובלת גשם אותיות הדבור והמחשבה ובלעדה אין שום מציאות אותיות מחשבה ודבור

So too, it is the soul that speaks and ponders, and bears the coarseness of the letters of speech and thought, and without it there is no existence at all of letters of thought and speech.

In the same way the soul speaks, thinks and bears the coarser letters of speech and thought, which could not exist without it.

וגם הארה ממנה מתלבשת באותיות המחשבה ודבור כלבנונית הקלף שתחת הדיו כדלקמן והרי א"כ אותיות המחשבה ודבור דבוקים ממש להנפש והיו לאחדים.

Also, a radiance from it is clothed in the letters of thought and speech, like the whiteness of the parchment beneath the ink, as will be explained below. If so, the letters of thought and speech truly cleave to the soul and become one.

Moreover, a radiance from the soul is clothed within these letters, as the white of the parchment lies under the ink. In this sense the letters of thought and speech are truly joined to the soul and become one with it.

7 ומי"מ הן לבושים לבד לפי שמצד עצמן הן דבר נפרד הדבור מן בחי' הכל הלב כו' רק שהנפש מתלבשת בהן

Nevertheless, they are garments alone, since in themselves they are a separate thing: speech is from the level of the breath of the heart, etc.; only, the soul is clothed in them.

Even so, thought and speech remain garments, for in themselves they are separate from the soul (speech, for example, is made of the breath of the heart); the soul is merely clothed in them.

זהו המשל מבחי' אותיות הכתיבה בדיו ע"ג [על גבי] קלף שדוגמתן ברוחנית בנפש הוא בחי' אותיות המחשבה והדבור כנ"ל (ועמ"ש מזה בד"ה שחורה אני⁷ אש שחורה ע"ג [על גבי] אש לבנה):

This is the analogy of the letters of writing, in ink upon parchment, whose counterpart in spirituality, in the soul, is the letters of thought and speech, as mentioned above. (See what is written about this in the discourse beginning "I am black," [on] "black fire upon white fire.")

This completes the first half of the analogy: letters of ink on parchment correspond, in the soul, to the letters of thought and speech. In Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, on "I am black," the Alter Rebbe takes up the Sages' teaching that the Torah was given as black fire upon white fire: the white parchment alludes to the Infinite Light itself, and the black ink darkens it so that a letter can be revealed and grasped, as the letters of thought are garments of the intellect yet not wholly separate from it.

SECTION 2 • 18-14

Engraved letters in the soul

8 ב אמנם להבין המשל מאותיות החקיקה מהו בנפש אין לזה דמיון כלל באותיות הגלויים לנו מהנפש רק מעט יש דמיון ממה שידוע שיש ב' בחי' במחשבה.

2. However, to understand what the analogy of the letters of engraving is in the soul: there is no likeness to it at all among the letters of the soul that are revealed to us. There is only a slight likeness, from what is known, that there are two levels in thought.

Section 2 turns to the harder half of the analogy: what in the soul corresponds to engraved letters. None of the letters we are aware of in ourselves truly resembles engraving, but there is a faint likeness in the known distinction between two levels of thought.

הא' הנק' מחשבה תתאה והוא כשחושב מה שמדבר וחושב האותיות ממש א"ב ג"ד להוציאן כן בפה כענין השמע לאזנך⁸ מה שאתה מוצא מפיו.

The first is called lower thought (machshavah tata'ah): when one thinks what one is saying and thinks the actual letters, alef, beis, gimmel, dalet, in order to bring them out so with the mouth, in the sense of "Let your ear hear what you bring out of your mouth."

The first level, "lower thought," is thinking in words: going over the very letters one is about to say aloud. It is the attention the Sages describe in the phrase "Let your ear hear what you bring out of your mouth," fixed on the words themselves.

9 וזהו חיצוניות המחשבה ונק' למעלה בחי' מלכות דתבונה שהיא בחי' לאה חיצוניות הבינה שהיא בחי' אותיות המחשבה הנ"ל. ובחי' הב' הוא הנק' מחשבה עילאה דהיינו כשחושב השכל ולא האותיות.

This is the outer dimension (chitzoniyyus) of thought, and Above it is called the level of Malchus (sovereignty) of Tevunah, which is the level of Leah, the outer dimension of Binah (understanding), which is the level of the letters of thought mentioned above. The second level is what is called higher thought (machshavah ila'ah), that is, when one thinks the concept and not the letters.

Lower thought is the outer dimension of thought. Among the Sefiros it corresponds to Malchus of Tevunah (the lower aspect of Binah), the configuration called Leah, which is the source of the letters of thought. The second level, "higher thought," is thinking the concept itself rather than its words.

ומ"מ אף שאינו מרגיש כלל האותיות מ"מ יש כלול בחי' אותיות במחשבה זו שחושב השכל שא"א להיות כלל גילוי השכל אפי' [אפילו] במוח האדם עצמו בלי אותיות

Nevertheless, even though one does not sense the letters at all, the level of letters is nevertheless included in this thought in which one thinks the concept, for there can be no revelation of the concept at all, even in a person's own brain, without letters;

Even in higher thought, where one is not aware of any letters, letters are present. No concept can come into the open, even inside one's own mind, without some form of letters.

רק שהאותיות כלולים ממש בתוך השכל ממש ואינן כהרהור אותיות דמחשבה תתאה שיצאו האותיות להיות מורגשין בפני עצמן חוץ מהשכל והוא בחי' חיצוני דבינה כנ"ל.

only, the letters are truly included within the concept itself, and are not like the pondering of the letters of lower thought, where the letters have come out to be sensed on their own, outside the concept; that is the level of the outer dimension of Binah, as mentioned above.

Here, however, the letters are completely absorbed within the concept. In lower thought the letters have come out to be sensed on their own, outside the concept, which is why it is the outer dimension of Binah.

אבל אותיות הכלולים בשכל עצמו שהוא בחי' פנימי' [פנימיות / פנימית] בינה ואינן דבר נפרד חוץ מהשכל
הרי הן דבר אי עם השכל

But the letters included in the concept itself, which is the level of the inner dimension (pnimiyus) of Binah, and which are not a separate thing outside the concept, are one thing with the concept.

The letters within the concept itself correspond to the inner dimension of Binah. Since they are not separate from the concept, they are one with it.

והרי מ"מ יש שם אותיות ולמעלה ג"כ הוא ענין פתוחי חותם^{9,10} מקור האותיות שבבחי' יסוד אימא

And yet, nevertheless, there are letters there. Above, too, this is the matter of "the engravings of a seal," the source of the letters, which is in the level of Yesod (foundation) of Imma,

Still, letters are there. Above, they correspond to "the engravings of a seal," the Torah's phrase for the names engraved on the High Priest's stones, used here for the source of letters in the Yesod of Imma, the channel at the base of Binah (Imma, "mother").

שמשם נמשך להיות התהוות אותיות מחשבה ודבור הנק' לאה ורחל.¹¹ ולכן נקראת הבינה ספר ע"ש
[על שם] סיפורי האותיות שמתהווים ממנה במחשבה ודבור.

from which comes the coming into being of the letters of thought and speech, which are called Leah and Rachel. Therefore Binah is called sefer ("book"), on account of the sippurei ("tellings") of the letters that come into being from it in thought and speech.

From there come the letters of thought and speech, known in Kabbalah as Leah and Rachel; in Likkutei Torah, Metzora, the Alter Rebbe explains that Leah is the letters of thought, the Written Torah, and Rachel the letters of speech, the Oral Torah. This is why Binah is called a "book" (sefer): the word is related to sippur, "telling," for the letters that come into being from it in thought and speech are its tellings.

10 והנה בחי' אותיות אלו הכלולים בהשכל ממש המתגלה מהנפש במוח האדם היא כמו משל אותיות
החקיקה שהן בגופו של האבן טוב ולא כמו דיו שהוא נפרד מצד עצמו מהקלף כו'.

Now, these letters that are truly included in the concept that is revealed from the soul in a person's brain are like the analogy of the letters of engraving, which are in the very body of the precious stone, and not like ink, which in itself is separate from the parchment, etc.

The letters absorbed within a concept, as it is revealed from the soul in the mind, resemble engraved letters. They are part of the concept itself, not something laid over it like ink on parchment.

וכך אותיות אלו הן מגוף ומהות השכל ממש שממהות ועצם השכל נמשכו בחיי אותיות אלו הכלולים בו ממש

So too, these letters are of the very body and being of the concept, for these letters, which are truly included in it, were drawn from the being and essence of the concept.

They are drawn from the very being of the concept and remain part of it.

ולכן לא נרגשו כלל להיות דבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] כאותיות המחשבה תתאה והדבור שהן בחיי דבר זר ונפרד ממהות השכל כנ"ל.

Therefore they are not sensed at all as a thing by themselves, like the letters of lower thought and of speech, which are a thing foreign to and separate from the being of the concept, as mentioned above.

That is why they are never felt as something separate, unlike the letters of lower thought and of speech, which are foreign to the concept.

משא"כ כאן במחשבת השכל שאינן דבר בפ"ע [בפני עצמו] שהרי אינו חושב כלל האותיות רק שחושב השכל ממש אלא שבו נמצאו ובו היו האותיות כנ"ל:

This is not so here, in the thinking of the concept, where they are not a thing by themselves, for one does not think the letters at all, only the concept itself; it is just that the letters are found within it and exist within it, as mentioned above.

When one thinks a concept, one does not think letters at all; one thinks only the idea, and the letters simply exist within it.

11 אמנם באמת אין משל זה מכוון עדיין ואינו דוגמא לבחי' אותיות שבנפש. כי אותיות הכלולים בשכל יתכן עליהן שהן עצם א' עם השכל וכמו חקיקה.

In truth, however, this analogy is still not precise, and it is not a parallel to the level of the letters that are in the soul. For of the letters included in the concept one can say that they are of one essence with the concept, like engraving,

He now qualifies the analogy: it does not yet capture the soul's own engraved letters. Letters within a concept are one with the concept, as engraving is one with the stone.

אבל לא יתכן לומר עליהם שהם עצם אי עם הנפש שהיא למעלה אפי' [אפילו] מכח השכל כש"כ [כל שכן]
מן השכל הגלוי

but one cannot say of them that they are of one essence with the soul, which is above even the power of intellect, and all the more so above revealed intellect.

But they are not one with the soul itself, for the soul is higher even than the power of intellect, let alone the intellect that comes into the open.

(וגם לא יתיישב מה שיתי' לקמן דבבחי' אותיות החקיקה שבנפש שייך הליכה ותוספת נביעי' [נביעה]
חדשה דמהשכל הגלוי לא יהי' [יהיה] כלל נביעות חדשות)

(Nor would it fit what will be explained below, that at the level of the letters of engraving in the soul there can be “walking” and an addition of new welling forth, for from revealed intellect there would be no new wellings forth at all.)

This aside looks ahead: the discourse will show that the soul's engraved letters allow for “walking,” a continual new welling forth. Revealed intellect yields no new wellings forth, so the engraved letters that make walking possible must lie higher in the soul.

ולענין המשל יובן ממ"ש באגה"ק [באגרת הקודש] ע"פ ויעש דוד שם שמבטא אותיות והנקודות הוא
למעלה מהשכל המושג ומובן אלא משכל הנעלם וקדמות השכל שבנפש המדברת¹²

As for the analogy, it will be understood from what is written in Iggeres HaKodesh on the verse “And David made a name,” that the articulation of the letters and the vowels is above the intellect that is grasped and understood, and comes rather from the hidden intellect and the primordial intellect (kadmus hasechel) in the speaking soul.

The fitting analogy comes from Iggeres HaKodesh (Tanya, Part IV, epistle 5), on “And David made a name.” There it is explained that the ability to articulate letters and vowels does not come from the intellect a person grasps and understands, but from the hidden intellect and the primordial intellect of the speaking soul, the level that precedes understanding.

ולכן אין התינוק יכול לדבר אף שמבין הכל כו' ע"ש.

Therefore an infant cannot speak, even though he understands everything, etc. See there.

The proof is an infant, who understands everything and yet cannot speak: understanding alone does not produce speech.

12 ועי"פ כ"ז [כל זה] יובן איך שיש בנפש בחי' אותיות החקיקה ואותיות הכתיבה והיינו כמו שאותיות החקיקה הם חקוקים בגוף ועצם האבן ואין כאן דבר נוסף,

According to all this, it will be understood how there are in the soul the level of the letters of engraving and [that of] the letters of writing. That is: just as the letters of engraving are engraved in the body and essence of the stone, and nothing is added here,

From all this one can see that the soul has both engraved letters and written letters. Engraved letters are cut into the stone itself and add nothing to it.

כך הוא ענין צורת הכ"ב אותיות שמקורן הוא מקדמות השכל ורצון הנפש¹³ הרי הם למעלה ממהות מחשבה ואפי" [ואפילו] ממהות שכל הגלוי כדפי' לעיל שהוא למעלה משכל המושג ומוכן אלא משכל הנעלם וקדמות השכל.

so is the form of the twenty-two letters, whose source is from the primordial intellect and the will of the soul: they are above the being of thought, and even above the being of revealed intellect, as explained above, that it is above the intellect that is grasped and understood, and comes rather from the hidden intellect and the primordial intellect.

In the same way, the forms of the twenty-two letters have their source in the soul's primordial intellect and will. They stand above thought, and even above revealed intellect, as Iggeres HaKodesh explains.

13 ור"ל [ורוצה לומר] כח השכל הכלול בעצם הנפש שם הוא מקור צורת כ"ב אותיות הנ"ל.

That is to say: the power of intellect that is included in the essence of the soul, there is the source of the form of the twenty-two letters mentioned above.

The power of intellect contained in the soul's essence is the source of the form of the twenty-two letters.

וגילוי השכל המתגלה במוח האדם הוא רק איזה הארה נשפעת ונמשכת משכל הנעלם שכנפש וכלא חשיב לגבי שכל הנעלם שיכול להשכיל השכלות רבות מאד

And the revelation of intellect that is revealed in a person's brain is only some radiance that flows and is drawn from the hidden intellect in the soul, and it counts as nothing compared to the hidden intellect, which can conceive very many insights.

The intellect revealed in a person's mind is only a faint glow drawn from the hidden intellect, and it is as nothing beside it, since the hidden intellect can produce a great many insights.

כי שכל הנעלם מיוחד בעצם הנפש ולמעלה מגילוי כחותיה במחשבה דו"מ [דבור ומעשה] ושם הם מקור צורת הכ"ב אותיות א"כ ה"ז [הרי זה] כמו אותיות החקיקה שהן במהות הנפש ועצמותה ואין כאן דבר זר ומהות אחר.

For the hidden intellect is united with the essence of the soul and is above the revelation of its powers in thought, speech and action, and there is the source of the form of the twenty-two letters. If so, this is like the letters of engraving, which are in the being and essence of the soul, and there is no foreign thing and no other being here.

The hidden intellect is united with the soul's essence and is above its powers of thought, speech and action. Because the form of the letters originates there, it is like engraving: part of the soul's own being, with nothing foreign added.

14 והן אמת שמהות ועצמות הנפש ממש הוא למעלה מעלה ממהות צורת האותיות כי האותיות היא רק בחי' אחרונה שבה. אך מ"מ עכ"פ [על כל פנים] הוא בחי' אחרונה שבמהותה ועצמותה ממש ולא תוספת מהות אחר.

It is true that the very being and essence of the soul is far, far above the being of the form of the letters, for the letters are only the last level in it. Yet nevertheless, at any rate, it is the last level of its very being and essence, and not the addition of another being.

He concedes that the soul's essence is far above the form of letters, which is only its last and lowest level. Still, that last level belongs to the soul's own being; it is not something added from outside.

וה"ז [והרי זה] כמשל אותיות החקוקים בהאבן טוב שהאבן טוב מצד עצמו פשוט בתכלית ולמעלה מתמונת אותיות וכשחוקקים בו אותיות נחשך קצת העצם הפשוט אמנם מ"מ אין כאן מהות אחר.

This is like the analogy of letters engraved in the precious stone: the precious stone in itself is utterly simple and above the shape of letters, and when letters are engraved in it the simple substance is somewhat darkened; nevertheless, there is no other being here.

This matches the precious stone: engraving dims its simple, letterless substance a little, yet introduces nothing foreign.

משא"כ כשנמשכים הכ"ב אותיות מהנפש במחשבה ודבור ומתלבשים בחומר וגוף אותיות הדבור שהוא בחי' הבל הלב (ואפי' [ואפילו] המחשבה כו' כנ"ל)

This is not so when the twenty-two letters are drawn from the soul into thought and speech, and are clothed in the matter and body of the letters of speech, which is the level of the breath of the heart (and even thought, etc., as mentioned above):

The soul's written letters appear when the twenty-two letters descend into thought and speech and are clothed in the matter of spoken sound, the breath of the heart. As said above, even thought is such a garment.

הרי ההבל הוא מהות גשמי ואינו ערוך למהות הנפש

the breath is a physical being and bears no comparison to the being of the soul.

Breath is physical and bears no comparison with the soul's being.

זהו כמשל אותיות הכתיבה שהן מדיו שהוא מהות זר מן הקלף שהקלף הוא לבן והדיו הוא שחור ומהות זר לגמרי רק שכותבין בו על הקלף ונעשה אות כו'.

This is like the analogy of the letters of writing, which are of ink, a being foreign to the parchment, for the parchment is white and the ink is black, an entirely foreign being; only, one writes with it on the parchment and it becomes a letter, etc.

These letters are therefore like letters written in ink: ink is foreign to the parchment, black on white, and forms a letter only because someone writes with it on the parchment.

כך ההבל מלביש לבחי' צורת האותיות כדי המלביש להקלף כו' ומ"מ היו לאחדים שהנפש היא המדברת ובלעדה אין אומר ואין דברים¹⁴ כמו שא"א להיות אותיות מדיו בלי קלף.

So the breath clothes the form of the letters, like the ink that clothes the parchment, etc. Nevertheless they have become one, for it is the soul that speaks, and without it "there is no utterance and there are no words," just as there cannot be letters of ink without parchment.

So breath clothes the letter-forms as ink covers the parchment, yet the two become one because it is the soul that speaks. Without the soul "there is no utterance and there are no words," just as ink letters cannot exist without parchment.

וגם כל אות שאין גויל מקיף מדי רוחותיה פסול¹⁵ כמ"ש הענין ע"פ שימני כחותם¹⁶ יעו"ש [יעויין שם]:

Also, any letter that is not surrounded by parchment on its four sides is invalid, as the matter is explained on the verse "Set me as a seal." See there.

The law that a letter must be surrounded by parchment on all four sides adds a further point: the written letter depends on the parchment around it as well as beneath it. The matter is explained in the discourse on "Set me as a seal."

SECTION 3 • ¶15-22

Engraving Above: Keser

15 ג והנה אחר שנתבאר ענין אותיות החקיקה ואותיות הכתיבה מהו ההפרש ביניהם במשל גשמי ונתבאר ג"כ כל זה ברוחניות באותיות הנפש.

3. Now, after the matter of the letters of engraving and the letters of writing has been explained, what the difference between them is in a physical analogy, and all this has also been explained in spirituality, in the letters of the soul,

Section 3 opens with a summary. The difference between engraved and written letters has now been shown both in a physical analogy and in the letters of the soul.

מעלה יובן כ"ז [כל זה] מעט מזער בנמשל למעלה בענין שורש הלוחות שהן בחי' חרות וחקיקה מהו מעלתן על תורה שבכתב בבחי' כתיבה.

from now on all this will be understood, in some small measure, in what it represents Above, regarding the root of the Tablets, which are the level of “engraved” and of engraving: what their superiority is over the Written Torah, which is at the level of writing.

Now the analogy can be applied, at least in a small way, to what it stands for Above: the root of the Tablets, whose letters were engraved, and why they surpass the Written Torah, whose letters are written.

כי הנה ידוע ענין בחי' אותיות למעלה כמ"ש בדבר ה' שמים נעשו¹⁷ שהן בחי' התגלות. כי אותיות מלשון אתא כו'.

For the matter of the level of letters Above is known, as it is written, “By the word of Havayah the heavens were made”: they are the level of revelation, for osiyos (“letters”) is related to asa (“came”), etc.

It is known that there are “letters” Above as well, as in the verse “By the word of Havayah the heavens were made,” which speaks of G-d’s creative speech. Letters are a form of revelation: the Hebrew word for letters, osiyos, is linked to the Aramaic asa, “came,” for letters bring what is hidden into the open.

16 ויש עד"מ בחי' אותיות הדבור המהוה ומחי' עלמין דאתגליין ויש בחי' אותיות המחשבה המחיה ומהוה עלמין סתימין.

By way of analogy, there is the level of the letters of speech, which brings into being and gives life to the revealed worlds, and there is the level of the letters of thought, which gives life to and brings into being the hidden worlds.

By way of analogy, G-d’s “letters of speech” create and sustain the revealed worlds, while His “letters of thought” create and sustain the hidden, higher worlds.

אמנם ב' בחי' אלו נק' לבושין כמו שע"ד משל למטה ההבל מלביש צורת האותיות כך הם בחי' לבושים כדי שיוכלו העולמות לקבל החיות וזהו ע"ד משל כמו אותיות הכתיבה.

However, these two levels are called garments: just as, by way of analogy, below, the breath clothes the form of the letters, so these are the level of garments, so that the worlds can receive the life-force (chayus). This is, by way of analogy, like the letters of writing.

Both are called garments. As breath clothes the form of the letters in human speech, these letters clothe the divine life-force so that the worlds can receive it, and so they correspond to letters written in ink.

אמנם יש ג"כ בחי' אותיות החקיקה והוא מ"ש בתחלת ספר זוה"ק [זוהר הקדוש] (בראשית ד' ט"ו ע"א) בריש הרמנותא דמלכא¹⁸ גליף גליפו בטהירו עילאה.

But there is also the level of the letters of engraving. This is what is said at the beginning of the book of the holy Zohar (Bereishis, folio 15a): "At the very beginning of the King's authority, He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness."

Above there are also engraved letters, as the Zohar says at the very start of its commentary on Genesis: "At the very beginning of the King's authority, He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness." The first act of G-d's will was an engraving, not a writing.

פי' טהירו עילאה הוא בחי' התגלות הארה מא"ס ב"ה מלשון כעצם השמים לטוהר¹⁹ ובחי' התהוות פרצוף ע"י [עתיק יומין] וא"א מהארה זו נק' גליף גליפו שהוא ענין חקיקה ורשימה בטהירו עילאה

That is: the supernal brightness (tehiru ila'ah) is the level of the revelation of a radiance from the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, from the expression "like the essence of the heavens in purity" (latohar). And the coming into being of the configuration of Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin from this radiance is called "He engraved engravings," which is the matter of engraving and inscription in the supernal brightness.

The "supernal brightness" is a revealed radiance from the Infinite One; its name, tehiru, is related to tohar, "purity," as in the verse "like the essence of the heavens in purity." The coming into being of Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, the two aspects of Keser, out of this radiance is what the Zohar calls "He engraved engravings": a mark cut within the brightness itself.

ונמשלו לחקיקה להורות שבחיי הכתר הנקי ע"י [עתיק יומין] ואריך אנפין מתאחד בתכלית בהאור א"ס ולמעלה מעלה מבחי שאר העשר ספירות דאצי

They are likened to engraving to teach that the level of Keser (the Crown), which is called Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, is utterly united with the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), and far, far above the level of the rest of the ten Sefiros of Atzilus (Emanation).

The image of engraving teaches that Keser, which consists of Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, is completely united with the Infinite Light and far above the ten Sefiros of Atzilus. In Likkutei Torah, Chukas, the Alter Rebbe pictures it as letters engraved in a brilliant gemstone: there the stone shines a little less, yet the engraving is in the stone itself.

אע"פ [אף על פי] דג"כ איהו וגרמוהי חד^{20, 21} מ"מ נמשלו לבחיי אותיות הכתב כמשי"ת [כמו שיתבאר].

Although of them too [it is said that] "He and His vessels (ihu vegarmohi) are one," they are nevertheless likened to the level of the letters of writing, as will be explained.

The Sefiros of Atzilus are also one with G-d, as the Tikkunei Zohar says, "He and His vessels are one," yet they are compared to written letters, as the discourse will explain.

אבל בחיי ע"י [עתיק יומין] וא"א נמשלו לחקיקה. ומ"מ גליף גליפו רק בטח"ע [בטהירו עילאה] שהוא בחיי ההארה הנמשכת מן האור א"ס

But the level of Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin is likened to engraving. Nevertheless, "He engraved engravings" only "in the supernal brightness," which is the level of the radiance drawn from the Infinite Light

Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, then, are compared to engraving. Still, the engraving took place only in the "supernal brightness," a radiance drawn from the Infinite Light, and not in the Light itself.

(וע' מענין טה"ע [טהירו עילאה] בביאור ע"פ וכעצם השמים לטהר²² לעיל בפ' משפטים ובמק"מ [ובמקדש מלך] בראשית ט"ו ד"ה בטהירו עילאה)

(on the supernal brightness, see the explanation on the verse "And like the essence of the heavens in purity," above in Parshas Mishpatim, and the Mikdash Melech on Bereishis, [folio] 15, the passage beginning "In the supernal brightness"),

This aside sends the reader to Torah Ohr, Mishpatim, on the verse "And like the essence of the heavens in purity," where "the essence of the heavens" is the letters of the Name Mah reaching up to the supernal brightness, and to the Mikdash Melech, a commentary on the Zohar, on this passage.

משא"כ מהותו ועצמותו ית' אין שייך כלל לומר בו כן וכנודע ג"כ שהצמצום ומקום פנוי היה רק בהאור כו' כמ"ש במ"א.

whereas of His being and essence, blessed be He, it is not at all applicable to say this; as is also known, the tzimtzum (contraction) and the vacated space were only in the light, etc., as is explained elsewhere.

Of G-d's own being and essence one cannot speak of engraving at all. In the same way, it is known that the tzimtzum, the withdrawal that left a "vacated space" for the worlds, took place only in His light, not in His essence.

והענין כי הנה ידוע מחלוקת המקובלים אם הכתר נמנה מכלל ע"ס [עשר ספירות] או שאינו מכלל כמו שהובא בפרדס שער ג'²³

The matter is this: there is a known dispute among the Kabbalists whether Keser is counted among the Ten Sefiros or is not among them, as is brought in the Pardes, Sha'ar 3.

To explain why Keser is likened to engraving, he cites a known dispute among the Kabbalists, brought in Rabbi Moshe Cordovero's Pardes Rimonim, Gate 3: is Keser counted among the Ten Sefiros?

שיש מי שרצו לומר שהוא אינו בגדר הי"ס [ה" ספירות] כלל רק הוא בחי' הארת אור א"ס כו'. ויש שחלקו ע"ז ואמרו שהוא מכלל הע"ס [העשר ספירות].

There are some who wished to say that it is not within the bounds of the ten Sefiros at all, but is only the level of a radiance of the Infinite Light, etc.; and some disagreed with this and said that it is among the Ten Sefiros.

Some held that Keser is not one of the Sefiros at all but a radiance of the Infinite Light; others disagreed and counted it among the Ten Sefiros.

והאר"י [והאלקי רבי יצחק] ז"ל [זכרנו לברכה / זכרונם לברכה] הכריע [בע"ח [בעץ חיים] שער מ"א פ"ג [פרק ג']]²⁴ שהוא בחי' ממוצע בין המאציל לנאצלים ויש בו מבחי' תחתונה שבאין סוף והוא בחי' עתיק יומין

And the Arizal, of blessed memory, decided (in Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 41, chapter 3) that it is an intermediary between the Emanator and the emanated. There is in it something of the lowest level of the Infinite One, and that is the level of Atik Yomin.

The Arizal settled the question in Etz Chaim: Keser is an intermediary between the Emanator, G-d, and the emanated Sefiros, and its upper part, Atik Yomin, holds the lowest level of the Infinite One; Likkutei Torah, V'Zos HaBerachah, explains that it is called Atik, "removed," because it bears no relation at all to the emanated Sefiros. The discourse cites Sha'ar 41, chapter 3, by the numbering of the Shklov printing; in today's editions it is Sha'ar 42, and the Kehot note says the chapter should read 1.

וזו הבחינה האצילה את הבחי' הב' שבו שהוא שרש כל י"ס [י' ספירות] הנאצלים²⁵ בבחי' העלם ודקות גדול והוא הנק' אריך אנפין ובי' בחי' אלו יחד נק' כתר והיא בחי' הממוצע²⁶ כו' יעו"ש [יעו"י שם].

And this level emanated the second level in it, which is the root of all ten emanated Sefiros, in a state of concealment and great subtlety, and that is what is called Arich Anpin. These two levels together are called Keser, and it is the intermediary, etc. See there.

That level emanated Keser's second part, Arich Anpin, the root of all ten Sefiros in a hidden and very subtle form; together the two parts are called Keser, the intermediary. In Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, the Alter Rebbe explains why it is needed: the Infinite Light could not be revealed and bring the Sefiros into being without an intermediary holding both the last level of the Emanator and the root of the emanated.

הרי מבואר דבחי' הכתר הוא למעלה מכל הע"ס [העשר ספירות] שאפי' [שאפילו] בחי' תחתונה שבו היא רק שרש הנאצלים בדקות גדול ולמעלה ממהות ספירות דאצילות.

It is thus explained that the level of Keser is above all the Ten Sefiros, for even the lowest level in it is only the root of the emanated [Sefiros], in great subtlety, and is above the being of the Sefiros of Atzilus.

So Keser stands above all the Ten Sefiros. Even its lower part is only their root, present in a very subtle way, and is above the nature of the Sefiros of Atzilus.

וזהו כעין ענין ע"ס [עשר ספירות] הגנוזות הנזכר בלשון הגאונים²⁷ ובלשון האר"י [האלקי רבי יצחק] ז"ל [זכרוננו לברכה / זכרונם לברכה] הוא ענין ע"ס [עשר ספירות] דעתיק ודא"א.

This is somewhat like the matter of the ten hidden Sefiros mentioned in the language of the Geonim; in the language of the Arizal, of blessed memory, it is the matter of the Ten Sefiros of Atik and of Arich Anpin.

This resembles what the Geonim called the "ten hidden Sefiros." In the Arizal's terms these are the Ten Sefiros of Atik and of Arich Anpin, the Sefiros as they exist within Keser; Likkutei Torah, Beha'aloscha, notes that by the Arizal's teaching the hidden Sefiros of the Pardes are G-d's holy Names, which, like a person's name, do not touch His essence.

וביאור הענין הנה יובן ע"ד דוגמא מענין מארז"ל [מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] (מנחות דכ"ט) גבי ר' [רבי] עקיבא ששאל משה רבע"ה [רבינו עליו השלום] זו תורה וזו שכרה והיתה התשובה שתוק כך עלה במחשבה^{28, 29}.

The explanation of the matter will be understood by way of illustration from what our Sages, of blessed memory, said (Menachos, folio 29) concerning Rabbi Akiva, that Moshe our teacher, peace be upon him, asked, "This is Torah and this is its reward?" and the answer was, "Be silent; thus it arose in thought."

To illustrate, he brings the Talmud's account: Moshe was shown Rabbi Akiva's Torah and then his martyrdom, and asked, "This is Torah and this is its reward?" G-d answered, "Be silent; thus it arose in thought."

פי' כי מבחי' חכמה עילאה היתה השגת משה רבינו שמשם נמשכה התורה שבכתב מבחי' נובלות ואחוריים דח"ע [דחכמה עילאה]³⁰ כמ"ש באגה"ק [באגרת הקודש]³¹ ד"ה עוטה אור כו'.^{32, 33}

That is: the comprehension of Moshe our teacher was from the level of the higher Chochmah (Chochmah ila'ah), from which the Written Torah was drawn, from the level of the novlos ("fallen fruit") and the back of the higher Chochmah, as is explained in Iggeres HaKodesh, in the discourse beginning "He wraps Himself in light," etc.

Moshe's understanding reached the higher Chochmah of Atzilus, the source of the Written Torah. The Written Torah comes from its outer levels, called the novlos ("fallen fruit") and the "back" of Chochmah, as Iggeres HaKodesh explains in the epistle beginning "He wraps Himself in light."

וע"פ חכמה זו לא נתיישב זה הענין וכי זו תורה וזו שכרה אלא שהשיב לו הקב"ה כך עלה במחשבה¹⁷ שזה נמשך מבחי' חכמה סתימאה

According to this Chochmah (wisdom) the matter was not resolved: is this Torah and this its reward?! But the Holy One, blessed be He, answered him, "Thus it arose in thought," meaning that this is drawn from the level of the hidden Chochmah (Chochmah stima'ah).

From the standpoint of the higher Chochmah, Moshe's question had no answer. G-d's reply, "Thus it arose in thought," meant that the matter came from the hidden Chochmah.

וזהו לשון עלה שהוא למעלה מעלה מחכמה עילאה הנקי תשב"כ [תורה שבכתב] אלא נמשך מחכמה סתימאה שהוא למעלה מעלה מבחי' הבנה והשגה הנמשך מחכמה דאצי' ועד"מ כמו שבאדם יש גילוי השכל ויש כח השכל שלמעלה מהשכל המושג ומובן.

This is [the meaning of] the word “arose,” for it is far, far above the higher Chochmah, which is called the Written Torah, and is drawn rather from the hidden Chochmah, which is far, far above the level of understanding and comprehension that is drawn from the Chochmah of Atzilus (Emanation). By way of analogy: in a person there is revealed intellect, and there is the power of intellect, which is above the intellect that is grasped and understood.

The word “arose” signals a source far above the higher Chochmah, the level of the Written Torah: the hidden Chochmah, within Keser, beyond any understanding drawn from the Chochmah of Atzilus. A person, similarly, has revealed intellect and also the power of intellect, which is above everything he grasps and understands.

18 וכמו כשאדם מעמיק בשכלו באיזו סברא ויפול לו בשכלו איזה סברא חדשה שהיא ודאי נמשכת מבחי'

כח השכל שלמעלה מהשכל המושג ומובן שהיה לו בתחלה

It is as when a person delves with his intellect into some line of reasoning, and some new reasoning occurs to his mind: it is certainly drawn from the level of the power of intellect that is above the intellect he had grasped and understood at first.

An example from human thinking: when someone delves into an argument and a new insight suddenly occurs to him, it surely comes from his power of intellect, which is above the understanding he had before.

שהשכל הראשון שהי' [שהיה] מושג לו כשהעמיק בסברא זו לא היה רק בחי' כלי בעלמא לקבל אותה שפע הבאה פתאום מלמעלה מהשכל. כך ע"ד משל זה יתפרש ג"כ ענין עלה במחשבה.

For the first intellect, which he had grasped when he delved into this reasoning, was only the level of a mere vessel to receive that flow which comes suddenly from above intellect. So, along the lines of this analogy, the matter of “it arose in thought” will also be explained.

The understanding he had while delving served only as a vessel to receive the insight that came suddenly from beyond intellect. The phrase “it arose in thought” is to be understood in the same way.

פ"י המחשבה סתם הוא חכמה דאצי" ולשם נמשך מבחי" חכמה סתימאה להיות כך וכך בענין ר' [רבי] עקיבא, והל"ל [והוה ליה למימר] ירד ונפל במחשבה שהרי הח"ס [החכמה סתימאה] הוא למעלה מחכמה דאצילות ומבחי" ח"ס [חכמה סתימאה] נמשך זה במחשבה שהיא חכמה דאצילות.

That is: "thought" unqualified is the Chochmah (wisdom) of Atzilus (Emanation), and into it there was drawn, from the level of the hidden Chochmah, that it should be thus and thus in the matter of Rabbi Akiva. Then it should have said "descended and fell into thought," for the hidden Chochmah is above the Chochmah of Atzilus, and from the level of the hidden Chochmah this was drawn into thought, which is the Chochmah of Atzilus.

"Thought" on its own means the Chochmah of Atzilus, and what was decided about Rabbi Akiva came into it from the hidden Chochmah. Since that is a movement from higher to lower, one would expect the Talmud to say it "descended" or "fell" into thought, not that it "arose."

אלא מפני שהח"ס [שהחכמה סתימאה] נק' ג"כ מחשבה סתימאה ובוה שייך לומר באמת לשון עלה שכך עלה במחשבה זו לכך אמר בכלל לשון עלה.

But because the hidden Chochmah is also called hidden thought (machshavah stima'ah), and of this one can truly use the word "arose," that "thus it arose" in this thought, therefore He used the word "arose" in general.

The word "arose" is used because the hidden Chochmah is also called "hidden thought," and of that higher thought one can truly say the matter "arose" there. That is why the expression "arose" was chosen.

19 ועכ"פ [ועל כל פנים] מובן מזה איך בחי" הח"ס [החכמה סתימאה] שהיא שרש הח"ע [החכמה עילאה] איך שהיא בכתר היא למעלה מעלה ממהות חכמה דאצי" עד שאינו מושג ומובן כלל בח"ע [בחכמה עילאה] כנ"ל בשאלת זו תורה כו'

At any rate, it is understood from this how the level of the hidden Chochmah (wisdom), which is the root of the higher Chochmah, as it is in Keser (the Crown), is far, far above the being of the Chochmah of Atzilus (Emanation), so that it is not grasped or understood at all in the higher Chochmah, as mentioned above in the question "This is Torah," etc.,

The conclusion: the hidden Chochmah, the root of the higher Chochmah as it exists within Keser, is so far above the Chochmah of Atzilus that it cannot be grasped there at all. That is why Moshe's question, "This is Torah...?", could not be answered at his level.

עד שא"א להיות התשובה רק שתוק כו' כאלו אין לזה טעם לפי שהטעם הזה שבח"ס [שבחכמה סתימאה] הוא למעלה מעלה מההשגה באצ"י ששם היתה השגת משה רבע"ה [רבינו עליו השלום].

so that there could be no answer but "Be silent," etc., as though there were no reason for it, because this reason in the hidden Chochmah is far, far above the comprehension in Atzilus, where the comprehension of Moshe our teacher, peace be upon him, was.

The only possible answer was "Be silent," as if there were no reason. The reason exists, but in the hidden Chochmah, far above the understanding of Atzilus, where Moshe's comprehension lay.

20 וע"ד זה יובן ג"כ בכללות בחי' הכתר אפילו בצד היותו שרש לאצ"י הוא למעלה מעלה ממהות ע"ס [עשר ספירות] דאצ"י כי בו הוא הארת אור א"ס.

Along these lines it will also be understood that the level of Keser (the Crown) as a whole, even in the respect in which it is the root of Atzilus (Emanation), is far, far above the being of the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus, for in it is the radiance of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof).

Applying this to Keser as a whole: even the part of Keser that serves as the root of Atzilus is far above the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus, because the radiance of the Infinite Light is within it.

וזהו בחי' עתיק יומין ונמשך ממנו שרש ליי"ס [לי" ספירות] דאצ"י וזהו בחי' א"א, ולכן נמשל לחקיקה שהיא כאלו אין כאן שום דבר נוסף כלל זולת המהות שהיה קודם החקיקה כך הוא ג"כ עכשיו לאחר החקיקה

This is the level of Atik Yomin; and from it there is drawn forth a root for the ten Sefiros of Atzilus, which is the level of Arich Anpin. Therefore it is likened to engraving, which is as though nothing at all has been added here besides the being that was there before the engraving; so it is also now, after the engraving.

Keser's upper part is Atik Yomin, and from it comes the root of the ten Sefiros of Atzilus, which is Arich Anpin. This is why Keser is likened to engraving: engraving adds nothing to the stone, and what was there before is all that is there afterward.

כך ג"כ התהוות בחי' ע"י [עתיק יומין] וא"א הם עדיין מכלל עולמות הא"ס,

So too the coming into being of the level of Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin: they are still within the worlds of the Infinite One (Ein Sof).

In the same way, Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, as they come into being, remain within the "worlds of the Infinite One," the levels still at one with G-d's infinity.

משא"כ בחי' התהוות י"ס [י' ספירות] דאצי' חכמה וחסד הרי כיון דאור א"ס לאו מכל אינון מדות³⁴ איהו כלל³⁵ וח"ע [וחכמה עילאה] כעשיי [כעשיה] גופניות נחשבת אצלו ית'³⁶ לכך נמשלו לאותיות הכתב שהדיו הוא דבר זר רק שנתאחד עם הקלף

This is not so with the coming into being of the ten Sefiros of Atzilus, Chochmah (wisdom) and Chesed (kindness): since the Infinite Light "is not of any of these attributes at all," and the higher Chochmah is considered like physical action before Him, blessed be He, they are therefore likened to the letters of writing, where the ink is a foreign thing and has only become united with the parchment.

The Sefiros of Atzilus, such as Chochmah and Chesed, are different: the Tikkunei Zohar says that G-d "is not of any of these attributes at all," and even the higher Chochmah counts before Him as physical action, as Tanya (Part I, chapter 2) explains with the verse "You made them all with Chochmah." So they are likened to written letters, whose ink is foreign to the parchment and only united with it.

משא"כ בחי' עי" [עתיק יומין] וא"א נחשבו מבחי' א"ס כנ"ל בשם האר"י [האלקי רבי יצחק] ז"ל [זכרוננו לברכה / זכרונם לברכה] שהוא בחי' ממוצע לכך לא נמשלו לאותיות הכתב רק לבחי' חקיקה.

Whereas the level of Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin is considered of the level of the Infinite One, as mentioned above in the name of the Arizal, of blessed memory, that it is an intermediary; therefore they are likened not to the letters of writing but to the level of engraving.

Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin, by contrast, count as part of the Infinite One, since, as the Arizal said, Keser is the intermediary; so they are likened not to writing but to engraving.

21 ואף גם שבאמת אינם ג"כ מערך ומהות עצם האור הנמשך מא"ס שהוא פשוט עדיין בתכלית

And even though in truth they too are not of the order and being of the very light drawn from the Infinite One (Ein Sof), which is still utterly simple,

He adds a qualification: Atik and Arich, too, are not the same as the utterly simple light drawn from the Infinite One.

ה"ז [הרי זה] כמשל החקיקה שכשרושמים וחוקקים על האבן טוב ונראה רשימות אין זה כמו עצם הפשוט ממש אך מ"מ אינו דבר זר כמו הדיו כו'.

this is like the analogy of engraving: when one inscribes and engraves upon a precious stone and markings appear, this is not like the simple substance itself, yet nevertheless it is not a foreign thing like the ink, etc.

Engraving a gemstone also produces marks that are not the stone's simple substance, yet they are not foreign to it as ink is to parchment.

וכמ"כ [וכמו כן] ע"ס [עשר ספירות] שבכתר עליון אין התחלקותם בבחי' הכתר נראית ונגלית ליש ודבר כלל מעצמות אור א"ס מאחר שהכתר יש בו עדיין מבחי' תחתונה שבאור א"ס רק שהם עדי"מ כמו בחי' חקיקה ורושם בעלמא ומיוחדים בעצמות אא"ס [אור אין סוף]

So too the Ten Sefiros in the supreme Keser (Keser Elyon): their division, at the level of Keser, is not seen or revealed at all as an entity, a thing [apart] from the essence of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), since Keser still contains something of the lowest level of the Infinite Light; rather, they are, by way of analogy, like the level of a mere engraving and impression, and they are united with the essence of the Infinite Light.

So too the Ten Sefiros within Keser do not appear as distinct entities apart from the essence of the Infinite Light, since Keser still holds the lowest level of the Infinite Light. They are like a mere engraving, united with the essence of the Infinite Light.

(וכמו עדי"מ שהשכל הגלוי מתגלה חוץ מהנפש משא"כ כח השכל כלול ומתאחד עם הנפש כו' אע"פ [אף על פי] שהנפש עצמה היא למעלה גם מכח השכל כמ"ש במ"א).

(Just as, by way of analogy, revealed intellect is revealed outside the soul, whereas the power of intellect is included and united with the soul, etc., although the soul itself is above even the power of intellect, as is explained elsewhere.)

The parenthesis gives a human parallel: revealed intellect comes out beyond the soul, while the power of intellect is included in the soul and one with it, even though the soul itself is higher still.

וזהו בריש הורמנותא דמלכא גליף גליפו. פי' בעלות הרצון לפניו להאציל הע"ס [העשר ספירות] אזי מתחלה גליף גליפו

This is [the meaning of] "At the very beginning of the King's authority, He engraved engravings." That is: when it arose in His will to emanate the Ten Sefiros, then first "He engraved engravings."

This is the Zohar's meaning: when it arose in G-d's will to emanate the Ten Sefiros, the first step was "He engraved engravings."

הוא עדי"מ התהוות בחי' חקיקה בהאור הפשוט לחקוק שרשי הע"ס [העשר ספירות] והיינו התהוות בחי' הכתר כנ"ל שזהו למעלה עדיין מהתהוות אותיות הכתב שהם ע"ס [עשר ספירות] דאצ"י.

This is, by way of analogy, the coming into being of the level of engraving in the simple light, to engrave the roots of the Ten Sefiros; that is, the coming into being of the level of Keser, as mentioned above, which is still above the coming into being of the letters of writing, which are the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus (Emanation).

That engraving is the forming, within the simple light, of the roots of the Ten Sefiros, that is, the coming into being of Keser. It comes before, and stands above, the "letters of writing," the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus.

22 ותוכן הענין דבאצ"י יש בחי' כלים ממש לאורות די"ס [די' ספירות] דלכך נמשלו לאותיות הכתב מדיו ע"ג [על גב] קלף לבן שהדיו הוא משל לכלים שאינן ממהות אור הפשוט.

The substance of the matter is that in Atzilus (Emanation) there are actual vessels for the lights of the ten Sefiros; that is why they are likened to letters of writing, in ink upon white parchment, the ink being an analogy for the vessels, which are not of the being of the simple light.

Why Atzilus is "writing": in Atzilus the Sefiros have actual vessels for their lights, and the vessels, like ink, are not of the nature of the simple light.

משא"כ בעי"י [בעתיק יומין] וא"א הגם שיש בהם שרש לכלים די"ס [די' ספירות] אין הכלים ניכרים ונתגלים בהם עדיין אלא בהעלם גדול ונמשלו לאותיות החקיקה שאין כאן דבר זר כדיו כו'.

This is not so in Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin: although there is in them a root for the vessels of the ten Sefiros, the vessels are not yet discernible and revealed in them, except in great concealment; so they are likened to the letters of engraving, where there is no foreign thing like ink, etc.

In Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin there is only a root for the vessels, deeply hidden and not yet discernible. So there is nothing foreign there like ink, and they are likened to engraving.

(ועמ"ש מזה ע"פ זאת חקת התורה)³⁷ ומ"מ הגליפו לא היה רק בטה"ע [בטהירו עילאה] שהוא הארה בעלמא הנמשכת מאורו ית' הפשוט.

(See what is written about this on the verse "This is the statute of the Torah.") Nevertheless, the engraving was only in the supernal brightness (tehiru ila'ah), which is a mere radiance drawn from His simple light, blessed be He.

The reader is referred to the discourse on "This is the statute of the Torah," where the Alter Rebbe reads chukas ("statute") as engraving: the Torah in its root is engraved letters, higher than the written letters of the Written Torah. Even so, the engraving took place only in the supernal brightness, a mere radiance of G-d's simple light.

שבחי הארה זו היא ג"כ פשוט בתכלית הפשיטות ובה נחקקו בחי' הי"ס [הי' ספירות] דכתר אבל באור א"ס עצמו לא שייך כלל בחי' חקיקה וגליפו ח"ו [חס ושלום].

This radiance too is utterly simple, and in it the ten Sefiros of Keser (the Crown) were engraved; but in the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof) itself engraving and inscription do not apply at all, G-d forbid.

That radiance is itself utterly simple, and in it the ten Sefiros of Keser were engraved. In the Infinite Light itself, engraving does not apply at all.

SECTION 4 • ¶23-24

The Written Torah and the Tablets

23 וזהו ג"כ כללות ההפרש בין תורה שבכתב למכתב הלוחות כי פי' תורה שבכתב היינו שנתלבשה באותיות הכתב

This is also, in general, the difference between the Written Torah and the writing of the Tablets. For the meaning of “the Written Torah” is that it was clothed in the letters of writing,

This also explains, in general, how the Written Torah differs from the writing on the Tablets: the Written Torah is the Torah as it has been clothed in letters of writing.

כי התורה עצמה היא למעלה מהכתב כי תורה היא מבחי' יסוד אבא שעדיין יש בו הארת א"ס שמלוכש בכתר כמ"ש ה' בחכמה ³⁸ ונקי בשם עדן

for the Torah itself is above writing, since the Torah is from the level of Yesod (foundation) of Abba, in which there is still the radiance of the Infinite One (Ein Sof) that is clothed in Keser (the Crown), as it is written, “Havayah, with Chochmah,” and it is called by the name Eden;

The Torah in itself is higher than writing. It comes from the Yesod of Abba, the channel of Chochmah, which still holds the radiance of the Infinite One that is clothed in Keser, as the verse “Havayah, with Chochmah [founded the earth]” indicates. This level of Chochmah is called “Eden.”

רק שנתלבשה בבינה ששם הוא בחי' אותיות וכמ"ש מזה בביאור ע"פ ועשית ציץ ^{39, 40} גבי ופתחת.

only, it was clothed in Binah (understanding), where there is the level of letters, as is written about this in the explanation on the verse “And you shall make a tzitz,” regarding “and you shall engrave.”

The Torah became letters only when it was clothed in Binah, where letters exist. Torah Ohr explains this on the verse “And you shall make a tzitz,” the gold headplate of the High Priest engraved with “Holy to Havayah”: Chochmah is a formless flash, and only Binah has letters.

24 והיינו ג"ן סדרים דאורייתא נמשכים מבחי' נהר היוצא מעדן ⁴¹ וגם האותיות אלו שהן הכלים הרי איהו וגרמוהי חד בהון ⁴² כו'. אמנם הלוחות שרשם בבחי' כתר עליון.

That is, the fifty-three [written as gan, “garden”] portions of the Torah are drawn from the level of “a river going out of Eden.” And also these letters, which are the vessels: “He and His vessels (ihu vegarmohi) are one in them,” etc. But the root of the Tablets is in the level of the supreme Keser (Keser Elyon).

The fifty-three portions of the Torah, a number written ג"ן (“garden”), flow from Binah, “the river going out of Eden” to water the garden. Their letters are vessels, and in Atzilus “He and His vessels are one,” yet the Tablets have a higher root, in the supreme Keser.

וזהו ענין עשרת הדברות שניתנו בחג השבועות לפי שאז הוא ההתגלות והמשכת הכתר מבחי' א"א ועתיק יומין ממש בז"א כמבואר בפע"ח [בפרי עץ חיים]

This is the matter of the Ten Commandments, which were given on the festival of Shavuos, because then there is the revelation and drawing down of Keser, from the very level of Arich Anpin and Atik Yomin, into Z'eir Anpin (the emotive attributes), as is explained in Pri Etz Chaim.

That is why the Ten Commandments were given on Shavuos: on that day Keser, from Arich Anpin and Atik Yomin, is revealed and drawn down into Z'eir Anpin, as Pri Etz Chaim, Rabbi Chaim Vital's record of the Arizal's teachings on prayer and the festivals, explains.

כי כל ימי הספירה הוא הגדלת המוחין דז"א בהשלמת מוחין דא"א [דאבא ואימא] המתלבשים בז"א גדלות ראשון וגדלות שני.

For all the days of the Counting [of the Omer] are the growth of the intellect (mochin) of Z'eir Anpin, in the completion of the mochin of Abba and Imma that are clothed in Z'eir Anpin: the first state of maturity and the second state of maturity.

During the forty-nine days of counting the Omer, between Pesach and Shavuos, the intellect (mochin) of Z'eir Anpin grows, as it receives the mochin of Abba and Imma in two stages of maturity.

אך בשבועות מאיר בו בחי' גלגלתא שהוא בחי' הכתר שמקבל מא"א [מאריך אנפין] וע"י [ועתיק יומין] ממש ואז דוקא ניתנו שני הלוחות שבהם עשרת הדברות

But on Shavuos there shines in it the level of the Gulgalta ("skull"), which is the level of Keser, which receives from Arich Anpin and Atik Yomin themselves; and specifically then were the two Tablets given, on which were the Ten Commandments.

On Shavuos something higher shines in Z'eir Anpin: the Gulgalta, the "skull," the level of Keser, which receives directly from Arich Anpin and Atik Yomin. Precisely then the two Tablets, bearing the Ten Commandments, were given.

ע"כ היה המכתב חרות על הלוחות בחי' אותיות החקיקה כמו שהוא בחי' ומדרגת הכתר שהיא בחי' גליף גליפו בט הירו עילאה כנ"ל.

Therefore "the writing" was "engraved upon the Tablets," the level of the letters of engraving, as is the level and rank of Keser, which is the level of "He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness," as mentioned above.

So the writing on the Tablets was engraved, matching the level of Keser, the Zohar's "He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness."

(ולכן יש ג"כ תר"ך אותיות בעשרת הדברות כמנין כתר וכמ"ש הרמ"ז [הרב משה זכות] פ' אמור ד' צ"ו ע"ב וברכות נשא פ"ג איתא תרי"ג אותיות יש⁴³ מן אנכי עד אשר לרעך ושבעה יתירות כנגד שבעה ימי בראשית⁴⁴ עכ"ל [עד כאן לשונו]):

(That is also why there are six hundred and twenty letters in the Ten Commandments, the numerical value of Keser, as the Ramaz writes on Parshas Emor, folio 96b. And in [Midrash] Rabbah on Nasso, chapter 13, it says: "There are six hundred and thirteen letters from 'I am' until 'which is your neighbor's,' and seven extra, corresponding to the seven days of Creation"; end of quote.)

A sign of this: the Ten Commandments contain 620 letters, the numerical value of כתר, Keser (kaf 20, tav 400, reish 200), as the Ramaz, Rabbi Moshe Zacuto, notes in his glosses on the Zohar. The Midrash counts 613 letters from "I am" to "which is your neighbor's," corresponding to the 613 mitzvos, and seven more for the seven days of Creation, making 620.

SECTION 5 • ¶25-30

The soul's root beyond the River

25 ד ועתה נבוא לביאור הפסוק אם בחקותי תלכו דמבואר לעיל דכיון דתלת קשרין אינון⁴⁵ כוי ע"כ כמו שבתורה יש ב' בחי' הנ"ל כתיבה וחקיקה דהיינו התושב"כ [התורה שבכתב] והלוחות

4. Now we come to the explanation of the verse "If you walk in My statutes." As was explained above, since "there are three bonds," etc., therefore, just as in the Torah there are the two levels mentioned above, writing and engraving, that is, the Written Torah and the Tablets,

Section 4 turns to the verse itself. The preceding discourse (Likkutei Torah, Bechukosai 1:2) cited the Zohar's teaching that the Holy One, blessed be He, the Torah and Israel are three bonds tied together, so whatever is in the Torah has its counterpart in Israel. Since the Torah has both writing, the Written Torah, and engraving, the Tablets, Israel has both as well.

כמו כן בכל ניצוץ ונפש אלקית יש ג"כ ב' בחי' אלו אותיות החקוקים ואותיות הכתובים דהנה אנו אומרים נשמה שנתת כי טהורה היא^{46,47} אתה בראתה כוי,

so too in every spark and G-dly soul there are also these two levels, engraved letters and written letters. For we say, "The soul that You have given within me, it is pure; You created it," etc.

Every G-dly soul, every "spark," likewise has engraved letters and written letters. The morning blessing hints at this: "The soul that You have given within me, it is pure; You created it."

וידוע הקושיא איך שייך לומר טהורה היא קודם שבראתה ואיפכא הל"ל [הוה ליה למימר] אתה בראתה טהורה היא כו'.

There is a known question: how can one say "it is pure" before "You created it"? It should have said the reverse: "You created it; it is pure," etc.

The blessing raises a known difficulty. A soul must be created before it can be called pure, so the order should seem to be "You created it; it is pure."

והענין יובן בהקדים ⁴⁸ ביאור הפסוק (ביהושע כ"ד ב') ויאמר יהושע אל כל העם כה אמר ה' אלהי ישראל בעבר הנהר ישבו אבותיכם מעולם ⁴⁹ כו'

The matter will be understood by first explaining the verse (in Joshua 24:2), "And Yehoshua said to all the people: Thus says Havayah, the G-d of Israel: Your fathers dwelt beyond the River of old," etc.,

To answer, he first explains Yehoshua's words to the people: "Thus says Havayah, the G-d of Israel: Your fathers dwelt beyond the River of old."

ואקח את אביכם את אברהם מעבר הנהר ואולך אותו בכל ארץ כנען ⁵⁰

"and I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan."

The passage continues, "I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan."

ומבואר הקושיא ע"ז בזהר (פ' אמור צ"ח ב') מאי קמ"ל [קא משמע לן] בזה וכי כל ישראל לא ידעו זה ⁵¹ ומלשון הפסוק נראה שהוא דבר גדול ומחודש אפילו לגבי יהושע עד שצריך שה' יאמר אותו.

The question on this is set out in the Zohar (Parshas Emor, 98b): what does this teach us? Did not all Israel know this? Yet from the wording of the verse it appears to be a great and novel matter, even for Yehoshua, so much so that G-d had to say it.

The Zohar raises a question about these verses: every Jew knew where Avraham came from, so what are they teaching? Their tone suggests a great and new revelation, one that G-d Himself had to announce, even to Yehoshua.

ותירץ בזה"ק [בזהר הקדוש]⁵² כי באמת דבר גדול דיבר הנביא בהודעה זו והוא ע"ד ישראל עלו במחשבה^{53, 54, 55, 56} דהכוונה ששרשם נמשך מבחי"י מחשבה סתימאה דא"א

The holy Zohar answers that the prophet truly spoke of a great matter in this announcement. It is along the lines of "Israel arose in thought," meaning that their root is drawn from the level of the hidden thought of Arich Anpin,

The Zohar answers that the prophet was announcing something great: G-d chose Israel through the Patriarchs and brought them out from "the supernal river." The Alter Rebbe connects it with the Sages' saying "Israel arose in thought": the root of Israel's souls lies in the hidden thought of Arich Anpin.

שהיא למעלה מעלה מבחי"י סתם מחשבה עילאה ותתאה. דהיינו כי מחשבה תתאה הוא שחושב מה שמדבר.

which is far, far above the level of higher and lower thought as such. That is: lower thought is when one thinks what one is saying.

This hidden thought is far above ordinary thought, whether higher or lower. As explained earlier, lower thought is thinking the words one is about to say.

26 ומחשבה עילאה היא מחשבת השכל. וכ"ז [וכל זה] הנמשל למעלה בבחי"י ע"ס [עשר ספירות] דאצי"י הנה אפי"י [אפילו] מחשבה עילאה הוא בחי"י בינה.

And higher thought is the thinking of the concept. And all this, as it is represented Above, in the level of the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus (Emanation): even higher thought is the level of Binah (understanding).

Higher thought is thinking the concept itself. Among the Ten Sefiros of Atzilus, even higher thought corresponds only to Binah.

והוא הנק' נהר היוצא מעדן⁵⁷ כי המחשבה אינה נחה כמו שהנהר נמשך תמיד ונמשכת מעדן היא בחי"י ח"ע [חכמה עילאה].

It is what is called "a river going out of Eden," for thought does not rest, just as a river flows continually; and it is drawn from Eden, which is the level of the higher Chochmah (wisdom).

Binah is called "the river going out of Eden," because thought never rests but flows like a river. Its source, Eden, is the higher Chochmah.

אמנם ענין עלו במחשבה הוא בחי' ח"ס [חכמה סתימאה] דא"א שלמעלה מעלה מחי'ע [מחכמה עילאה] דאצי' כדלעיל באריכות בפי' שתוק כך עלה במחשבה.

But the matter of “arose in thought” is the level of the hidden Chochmah of Arich Anpin, which is far, far above the higher Chochmah of Atzilus, as explained above at length in the explanation of “Be silent; thus it arose in thought.”

“Arose in thought,” however, refers to the hidden Chochmah of Arich Anpin, far above the higher Chochmah of Atzilus, as explained earlier in connection with “Be silent; thus it arose in thought.”

וא"כ אמרם ז"ל [זכרונו לברכה / זכרונם לברכה] עלו במחשבה היינו ששרש נשמתם מושרש ונמשך מבחי' מחשבה סתימאה דא"א שלמעלה מחי'ב [מחכמה ובינה] דאצי'

If so, the saying of our Sages, of blessed memory, “they arose in thought,” means that the root of their souls is rooted in and drawn from the level of the hidden thought of Arich Anpin, which is above Chochmah and Binah of Atzilus

So when the Sages say Israel “arose in thought,” they mean that the root of Jewish souls is in the hidden thought of Arich Anpin, above Chochmah and Binah of Atzilus.

(ועיין בזהר פ' נח דף ס"ה ע"א ובפרדס בעה"כ [בערכי הכינויים] ערך מחשבה).⁵⁸ וזהו ג"כ ענין הודעה זו שהודיעם ה' איך כי בעבר הנהר ישבו אבותיכם מעולם.

(and see the Zohar, Parshas Noach, folio 65a, and the Pardes, Erchei HaKinuyim, entry “Machshavah”). This is also the matter of this announcement that G-d made to them, how “your fathers dwelt beyond the River of old”:

The parenthesis refers to the Zohar and to Erchei HaKinuyim, the part of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero's Pardes Rimonim that explains Kabbalistic terms, under “thought.” This same root is what G-d announced through Yehoshua: “Your fathers dwelt beyond the River of old.”

ר"ל [רוצה לומר] ששרשם נמשך מבחי' שלמעלה מבחי' נהר היוצא מעדן שהיא בחי' בינה. כי פי' בעבר ר"ל [רוצה לומר] בעבר השני כשעוברים הנהר ובעבר השני שם ישבו אבותיכם.

that is to say, their root is drawn from a level above the level of “a river going out of Eden,” which is the level of Binah. For “beyond” (be'ever) means on the other side, when one crosses the river; on the other side, there “your fathers dwelt.”

The “River” is Binah, “the river going out of Eden.” “Beyond the River” means its far side, the side one reaches by crossing it; there, above Binah, the Patriarchs “dwelt.”

27 והיינו בבחי' א"א שלמעלה מהאצי' כי פרסא מפסיק בינו לאצי' כמ"ש במ"א בענין עד הגל' ^{59, 60} כו' ומעבר להפרסא מושרשים האבות.

That is, in the level of Arich Anpin, which is above Atzilus (Emanation), for a curtain (parsa) divides between it and Atzilus, as is explained elsewhere on "The heap is witness," etc. And beyond the curtain the Patriarchs are rooted.

The far side of the River is Arich Anpin, above Atzilus and separated from it by a "curtain" (parsa), as explained elsewhere on the boundary heap between Yaakov and Lavan, "The heap is witness." The Patriarchs are rooted beyond that curtain.

והענין כי ידוע דאברהם יצחק ויעקב הם בחי' חג"ת [חסד גבורה תפארת] אמנם שרשם הוא בחי' חג"ת [חסד גבורה תפארת] דא"א. ⁶¹

The matter is this: it is known that Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov are the levels of Chesed (kindness), Gevurah (restraint) and Tiferes (beauty); but their root is the level of Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin.

Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov embody Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes: love, awe and compassion. Their root, however, is the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin, above Atzilus.

28 והוא ענין טורי נהורא וטורי חשוכא ⁶² הנזכר בזהר ⁶³ דהיינו חג"ת [חסד גבורה תפארת] דאצי' נק' טורי נהורא והם בחי' המדות הנמשכים מן השכל וההתבוננות שע"י השכל וההתבוננות נולד האהבה או היראה,

This is the matter of "mountains of light" and "mountains of darkness" mentioned in the Zohar. That is: Chesed (kindness), Gevurah (restraint) and Tiferes (beauty) of Atzilus (Emanation) are called "mountains of light," and they are the level of the emotive attributes (middos) drawn from intellect and contemplation, for through intellect and contemplation love or awe is born.

The Zohar speaks of "mountains of light" and "mountains of darkness." The mountains of light are Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Atzilus: emotions born of understanding and contemplation, as when reflecting on G-d produces love or awe.

אך יש בחי' אהבה רבה שלמעלה מהשכל ונקי' טורי חשוכא שהם המדות הכלולים בהרצון שלמעלה מהשכל וכענין שתוק כך עלה במחשבה כו'.

But there is a level of great love (ahavah rabbah) that is above intellect, and it is called “mountains of darkness”: these are the attributes included in the will (ratzon) that is above intellect, as in “Be silent; thus it arose in thought,” etc.

The mountains of darkness are a great love above intellect: emotions contained within the will that transcends understanding. They are “dark” in that understanding cannot reach them, like the answer “Be silent; thus it arose in thought”; Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim, identifies them with the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin.

וזהו ענין גי' ידות ⁶⁴ יד הגדולה ⁶⁵ ויד החזקה ^{66, 67} ויד הרמה ⁶⁸ וכנודע שבחי' חו"ג [חסד וגבורה] דא"א מתלכשים באו"א [כאבא ואימא] ומהם נמשך אח"כ בחג"ת [בחסד גבורה תפארת] דאצ"י.

This is the matter of the three “hands”: “the great hand,” “the strong hand” and “the high hand.” As is known, the level of Chesed and Gevurah of Arich Anpin is clothed in Abba and Imma, and from them it is afterward drawn into Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Atzilus.

This is the meaning of the Torah's three “hands”: the great hand (Exodus 14:31), the strong hand (Exodus 6:1) and the high hand (Exodus 14:8, where Israel went out “with a high hand”). As is known, Chesed and Gevurah of Arich Anpin are clothed in Abba and Imma, and through them reach Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Atzilus.

29 והנה המדות שלמעלה מהשכל הם בבחי' התכללות מאד וכנ"ל שבכתר אין שייך התחלקות עדיין.

Now, the attributes (middos) that are above intellect are in a state of great inter-inclusion, as mentioned above, that in Keser (the Crown) division does not yet apply.

Emotions that transcend intellect are not yet divided into separate attributes; each contains the others, for in Keser there is no division.

וזהו ואקח את אביכם את אברהם מעבר הנהר ואולך אותו בכל ארץ כנען ⁶⁹ פ"י ארץ כנען הוא המל' דאצ"י לשון תגר וסוחר ולשון הכנעה כמ"ש במ"א. ⁷⁰

This is [the meaning of] “And I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan.” That is: “the land of Canaan” (Kenaan) is the Malchus (sovereignty) of Atzilus (Emanation), a term meaning “merchant” and “trader,” and a term of submission (hachna'ah), as is explained elsewhere.

Now the next verse: “I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan.” The land of Canaan is Malchus of Atzilus; the word Kenaan can mean “merchant,” and it also echoes hachna'ah, submission. In Torah Ohr, Vayeshev, the Alter Rebbe explains that Canaan means a merchant, who spends his money in order to gain more, and calls Malchus “the supernal Canaan of holiness.”

והכוונה שהמשיך את האבות משרשם שבעבר הנהר לירד למטה בכל האצ"י (דהיינו כנ"ל שחג"ת [שחסד גבורה תפארת] דא"א מתלבשים באו"א [באבא ואימא] ומשם בזו"נ [בזעיר אנפין ונוקבא])

The intent is that He drew the Patriarchs from their root beyond the River, to descend below through all of Atzilus (that is, as mentioned above, the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin are clothed in Abba and Imma, and from there in Z'eir Anpin and Nukva),

G-d drew the Patriarchs down from their root beyond the River through all of Atzilus: from Arich Anpin into Abba and Imma, and from there into Z'eir Anpin and Nukva.

עד המלי' כדי להתלבש בכי"ע בגופים בעוה"ז לברר ברורי רפ"ח נצוצין שנפלו בכי"ע וירידה זו צורך עלייה היא שיעלו הרפ"ח ניצוצות לשרשן ומקורן

down to Malchus, in order to be clothed in Beriah (Creation), Yetzirah (Formation) and Asiyah (Action), in bodies in this world, to refine the refinements of the two hundred and eighty-eight sparks that fell into Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah. And this descent is for the sake of ascent: that the two hundred and eighty-eight sparks ascend to their root and source

They descended to Malchus and from there into the lower worlds, Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah, into bodies in this world. The purpose was to refine and raise the 288 sparks of holiness that fell into those worlds, so the descent is for the sake of an ascent.

(וכמשנ"ת [וכמו שנתבאר] ענין זה ג"כ בד"ה לך לך⁷¹ הנה אב רם הוא שכל הנעלם כו') אברהם ע"י בחי' האהבה ויצחק בבחי' יראה ויעקב בחי' רחמנות.

(as this matter was also explained in the discourse beginning "Go forth," [where] "Av ram" ["exalted father"] is the hidden intellect, etc.): Avraham through the level of love, Yitzchak through the level of awe, and Yaakov through the level of compassion.

This was also explained in Torah Ohr, in the discourse on "Go forth" (Lech Lecha), where Avram, "Av ram," "exalted father," is the hidden intellect, which must come into revelation step by step. Avraham refines the sparks through love, Yitzchak through awe, and Yaakov through compassion.

וזהו ענין אם בחקותי תלכו שהיא בחי' ההליכה ממטה למעלה ובפרט העיקר ע"י מדת רחמנות בחי' נחלה בלי מצרים⁷² כו'

This is the matter of "If you walk in My statutes": it is the level of "walking" from below upward, and in particular, principally, through the attribute of compassion, the level of "an inheritance without bounds," etc.

This is the meaning of "If you walk in My statutes": walking from below upward, back to the root. Above all it happens through compassion, Yaakov's attribute, which the Sages call "an inheritance without bounds."

(וכמ"ש במ"א ע"פ המאמר וישב⁷³ ד' קפ"א וגבה מאד מסטרא דיעקב⁷⁴ כו' ע"ש וע' במ"ש בד"ה כנשר יעיר⁷⁵ וע' לעיל פ' ויצא בד"ה והיה הוי' לי לאלקים⁷⁶ כו' וכל אשר תתן לי עשר אעשרנו לך⁷⁷ כו').

(As is explained elsewhere on the statement [of the Zohar], Vayeshev, folio 181, "And very high: from the side of Yaakov," etc.; see there. And see what is written in the discourse beginning "As an eagle stirs up," and see above, Parshas Vayetzei, in the discourse beginning "And Havayah will be my G-d," etc., "and of all that You give me I will surely tithe to You," etc.)

The parenthesis cites the Zohar on the verse "He shall be exalted and lifted up and very high": the word "very" (me'od) is from the side of Yaakov. It also refers to the discourses on "As an eagle stirs up its nest" and on Yaakov's vow, "Havayah will be my G-d."

וזהו ג"כ ענין נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא כי הנה בחי' שרשם בעבר הנהר היינו בחי' אותיות החקיקה כנ"ל דבחי' מחשבה סתימאה נקי גליף גליפו בטה"ע [בטהירו עילאה]

This is also the matter of "The soul that You have given within me, it is pure": for the level of their root, beyond the River, is the level of the letters of engraving, as mentioned above, since the level of hidden thought is called "He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness (tehiru ila'ah)."

The same root explains "The soul that You have given within me, it is pure." The soul's root beyond the River is the level of engraved letters, since hidden thought is what the Zohar calls "He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness."

וזהו פ"י טהורה היא שנמשכה מבחי' טהירו עילאה והיינו ממש ענין בעבר הנהר ישבו אבותיכם.

This is the meaning of "it is pure" (tehorah): that it is drawn from the level of the supernal brightness (tehiru ila'ah). And this is exactly the matter of "your fathers dwelt beyond the River."

"It is pure" (tehorah) alludes to tehiru, the supernal brightness, from which the soul is drawn. This is exactly what "your fathers dwelt beyond the River" means.

30 ואח"כ כשירדה למטה כמ"ש ואולך אותו בכל ארץ כנען הוא ענין אתה בראתה יצרתה בחי' השתלשלות בי"ע עד שנפחתה בי והשתלשלות זו היינו בחי' אותיות הכתב

Afterward, when it descended below, as it is written, "and I led him through all the land of Canaan," this is the matter of "You created it, You formed it," the level of the chain of descent (hishtalshelus) through Beriah (Creation), Yetzirah (Formation) and Asiyah (Action), until "You breathed it into me." And this chain of descent is the level of the letters of writing.

After the soul's root comes its descent, as in "and I led him through all the land of Canaan." This is "You created it, You formed it... You breathed it into me": the soul's passage down through Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah into the body, and that descent is the level of written letters.

נמצא יש בישראל ג"כ ב' מדרגות מצד שרשן טהורה היא הם בחי' אותיות החקיקה ומצד השתלשלותן למטה בבחי' בראתה יצרתה נפחתה בי⁷⁸ זהו ענין אותיות הכתב.

It follows that in Israel, too, there are two levels: from the side of their root, "it is pure," they are the level of the letters of engraving; and from the side of their descent below, at the level of "You created it, You formed it, You breathed it into me," this is the matter of the letters of writing.

So every Jew has two levels. In its root, "it is pure," the soul is engraved letters, one with its source; in its descent, "You created it, You formed it, You breathed it into me," it is written letters. This answers the question: "it is pure" comes first because the root precedes the descent.

SECTION 6 • 31-32

Walking in My statutes

31 ולהבין ענין ב' בחי' אלו בעבודת ה' הוא כי יש בחי' אהבה הנמשכת מצד הבינה והדעת בגדולת ה'.

To understand these two levels in the service of G-d: there is a level of love that is drawn from Binah (understanding) and Daas (knowledge) of the greatness of G-d.

Now the two levels are applied to the service of G-d. One kind of love for G-d is born of understanding and knowledge, from contemplating His greatness.

אמנם עיקר בחי' האהבה אינה מצד הדעת וההתבוננות כי אנו רואים שגדול כח הרצון והאהבה יותר מערך השכל וההתבוננות שהרי אפילו קל שבקלים יכול למסור נפשו על קדש^[קדושת השם] שלא מצד ערך ההתבוננות כלל

However, the essential level of love does not come from knowledge and contemplation. For we see that the power of will and love is greater than anything commensurate with intellect and contemplation, since even the lowest of the low can give up his life (mesirus nefesh) for the sanctification of G-d's Name, not at all by virtue of contemplation.

But love in its essence does not come from contemplation. The proof: even the least worthy Jew is ready to give his life for the sanctification of G-d's Name, which no amount of contemplation could account for.

נמצא שעצם הרצון בכל נפש לה' זהו למעלה מהדעת רק שעובר דרך מעבר ע"י השכל והדעת ולכך בלי התבוננות לא יומשך בגילוי.

It follows that the very will (ratzon) for G-d in every soul is above knowledge; only, it passes through intellect and knowledge as through a passageway, and therefore without contemplation it will not be drawn forth into revelation.

So the essential will for G-d in every soul is above knowledge. It passes through intellect and knowledge on its way out, which is why without contemplation it does not become revealed.

אבל מ"מ עצם שרש הרצון הוא למעלה מהדעת. וזהו מצד בחי' נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא

Nevertheless, the very root of the will is above knowledge. And this is from the level of "The soul that You have given within me, it is pure"

Still, the root of that will is above knowledge. It comes from the soul's root, of which the blessing says, "it is pure."

(והיא בחי' אהבת הבן אל האב שנתבאר במ"א⁷⁹ מפני שהי' אלהינו ממש כו'. וזהו בחינת חטה שאין התינוק יודע^{80,81} כו' כמ"ש במ"א).

(and it is the level of the love of a son for his father, which is explained elsewhere, because Havayah is truly our G-d, etc. And this is the level of "wheat," for "an infant does not know," etc., as is explained elsewhere).

This is the love of a son for his father, explained elsewhere, which comes because "Havayah is our G-d," truly our own. It is also linked with "wheat," after the Sages' saying that an infant does not know how to call "father" and "mother" until it tastes grain; this too is explained elsewhere.

וזהו אם בחקותי תלכו בחוקים שחקקתי לכם היינו בחי' חג"ת [חסד גבורה תפארת] דא"א ששם שרש האבות ע"כ ביכולתם לרעות צאנם ולהביאם למקור זה הנק' חקיקות ואז תלכו בבחי' מהלך בלתי שיעור וגבול.

This is [the meaning of] "If you walk in My statutes": in the statutes (chukim) that I have engraved (chakakti) for you, that is, the level of Chesed (kindness), Gevurah (restraint) and Tiferes (beauty) of Arich Anpin, where the root of the Patriarchs is. Therefore they are able to pasture their flock and bring them to this source, which is called "engravings," and then "you will walk," at the level of a walking without measure or limit.

So "If you walk in My statutes" means: in the statutes I have engraved for you, the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin, where the Patriarchs are rooted. The Patriarchs, as shepherds, can lead their flock, the Jewish souls, to that source, and then the soul's walking is without measure or limit.

וכמ"ש הנה ישכיל עבדי⁸² כו' וגבה מאד ופי' מאד בלי גבול היינו בבחי' א"ס (ועמ"ש ע"פ הזהר וישב הנ"ל) וזה הגילוי יהיה לע"ל [לעתיד לבוא].

As it is written, "Behold, My servant shall be wise," etc., "and very high"; and the meaning of "very" (me'od) is without limit, that is, at the level of the Infinite One (Ein Sof) (see what is written on the Zohar on Vayeshev mentioned above). And this revelation will be in the Time to Come.

The verse "Behold, My servant shall be wise... and very high" shows this: "very" (me'od) means without limit, the level of the Infinite One. This revelation belongs to the Time to Come.

והיינו ע"י אהבת בכל מאדך⁸³ בבחי' הילוך בתוספת אור דבר יום ביומו וכל אי מוכרח לבא אל אמיתית שרשו ומקורו בבחי' חג"ת [חסד גבורה תפארת] דא"א הנקי בחקותי כי לא ידח ממנו נדח⁸⁴ ממנו ממש ממהותו ועצמותו ית'.

That is, through the love of "with all your might" (bechol me'odecha), at the level of walking, with an increase of light, "each day's matter on its day." And every one is bound to come to the truth of his root and source, at the level of Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin, which are called "My statutes," for "the banished one shall not be banished from Him": truly from Him, from His being and essence, blessed be He.

It is reached through love "with all your might" (bechol me'odecha), with light increasing day by day. Every soul must eventually reach its true root, for, in the verse's words, "the banished one shall not be banished from Him," from G-d's very being and essence.

32 ואם לא בדור הזה יבא בגלגול בדור אחר ובפרט בדור דמלכא משיחא שיתעלו כללות נש"י [נשמות ישראל] בבחי' מאד

And if not in this generation, he will come in a reincarnation in another generation, and especially in the generation of King Moshiach, when the souls of Israel as a whole (klalus) will be raised to the level of "very" (me'od).

If a soul does not reach its root in this lifetime, it returns in a later generation, in a reincarnation. Above all, in the generation of Moshiach the souls of Israel as a whole will rise to the level of "very."

כי בימות המשיח עד תחיית המתים⁸⁵ יהיה העבודה במצות מעשיות רק שיהיה שלימות העבודה וכמ"ש במ"א ע"פ אוסרי לגפן^{86,87} לכן אז יהיה גבה מאד בחקותי ממש תלכו.

For in the days of Moshiach, until the Resurrection of the Dead, the service will be in practical mitzvos, only there will be the perfection of the service, as is explained elsewhere on the verse "Binding his foal to the vine." Therefore then there will be "very high": truly "in My statutes you will walk."

In the days of Moshiach, until the Resurrection, divine service will still consist of practical mitzvos, but in their full perfection. In Torah Ohr, Vayechi, on "Binding his foal to the vine," the Alter Rebbe explains that the days of Moshiach are still a time "to do them," the perfection of action, before the reward that follows the Resurrection. Then "very high" will be fulfilled, and Israel will truly walk "in My statutes."

והנה מה שאמר אם בחקותי תלכו אין אם אלא לשון תחנונים⁸⁸ הכוונה בבקשה זו שלא ילכו כנסת ישראל בבחי' הילוך הנ"ל כ"א בג' חקיקות הללו

Now, as for its saying "If you walk in My statutes": "If (im) is nothing but a term of entreaty." The intent of this request is that the Congregation of Israel should walk in the walking mentioned above only in these three engravings

As the Sages said, "If" here is a plea: G-d is entreating Israel. The plea is that the Congregation of Israel walk this path only within these three "engravings."

(שהם שרש ג' אבות שהם שרש ג' מדות הקדושות אהוי"ר [אהבה ויראה]⁸⁹ ורחמנות ושאר המדות מסתעפים מהם נצח ענף החסד שהוא האהבה כו' וכן כל המצות נמשכים מג' קוין אלו

(which are the root of the three Patriarchs, who are the root of the three holy attributes (middos), love and awe and compassion; and the other attributes branch out from them, Netzach (victory) being a branch of Chesed (kindness), which is love, etc.; and likewise all the mitzvos are drawn from these three lines,

The three engravings are the root of the three Patriarchs and of the three holy attributes, love, awe and compassion. All the other attributes branch out from them, as Netzach branches from Chesed, and all the mitzvos too are drawn from these three lines.

ולכן נחלקו לג' בחי' תורה ועבודה וגמ"ח [וגמילות חסדים]^{89,90} ולא בדרך אחרת זולתם כלל וזהו בחקותי שחקקתי דוקא תלכו:

and therefore they are divided into three categories, Torah, service and acts of kindness), and not in any other way besides them at all. This is [the meaning of] "in My statutes" (bechukosai), that I have engraved (chakakti), specifically, "you shall walk."

This is why the mitzvos fall into three groups, Torah, service and acts of kindness, the three things on which the world stands. G-d asks that Israel walk in no other way: "in My statutes," the ones He engraved.

SECTION 7 • ¶33-36

Keeping My commandments

33 ה ואת מצותי תשמרו.⁹¹ פיי השמירה כדי שיתקיים ההילוך דבכל מאדך בתפלה הוא ע"י המצות שהן

בחי כלים מכלים שונים לאור א"ס ב"ה וזהו ויין מלכות רב כיד המלך.⁹²

5. "And keep My commandments." The meaning: the keeping, so that the walking of "with all your might" in prayer will endure, is through the mitzvos, which are the level of vessels, "vessels of diverse vessels," for the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He. This is [the meaning of] "And royal wine in abundance, according to the hand of the king."

Section 5 turns to the second half of the verse, "and keep My commandments." The walking of prayer, "with all your might," must be kept and preserved, and that happens through the mitzvos, which are vessels for the Infinite Light; the Megillah's "vessels of diverse vessels... and royal wine in abundance" alludes to this.

93 פיי עד"מ היין שא"א לקבלו בלא כלי וכן עד"מ האור שמאיר בפתילה שאם אין פתילה יסתלק האור.

The meaning, by way of analogy: wine, which cannot be received without a vessel; and likewise, by way of analogy, the light that shines on a wick: if there is no wick, the light departs.

Wine cannot be held without a vessel, and a flame cannot stay alight without a wick: without the wick, the light departs. In Torah Ohr, Miketz, the Alter Rebbe explains that a flame shines because it takes hold of the wick, and so the light of the G-dly soul takes hold of the animal soul in which it is clothed.

34 וכן עד"מ בנפש החיונית המחיה אברי הגוף כמו כח הראיה בעין וכח השמיעה באזן שבקלקול הכלי ע"י

מכה וכדומה מסתלק אור הראיה מהעין והשמיעה מהאזן עד"מ.

And likewise, by way of analogy, with the vital soul that gives life to the limbs of the body, such as the power of sight in the eye and the power of hearing in the ear: when the vessel is damaged by a blow or the like, the light of sight departs from the eye, and the hearing from the ear, by way of analogy.

The same holds for the vital soul in the body: sight and hearing need healthy organs, and if the eye or the ear is injured, the power departs from it.

וכך עדי"ז יובן ענין רמ"ח מ"ע [מצות עשה] רמ"ח אברים דהיינו בחי' כלים דז"א לקבל המשכת האור מבחי' כתר תר"ך עמודי אור^{94,95} שהם תרי"ג מצות דאורייתא ושבע מצות דרבנן

In the same way will be understood the matter of the two hundred and forty-eight positive commandments, the two hundred and forty-eight limbs, that is, the level of the vessels of Z'eir Anpin, to receive the drawing down of the light from the level of Keser (the Crown), the six hundred and twenty pillars of light, which are the six hundred and thirteen mitzvos of the Torah and the seven mitzvos of the Rabbis,

So the 248 positive commandments correspond to 248 "limbs," the vessels of Z'eir Anpin, which receive the light drawn from Keser, called the "620 pillars of light": the 613 mitzvos of the Torah and the seven mitzvos of the Rabbis, among them the Chanukah lights and the reading of the Megillah (620 is the numerical value of כתר, Keser).

שיומשך ויתפשט בכלים ואברים דז"א ומשם יומשך בבי"ע ובלעדי הכלים הי' [היה] מסתלק האור כענין שנאמר כלים רקים אל תמעיטי⁹⁶ כו' וכתוב אין עוד כלי ויעמוד השמן^{97,98} כו'.

so that it be drawn and spread into the vessels and limbs of Z'eir Anpin, and from there be drawn into Beriah (Creation), Yetzirah (Formation) and Asiyah (Action). Without the vessels the light would depart, as in what is said, "Empty vessels, do not take few," etc., and it is written, "There is no other vessel; and the oil stopped," etc.

Through them the light spreads into Z'eir Anpin and then into the lower worlds; without vessels it would depart, as in Elisha's miracle, where the oil flowed only while there were empty vessels to fill.

(ועמ"ש מזה בביאור ע"פ וקבל היהודים).^{99,100} וזהו ויין מלכות הוא האור שמאיר רב כיד המלך הוא בחי' היד הגדולה חסד דאריך כו'

(See what is written about this in the explanation on the verse "And the Jews accepted.") And this is [the meaning of] "And royal wine": it is the light that shines; "in abundance, according to the hand of the king": it is the level of "the great hand," the Chesed (kindness) of Arich [Anpin], etc.

The reader is referred to the discourse on "And the Jews accepted," which notes that had there been more vessels, more light would have been drawn down. In the verse, the "royal wine" is the light, and "according to the hand of the king" is "the great hand," the Chesed of Arich Anpin.

ועל ידי שנכנס יין זה באדם יצא הסוד ואהבה מסותרת ששרשה מבחי האבות אשר שרשן מבחי זו בעבר הנהר כו' כנ"ל.

And through this wine entering a person, “the secret comes out,” and [so does] the hidden love, whose root is from the level of the Patriarchs, whose root is from this level beyond the River, etc., as mentioned above.

When this wine enters a person, “the secret comes out,” as the Sages say of wine: the hidden love is revealed, whose root is in the Patriarchs, beyond the River.

אך שצריך להיות בחי כלים מכלים שונים דתורה ומצות שבהן יומשך יין מלכות להיות רב כיד המלך.

Only, there must be the level of vessels, “vessels of diverse vessels,” of Torah and mitzvos, in which the royal wine will be drawn, to be “in abundance, according to the hand of the king.”

But the wine must be received in vessels, the “diverse vessels” of Torah and mitzvos, so that it can flow “in abundance, according to the hand of the king.”

35 וזהו ואת מצותי תשמרו פי' מצוה לשון צוותא והתחברות והיינו כאשר האור נמשך בכלי אז הוא בבחי התקשרות וצוותא אלינו משא"כ בעודו למעלה נקי חקיקה גליף גליפו וכו'.

This is [the meaning of] “And keep My commandments” (mitzvosai): mitzvah is a term of tzavta, joining and connection. That is, when the light is drawn into a vessel, it is then at the level of a bond and joining with us; whereas while it is still above, it is called engraving, “He engraved engravings,” etc.

“My commandments” (mitzvosai) is read as related to tzavta, joining. When light is drawn into a vessel it becomes bound and joined with us; while it remains above, it is only “engraving.”

וזהו בחוקתי תלכו בתפלה בבחי אהבה ויראה והתעוררות רחמים כו' שהם עליות עד בחי חקיקה עליונה אורות דכתר

This is “In My statutes you shall walk”: in prayer, at the level of love and awe (ahavah and yirah) and the arousal of compassion, etc., which are ascents up to the level of the supernal engraving, the lights of Keser (the Crown);

So “In My statutes you shall walk” is the ascent in prayer, through love, awe and the arousal of compassion, up to the supernal engraving, the lights of Keser.

והיינו דוקא ע"י ואת מצותי תשמרו שהן הכלים להמשכת וגילוי אורות הנ"ל שע"י הכלי יתקיים האור והיינו כי צ"ל תמיד בחי העלאה והמשכה כו' בחי רצוא ושוב.¹⁰¹

and this is specifically through "And keep My commandments," which are the vessels for drawing down and revealing the lights mentioned above, for through the vessel the light endures. That is, there must always be the level of raising up and drawing down, etc., the level of "running and returning" (ratzo vashov).

That ascent lasts only through "keep My commandments," the vessels that draw the lights down and reveal them. There must always be both raising up and drawing down, "running and returning," as the prophet describes the living creatures of the Chariot.

36 ועי"ז ונתנה הארץ יכולה¹⁰² הארץ היינו בחי מלכות דאצילות שתתן יכולה בהעלאת מ"נ [מ"יין נוקבין]

דרפ"ח ניצוצין ואח"כ ממילא יומשך בחי ועץ השדה יתן פריה הוא המשכת מ"ד [מ"יין דוכרין]

Through this, "the land shall give its produce": "the land" is the level of Malchus (sovereignty) of Atzilus (Emanation), which shall give its produce in the raising of the feminine waters (mayin nukvin) of the two hundred and eighty-eight sparks; and afterward there will automatically be drawn the level of "and the tree of the field shall give its fruit," which is the drawing down of the masculine waters (mayin duchrin);

The verse continues, "the land shall give its produce, and the tree of the field shall give its fruit." The land is Malchus of Atzilus: its "produce" is the raising of "feminine waters," the 288 sparks lifted up from below, and in response comes the "fruit" of the tree, the "masculine waters" drawn down from above.

והיינו שיהיה גילוי אור א"ס ב"ה להיות והתהלכתי בתוכם¹⁰³ בבחי עץ החיים שמשם יומשכו נשמות עליונות הנקראים פרי צדיק עץ חיים¹⁰⁴ (ועיין בזו"א [בזהר חלק א] בראשית דל"ז סע"ב [סוף עמוד ב]. עמ"ש במ"א ע"פ בן פורת יוסף¹⁰⁵ כו')

that is, that there will be a revelation of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, so that "I will walk among you," at the level of the Tree of Life, from which lofty souls will be drawn, who are called "the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" (and see the Zohar, Part I, Bereishis, end of folio 37b; see what is written elsewhere on the verse "Yosef is a fruitful bough," etc.).

That response is a revelation of the Infinite Light, as a later verse promises, "I will walk among you," from the level of the Tree of Life. From there come lofty souls, called "the fruit of the righteous," which "is a tree of life."

ועמ"ש עוד ע"פ את שבתותי תשמרו¹⁰⁶ מענין ירידת הנשמות ממקורם ממחשבה עילאה להתלבש בגופים איך שהיא ירידה צורך עלייה למעלה מעלה כו'.

And see further what is written on the verse "You shall keep My Shabbosos," regarding the descent of the souls from their source, from higher thought, to be clothed in bodies, how it is a descent for the sake of an ascent, far, far higher, etc.

The reader is referred to the discourse on "You shall keep My Shabbosos" (Likkutei Torah, Behar), which explains that the souls, which even before their descent "arose in thought," come down into body and animal soul, a descent that calls for great compassion and is for the sake of a far higher ascent.

ועמ"ש בד"ה ושמתי כדכד¹⁰⁷ בענין טהרה מביאה לידי קדושה וסד"ה אלה מסעי^{108, 109} בענין מסעיהם למוצאיהם.¹¹⁰

And see what is written in the discourse beginning "And I will make [your windows of] kaddod," regarding "purity brings to holiness," and at the end of the discourse beginning "These are the journeys," regarding "their journeys according to their goings out."

Also cited are the discourse on "And I will make your windows of kaddod," on the teaching that purity leads to holiness, and the end of the discourse on "These are the journeys," on "their journeys according to their goings out."

(ועיין מענין חרות על הלוחות^{111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121} ברבות משפטים ר"פ ל"ב. כי תשא פמ"א [פרק מ"א / פרשה מ"א]. פקודי פנ"א. ובגמרא עירובין נ"ד א'. ובוזהר ח"ב [חלק ב'] דף פ"ד דק"ג ב'. קי"ד א'. קפ"ג א' מ"ה ע"ב. ח"א [חלק א'] דל"ז סע"ב [סוף עמוד ב'] ודקל"א ב'. ח"ג [חלק ג'] ד"ו ע"ב).¹²²

(And on "engraved upon the Tablets," see [Midrash] Rabbah on Mishpatim, beginning of section 32; Ki Sisa, section 41; Pekudei, section 51; and in the Gemara, Eruvin 54a; and in the Zohar, Part II, folio 84; folio 113b; 114a; 183a; 45b; Part I, end of folio 37b, and folio 131b; Part III, folio 6b.)

This parenthesis gathers sources on "engraved upon the Tablets" in the Midrash, the Talmud and the Zohar. Several of them read charus, "engraved," as cherus, "freedom": freedom from the angel of death and from subjugation.

וצויתי את ברכתי¹²³ ברכת המצות כי מצות צריכות כוונה להמשיך בהן האור וכללות הכוונה היא התפלה של כל יום כמ"ש במ"א ע"פ לא הביט און ביעקב¹²⁴

“And I will command (vetzivisi) My blessing”: the blessing over the mitzvos. For mitzvos require intention, to draw the light into them, and the intention as a whole (klalus) is the prayer of each day, as is explained elsewhere on the verse “He has not beheld iniquity in Yaakov.”

The verse “And I will command My blessing” (in Parshas Behar) is read as the blessing said over a mitzvah, since vetzivisi, “I will command,” shares its root with mitzvah. Mitzvos need intention, to draw the light into them, and the intention for all of them together is the daily prayer, as explained on the verse “He has not beheld iniquity in Yaakov.”

וזהו ענין אם בחקותי תלכו שהוא בבחינת התפלה ואחר כך ואת מצותי תשמרו כו' ודרך פרט זהו ג"כ ענין ברכות המצות:¹²⁵

This is the matter of “If you walk in My statutes,” which is at the level of prayer, and afterward “and keep My commandments,” etc.; and on the particular level, this is also the matter of the blessings over the mitzvos.

So “If you walk in My statutes” is prayer, and “keep My commandments” follows it. On the particular level, the blessing recited over each mitzvah does the same for that mitzvah; in Likkutei Torah, Masei, the Alter Rebbe describes such a blessing as a drawing down from above that gives the power to raise up the physical thing with which the mitzvah is done.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Every Jew's will for G-d is rooted above knowledge, yet without contemplating G-d's greatness it does not come into the open. In prayer a person should walk, rising day by day in love, awe and compassion toward the engraved root of his soul, and by no other way. Then he must hold that light in the vessels of the mitzvos, for without a vessel the light departs: always rising and drawing down again, with each day's prayer as the intention for all his mitzvos and the blessing as the intention for each one.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the maamar insist that engraved letters are not identical with the stone's simple substance, and how does this nuance carry over to Keser and to the soul?
2. Why do the letters included in the concept fall short as an analogy, and what does the infant who understands but cannot speak show about where the letters come from?
3. What does the story of Moshe and Rabbi Akiva show about the difference between the Chochmah of Atzilus and the hidden Chochmah of Keser?
4. How does reading "beyond the River" as the root of the soul answer why the blessing says "it is pure" before "You created it"?
5. Why must the walking of prayer be followed by keeping the mitzvos, and what do the images of wine, wick and vessel add?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 2

- 1 G-d's promise to Israel that opens the blessings of Bechukosai: "If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and do them," I will give your rains in their season. Plainly, chukosai means "My statutes," the laws to be followed; the discourse reads the word as "My engravings" (chakikah) and the "walking" as the soul's ascent.

ויקרא כ"ו:ג: Leviticus 26:3

אם-בְּחֻקֵּי תֵלְכוּ וְאֶת-מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם:

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

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- 2 As Moshe comes down the mountain with the two Tablets, the Torah describes them: "The Tablets were the work of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d, engraved upon the Tablets." The Alter Rebbe takes the engraved letters of the Tablets as the model of letters that are one with the substance they are in.

שמות ל"ב:ט"ז Exodus 32:16

וְהַלָּחַת מַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹקִים הֵמָּה וְהַמִּכְתָּב מִכְתָּב אֱלֹקִים הוּא קְרוֹת עַל-הַלָּחַת:

And the tables were the work of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d, graven upon the tables.

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PARAGRAPH 6

- 3 שהנפש מלאה אותיות

There the Alter Rebbe explains that all things were created through the letters of the Ten Utterances, and that the human soul too is full of letters, since G-d "blew into his nostrils the breath of life," that is, with the breath of His mouth, which brings everything into being through letters.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן פ' נשא כו, ב. וראה באוה"ת תבוא ע' תתרלב.

- 4 ויהי האדם לנפש חי

The Torah tells how G-d formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, "and man became a living soul." The Alter Rebbe cites it, with Onkelos's rendering, to show that the human soul is full of letters.

בראשית ב':ו: Genesis 2:7

וַיִּצָּר ה' אֱלֹקִים אֶת-הָאָדָם עֹפֶר מִדְּהָאָדָמָה וַיִּפֹּחַ בָּאָפִיו נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה:

Then the L-RD G-d formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית ב, ז.

- 5 לרוח ממללא

Onkelos renders "a living soul" as "a speaking spirit," identifying the life of the human soul with its power of speech.

תרגום אוונקלוס על בראשית ב':ז: Onkelos Genesis 2:7

וּבָרָא יי' אֱלֹקִים יֵת אָדָם עֹפֶרָא מִן אֲדָמָתָא וּנְפַח בְּאַפּוּהִי נְשָׁמָתָא דְחַיִּי וְהוּת בְּאָדָם לְרוּחַ מְמַלְלָא:

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- 6 לבוש . . כמ"ש במ"א

the passage shares nothing with the note

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקו"ת שה"ש ד, א. בלק סז, ג.

PARAGRAPH 7

- 7 בד"ה שחורה אני

That discourse, on "I am black, yet comely," builds on the Sages' teaching that the Torah was given as black fire upon white fire, and applies it to the World to Come, created with the letter yud: the smooth parchment is the white fire, the Infinite Light itself, and the black yud darkens it so that it can be grasped.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת שה"ש ד, ב וא"לך.

PARAGRAPH 8

- 8 השמע לאזנך

The Talmud learns from the word "Shema" ("Hear") that the Shema should be recited audibly: "Let your ears hear what you bring out of your mouth." The Alter Rebbe uses the phrase to describe lower thought, which thinks the very letters one speaks.

ברכות י"ג א:כ"ח-ל"א Berakhot 13a:28-30

וְלִרְבִּי נָמִי, הָא קְתִיב "שְׁמַע"! הָהוּא מְבַעֵי לָקָה: הַשְׁמַע לְאַזְנוֹיָךְ מַה שְּׂאֲתָהּ מוֹצִיא מִפִּיךָ. וְרַבְּנָן? סְבָרִי לֵה כְּמָאן דְּאָמַר לֹא הַשְׁמַע לְאַזְנוֹיָךְ — יִצָּא. וְלִרְבְּנָן נָמִי הָא קְתִיב "וְהִיוּ"? הָהוּא מְבַעֵי לְהוּ שְׁלֹא יִקְרָא לְמַפְרַע.

But for Rabbi also it is written "Hear, O Israel" ! He requires it to establish the rule. Cause thine ear to hear what thou utterest with thy lips. And the Sages ? They agree with him who says that if one does not read [the Shema] audibly, he has still fulfilled his obligation. But for the Sages also it is written "And these words shall be" ! They require it to establish the rule that one must not read [the sentences of the Shema] out of order.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ברכות יג, א.

PARAGRAPH 9

9 פתוחי חותם

Kehot's note points to Exodus 21:13 for these words.

שמות כ"א:י"ג Exodus 21:13

KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות כא, יג.

10 פתוחי חותם

G-d tells Moshe to engrave the names of the tribes on the two stones of the ephod "like the engravings of a seal" (pituchei chosam); the same phrase recurs for the stones of the breastplate and the High Priest's gold headplate. The discourse uses it for engraved letters at their source in Binah. (Kehot: Exodus 21:13)

שמות כ"ח:י"א Exodus 28:11

מַעֲשֵׂה הַרֶשֶׁת אֶבֶן פְּתוּחֵי הַחֹם תִּפְתַּח אֶת־שְׁמֵי הָאֲבָנִים עַל־שְׁמַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִסֵּבַת מִשְׁבָּצוֹת זָהָב תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם:

With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones, according to the names of the children of Israel; thou shalt make them to be inclosed in settings of gold.

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11 אותיות מחשבה ודבור הנקי לאה ורחל

Sefaria does not know this ref

KEHOT'S NOTE

נסמן לעיל (מצורע) כד, ג.

PARAGRAPH 11

12 משבטאותיות והנקודות הוא למעלה מהשכל המושג ומובן אלא משבט הנעלם וקדמות השכל שבנפש המדברת

In this epistle, on "And David made a name," the Alter Rebbe explains that the articulation of letters and vowels comes not from grasped intellect but from the hidden and primordial intellect of the speaking soul, which is why an infant who understands everything cannot yet speak. The discourse quotes it almost word for word.

Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh 5:5-6 ו"ה-ה' הקדש ה' תניא, אגרת הקדש ה' תניא,

... ולא לפתוח כלל וכלל. ואין להאריך בדבר הפשוט ומובן ומושקל לכל משכיל, שמבטאותיות והנקודות הוא למעלה מהשכל המושג ומובן, אלא משכיל הנעלם וקדמות השכל שבנפש המדברת, ולכן אין התינוק יכול לדבר, אף שמכין הכל: אך האותיות הן בבחינת חומר וצורה, הנקרא פנימית וחיצונית, כי הגם שמקורן הוא מקדמות השכל ורצון הנפש, זו היא בחינת צורת שינוי המבטא שבכ"ב אותיות, אבל בבחינת החומר וגוף התהוותו, ...

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PARAGRAPH 12

13 שמקורן הוא מקדמות השכל ורצון הנפש

Iggeres HaKodesh says that the source of the letters is "the primordial intellect and the will of the soul," and that this is the form of the twenty-two letters, as distinct from their matter. The discourse uses the same words for the soul's engraved letters.

Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh 5:6 ו"ה-ה' הקדש ה' תניא, אגרת הקדש ה' תניא,

אך האותיות הן בבחינת חומר וצורה, הנקרא פנימית וחיצונית, כי הגם שמקורן הוא מקדמות השכל ורצון הנפש, זו היא בחינת צורת שינוי המבטא שבכ"ב אותיות, אבל בבחינת החומר וגוף התהוותו, והוא בבחינת חיצוניתו, הוא ההכל היוצא מהלב, שממנו מתהווה קול פשוט היוצא מהגרון, ואחר כך נחלק לכ"ב הברות, וביטוי כ"ב אותיות בה מוצאות ה'דועות: אח"כ מהגרון, גיכ"מ מהחיר כו'. ומבטא ההכל הוא אות ה' "אתא קלילא כו", והוא מקור החומר ...

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PARAGRAPH 14

14 אין אומר ואין דברים

In David's psalm the heavens and the days declare G-d's glory, though "there is no utterance and there are no words; their voice is not heard": they say nothing aloud, and their very being carries the message. The Alter Rebbe borrows the words in another sense: without the soul there would be no utterance or words at all. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Tehillim 19:4 ו"ה-ה' הקדש ה' תניא, אגרת הקדש ה' תניא,

אין אומר ואין דברים בלי נשמע קולם:

There is no speech, there are no words, neither is their voice heard.

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15 כל אות שאין גויל מקיף מדי רוחותיה פסול

The Talmud rules that any letter not surrounded by parchment on its four sides is invalid. The Alter Rebbe cites the law as a further sign of how the written letter depends on its parchment.

Menachot 29a:17-18 ו"ה-ה' הקדש ה' תניא, אגרת הקדש ה' תניא,

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב לא נצרכה אלא לקוצה של יוד והא נמי פשיטא אלא לכאידך דרב יהודה אמר רב דאמר רב יהודה אמר רב כל אות שאין גויל מוקף לה מארבע רוחותיה פסולה אמר אשיאן בר נבך משמיה דרב יהודה ניקב תוכו של ה"י כשר יריכו פסול א"ר זירא לדידי מפרשה לי מיניה דרב הונא ורבי יעקב אמר לדידי מפרשה לי מיניה דרב יהודה ניקב תוכו של ה"י כשר יריכו אם נשתיר בו כשיעור אות קטנה כשר ואם לאו פסול

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16 שימיני כחותם

The beloved asks, "Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm," to be bound to him for ever; in the allegory, Israel asks this of G-d. The verse names another

discourse, where this law of the parchment surrounding each letter is explained.

Song of Songs 8:6: שיר השירים ח:ו

שִׁימֵנִי כְּחֹתֶם עַל־לִבְךָ כְּחֹתֶם עַל־זְרוֹעֶךָ כִּמְנוֹת אֶהְבֶּה קֶשֶׁר
כְּשֹׂאֹל קִנְיָה רִשְׁפִּיהָ רִשְׁפִּי אֵשׁ שֶׁלֹּה־בִתְיָה:

Set me as a seal upon thy heart, As a seal upon thine arm;
For love is strong as death, Jealousy is cruel as the grave;
The flashes thereof are flashes of fire, A very flame of the L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 15

17 בדבר ה' שמים נעשו

“By the word of Havayah the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.” The verse is the classic source for G-d creating through speech, that is, through letters.

Psalms 33:6: תהילים ל"ג:ו

בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נַעֲשׂוּ וּבְרוּחַ פִּי כָל־צִבְּאוֹם:

By the word of the L-RD were the heavens made; And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

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PARAGRAPH 16

18 מ"ש . . בריש הרמנותא דמלכא

In the discourse on “This is the statute of the Torah,” the Alter Rebbe reads the Zohar’s “He engraved engravings” as engraving, since the Targum renders “you shall engrave upon it engravings” with the same root.

KEHOT’S NOTE

ראה לקמן פ' חוקת נט, ג. ביאה"ז לצ"צ ע' שצח ואילך.

19 כעצם השמים לטוהר

At Sinai, Moshe, Aharon, Nadav, Avihu and seventy elders “saw the G-d of Israel, and under His feet was like a work of sapphire brick, and like the essence of the heavens in purity.” The word for purity, tohar, explains the Zohar’s term tehiru, the supernal brightness.

Exodus 24:10: שמות כ"ד:י

וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַתַּחַת רַגְלָיו כִּמְעָשָׂה לִבְנֵת הַסַּפִּיר וּכְעָצֶם
הַשָּׁמַיִם לְטָהָר:

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

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KEHOT’S NOTE

שמות כד, י.

20 איהו וגרמוהי חד

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

KEHOT’S NOTE

ת"ו בהקדמה.

21 איהו וגרמוהי חד

The Tikkunei Zohar says that in the ten Sefiros of Atzilus “He and His vessels are one,” unlike the Sefiros of Beriah. The Alter Rebbe grants this, yet likens the Sefiros of Atzilus to written letters compared with Keser.

Tikkunei Zohar 3b:9-10: תקוני זוהר ג' ב:ט-י

דַּעֲשֵׁר סְפִירוֹת דְּאֻצִּילוֹת מְלָכָא בְּהוֹן, אִיהוּ וְגִרְמִיָּה חַד בְּהוֹן, אִיהוּ וְחִיּוּנִי חַד בְּהוֹן, מִה דְּלֹא חֲכִי בַּעֲשֵׁר סְפִירוֹת דְּבְרִיָּאָה, דְּלֹא אִינוֹן וְחִיּוּנוֹן חַד, לֹא אִינוֹן וְגִרְמִיָּהוֹן חַד. וְעַלֹת עַל כָּלָא הוּא נִהִיר (נ"א נחית) בַּעֲשֵׁר סְפִירוֹת דְּאֻצִּילוֹת, וּבַעֲשֵׁר סְפִירוֹת דְּבְרִיָּאָה, וְנִהִיר בַּעֲשֵׁר כְּתוּת דְּמִלְּאָכְנָא, וּבַעֲשֵׁר גִּלְגְּלִי דְּרִקִּיעָא, וְלֹא אֲשֵׁתְנִי בְּכָל אֲתָר.

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22 בכיור ע"פ וכעצם השמים לטוהר

This is the explanation the text refers to.

KEHOT’S NOTE

תו"א עח, ג. נתבאר בארוכה באוה"ת בלק ע' תתקסו. אוה"ת ענינים ע' קסב.

23 מחלוקת המקובלים . . בפרדס שער ג'

The note refers to this collection of the Alter Rebbe’s maa-marim for the dispute among the Kabbalists over whether Keser is counted among the Sefiros.

KEHOT’S NOTE

ראה מאמרי אדה"ז — ענינים ע' קצא. סה"מ תרס"ו ע' קמה.

24 בע"ח שער מ"א פ"ג

After noting that the discourse’s “Sha’ar 41” follows the numbering of the Shklov printing (Sha’ar 42 in current editions) and that “chapter 3” should read chapter 1, the note refers to Or HaTorah on Balak, where the Arizal’s view of Keser as intermediary is discussed at length.

KEHOT’S NOTE

בדפוס שקלאוו תר"ס. [לפננו שער מ"ב] צ"ל פ"א ולא פ"ג [כ]. בארוכה ראה אוה"ת בלק ע' תתקסו.

25 האצילה את הבחי' הב' שבו שהוא שרש כל י"ס הנאצלים

The Arizal explains that Keser is an intermediary between the Emanator and the emanated: its lower level of the Infinite One emanates a second level holding the root of all the emanated, and the two, Atik and Arich Anpin, are together called Keser. The discourse cites it as Sha’ar 41, chapter 3: the gate follows the numbering of the Shklov printing (Sha’ar 42 in current editions), and the Kehot note corrects the chapter to 1.

Sefer Etz Chaim 42:3: עץ חיים מ"ב:ג

... בחי' דיצירה מלבישין לבריאה וגי' בחי' דעשיה מלבישין ליצירה. ונמצא גופות דעשיה מלבישין כל הבחי' כולם ועליהם קליפות דאצי ועליהן קליפין דבריאה ועליהן קליפין דיצירה ועליהם קליפין דעשיה ועליהם מלבישים לבושי והיכלות דקדושה דעשיה ועליהן לבושי והיכלי קדושה דיצירה כו' עד לבושי והיכלי דא"ק זהו הנלע"ד עתה ויש פ"י ב' והוא שאין הקליפה מקיפין כל האצילות אלא ע"ד שרחל יוצאת מאחורי ז"א ונפרדת ממנו כך הקליפה דאצילות הוא כדמיון אדם א' בלע"ל עומד אחורי אדם דקדושה דאצילות וכשעולה הקדושה דבריאה

באצילות אז הקדושה מלבשת לקדושה וקליפה דבריאה מקפת לקליפה ...

Sefer Etz Chaim (Public Domain)

26 כתר והיא בחי הממוצע

The note says a fuller explanation of Keser as intermediary is found in this manuscript and belongs here.

Song of Songs 7:4: ז'ד: שיר השירים

שְׁנֵי שְׁדֵיךְ כְּשְׁנֵי עֶפְרַיִם תְּאֵמִי צְבִיָּה:

Thy two breasts are like two fawns that are twins of a gazelle.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ביאור יותר בזה עי ביכעל פערטעל קכו, ב ושייכו ל כאן וד"ל [כ]. [המסומן בספריית כ"ק אדמו"ר במס' 499 שם נמצא ד"ה להבין מ"ש בע"ה דהכתר הוא ממוצע, ונדפס בס' מאמרי אדה"ז-ענינים עי קצא, וראה בהנסמן בהמ"מ שם]. ראה לקמן שה"ש ז, ד ואילך. אוה"ת וישב כרך-ו ודף תתרפח, א. אוה"ת יתרו עי תתלט ואילך. ד"ה וילך תרס"ו עי קסה ואילך. וראה בד"ה תקעו תרס"ג עי לא למה צריכים ממוצע.

27 ע"ס הגנוזות . . הגאונים

There the Alter Rebbe notes that the "ten hidden Sefiros" mentioned in the Pardes are, by the Arizal's teaching, the level of G-d's holy Names, which, like a person's name, do not touch His essence; the Kehot notes there list the sources.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה הנסמן לקמן (בהעלותך) לו, א.

28 Moshe, shown Rabbi Akiva's Torah and then his martyrdom, asks, "This is Torah and this is its reward?" and is told, "Be silent; thus it arose in thought before Me." The Alter Rebbe uses the story to show a reason beyond the Chochmah of Atzilus.

Menachot 29b:5: כ"ט ב:ה: מנחות

חזר ובא לפני הקב"ה אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם יש לך אדם כזה ואתה נותן תורה ע"י אמר לו שתוק כך עלה במחשבה לפני אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם הראיתני תורתו הראני שכרו אמר לו חזור [לאחורך] חזר לאחוריו ראה ששוקלין בשרו במקולין אמר לפניו רבש"ע זו תורה וזו שכרה א"ל שתוק כך עלה במחשבה לפני

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29 שתוק כך עלה במחשבה

The note refers to the Mittler Rebbe's explanations of the Zohar for the meaning of "Be silent; thus it arose in thought."

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ביאה"ז לאדה"א מז, א.

30 נובלות ואחוריים דח"ע

In the epistle beginning "He wraps Himself in light," the Alter Rebbe writes that Moshe's comprehension was of the "back" of Chochmah, in the sense of "the fallen fruit of the

Chochmah Above is Torah." The discourse cites it for the level of the Written Torah.

Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh 19:2: י"ט:ב: תניא, אגרת הקדש

אכל למעלה מנצח הודי-סודי-מלכות לא היתה לו שום השגה בפנימיות, כי אם בבחינת אחוריים דחכמה המלוכשים בבניה, המלוכשת ומתפשטת תוך פנימיות דנצח הודי-סודי-מלכות, בסוד "נובלות חכמה שלמעלה - תורה", שהיא בבחינת "זעיר אנפין", וכדכתיב: "וראית את אחורי, ופני לא יראו", עיין שם ובשער הנבואה פרק א'.

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31 באגה"ק — חכמה

The note refers to a comment of the Rebbe Rashab printed earlier in the Additions, on this point about Iggeres HaKodesh and the level of Chochmah from which the Written Torah comes.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לעיל בהוספות יח, ג הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר מהורש"ב נ"ע.

32 ייש — יומין

In the discourse "A psalm, a song at the dedication of the House," the Alter Rebbe explains that Keser, the intermediary, has two levels, as Etz Chaim (Sha'ar 41, chapter 3) says: the first of the emanated, Arich Anpin, the source of the ten Sefiros of Atzilus, and the lowest level of the Emanator, called Atik, as in "who removes (ha-ma'atik) mountains," which bears no relation at all to the emanated Sefiros.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ועי ברכה לקמן צט, א [כ].

33 The opening words of the Zohar on Bereishis: at the start of the King's will, He engraved engravings in the supernal brightness. The Alter Rebbe reads this engraving as the coming into being of Keser, Atik Yomin and Arich Anpin.

Sfzer Zohar, Bereshit 1:1-2:7: ב'ז:א-א':ב'ז: ספר הזוהר, בראשית א':ב'ז:1-1:2

PARAGRAPH 20

34 לאו מכל אינן מדות

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"ז בהקדמה.

35 לאו מכל אינן מדות איהו כלל

In the prayer of Eliyahu (Patach Eliyahu) in the introduction to the Tikkunei Zohar, G-d is described as being none of these attributes at all. The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that the Sefiros of Atzilus are not G-d's own essence.

Tikkunei Zohar 17b:5-7: ז'ז:ב:ה: תקוני זוהר

אבל לאו דאית לך צדק ידיעא דאיהו דין. ולא משפט ידיע דאיהו רחמי ולא מכל אליו מדות כלל. קום רבי שמעון ויתחדשון מלין על ידך דהא רשותא אית לך (נ"א אתיהיב לך) לגלאה רזין טמירין על ידך מה דלא אתיהיב רשו לגלאה לשום בר נש עד כען. קם רבי שמעון פתח ואמר לך יי הגדולה והגבורה וכי

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36 וז"ע כעשי גופנית נחשבת אצלו ית

In chapter 2 Tanya says that the Infinite One is so exalted above Chochmah, Binah and Daas that their very being "is considered like physical action before Him, blessed be He," as it is written, "You made them all with Chochmah." Shaar HaYichud VebaEmunah, chapter 9, explains the same verse: Chochmah, the beginning of thought, is the end of action before G-d.

Psalms 104:24 כ"ד:תהילים

מהרבו מעשיך ה' כלם בְּחִכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ מְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ וְהַיָּם:

How manifold are Thy works, O L-RD! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; The earth is full of Thy creatures.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

כמיש כולם בחכ' עשית (תהלים קד, כד). ראה תניא ח"א פ"ב בהגהה. ח"ב פ"ט. ועוד.

PARAGRAPH 22

37 ע"פ זאת חקת התורה

There the Alter Rebbe reads chukas haTorah as engraving: the Torah in its root and source is at the level of engraved letters, higher than its being clothed in the level called letters of writing, the Written Torah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת חקת נו, א.

PARAGRAPH 23

38 ה' בחכמה

Praising wisdom, Shlomo says, "Havayah founded the earth with Chochmah; He established the heavens with understanding." The Alter Rebbe cites it for the radiance of the Infinite One, Havayah, present within Chochmah, the source of the Torah.

Proverbs 3:19 משלי ג':י"ט

ה' בְּחִכְמָה יָסַד אֶרֶץ כוֹנֵן שָׁמַיִם בְּתוּבָנָה:

The L-RD by wisdom founded the earth; By understanding He established the heavens.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי ג, יט.

39 בביאור ע"פ ועשית ציץ

The Kehot note quotes the point made there: "For Chochmah is the level of a flash of lightning and has no form at all; only Binah is something defined, and the level of letters applies to it." That is why the Torah becomes letters only in Binah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

תו"א פד, א "כי הרי החכמה היא בחי' ברק ואין בה שום תמונה, רק בינה היא יש ושייך בה בחי' אותיות".

ועשית ציץ

40

G-d tells Moshe: "And you shall make a tzitz of pure gold, and engrave upon it, engraved like a seal, 'Holy to Havayah,'" the gold plate the High Priest wore on his forehead. The verse names the Torah Ohr discourse where the source of letters in Binah is explained.

Exodus 28:36 שמות כ"ח:ל"ו

וְעָשִׂיתָ צִיץ זָהָב טָהוֹר וּפְתַחְתָּ עָלָיו פְּתוּחֵי חֹתֶם קֹדֶשׁ לְה'

And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and engrave upon it, like the engravings of a signet: HOLY TO THE L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 24

41 נהר היוצא מעדן

The Torah describes the Garden of Eden: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden." The Alter Rebbe reads Eden as Chochmah and the river as Binah, from which the fifty-three (ג"ן, gan, "garden") portions of the Torah flow.

Genesis 2:10 בראשית ב':י"י

וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן לְהַשְׁקוֹת אֶת־הַגֶּן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרָד וְהָיָה לְאַרְבָּעָה רָאשִׁים:

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads.

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42 איהו וגרמוהי חד בהון

The Tikkunei Zohar says that in the ten Sefiros of Atzilus "He and His vessels are one in them." Even so, the letters of the Written Torah are vessels, below the engraved letters of the Tablets.

Tikkunei Zohar 3b:9-10 תקוני זוהר ג' ב:ט-י

דְּעֵשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת דְּאֶצִּילוֹת מְלֻכָּה בְּהוֹן, אִיהוּ וְגִרְמִיָּה חַד בְּהוֹן, אִיהוּ וְחֵיָיו חַד בְּהוֹן, מֵה דְלֹא חֵי בְּעֵשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת דְּבְרִיָּא, דְּלֹא אִינוּ וְחֵיָיו חַד, לֹא אִינוּ וְגִרְמִיָּה חַד. וְעֵלָת עַל כֻּלָּא הוּא נְהִיר (נ"א נחית) בְּעֵשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת דְּאֶצִּילוֹת, וּבְעֵשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת דְּבְרִיָּא, וְנְהִיר בְּעֵשֶׂר כְּתוּבֵי דְּמִלְאכֵיָא, וּבְעֵשֶׂר גִּלְגָּלֵי דְּרִקִּיעָא, וְלֹא אֲשֵׁתַי כֻּלָּא אֶתֶר.

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43 וברבות נשא פייג . . תרי"ג אותיות יש

The note refers to this maamar of the Rebbe Rashab for the Midrash's count of the letters of the Ten Commandments.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ד"ה ויחי יעקב תרמ"ד ע' רכא.

44 אותיות יש מן אנכי עד אשר לרעך ושבעה יתירות כנגד שבעה ימי

בראשית

The Midrash counts 613 letters in the Ten Commandments from "I am" to "which is your neighbor's," corresponding to the 613 mitzvos, with seven extra letters for the seven

days of Creation. The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that the total, 620, is the value of Keser.

Bamidbar Rabbah 13:16 ט"ז:ט"ז

PARAGRAPH 25

45

תלת קשרין אינון

The Zohar teaches that three levels are bound to one another, the Holy One, blessed be He, the Torah and Israel, and that each has a hidden and a revealed level. The Alter Rebbe infers that the two kinds of letters in the Torah are found in every soul too.

ספר הוהר, אחרי מות מ"ט:רצ"ו-50:305-296:49 Zohar, Achrei Mot

And Israel themselves are in two grades, corresponding to the two grades of the Torah, the disclosed and the undisclosed. To all who have been circumcised and stamped with the holy impress, we impart those things in the Torah which are on the surface, the letters and the plain contents and the precepts, and no more. This is indicated in the words, "He telleth his words to Jacob".

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

46

נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ברכת השחר.

47

נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא

The Talmud gives the blessing said on waking: "My G-d, the soul that You have given within me is pure; You formed it within me, You breathed it into me." The Alter Rebbe asks why "pure" comes before "You created it."

ברכות ס' ב:ד"ד 60b:4 Berakhot

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

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

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48

והענין יובן בהקדים

From this point on, the note says, compare the Rebbe Rashab's maamar on the same verse from Yehoshua.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מכאן ראה ד"ה ויאמר יהושע תרנ"ז ע' ס ואילך.

49

Before his death Yehoshua gathers the tribes and conveys G-d's words: "Your fathers dwelt beyond the River of old, Terach, the father of Avraham and the father of Nachor." In the plain sense the River is the Euphrates, beyond which Avraham's family lived; the Alter Rebbe, with the Zohar, reads "beyond the River" as the root of the Patriarchs above Binah, "the river going out of Eden."

יהושע כ"ד:ב' Joshua

ויאמר יהושע אל-כל-העם כה-אמר ה' אלקי ישראל בעבר הנהר ישבו אבותיכם מעולם תרח אבי אברהם ואבי נחור ויעבדו אלקים אחרים:

And Joshua said unto all the people: 'Thus saith the L-RD, the G-d of Israel: Your fathers dwelt of old time beyond the River, even Terach, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods.

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50

ואקח את אביכם את אברהם מעבר הנהר ואולך אותו בכל ארץ כנען

"And I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan": in the plain sense, G-d brought Avraham across the Euphrates and through the land. The discourse reads it as the drawing down of the Patriarchs from their root into Atzilus and the lower worlds.

יהושע כ"ד:ג' Joshua

ואקח את-אביכם את-אברהם מעבר הנהר ואולך אותו בכל-ארץ כנען וארכה את-זרעו ואת-רלו את-יצחק:

And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

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51

וכי כל ישראל לא ידעו זה

Rabbi Yitzchak asks of Yehoshua's words, "Did not all Israel know this, and all the more so Yehoshua?" and answers that the Torah has a hidden side: the Holy One did Israel a great kindness, choosing them through the Patriarchs, making them a holy chariot for His glory and bringing them out from within the supernal river. The Alter Rebbe explains this as Israel's root in hidden thought.

ספר הוהר, אמור ל"ה:קע"א-ל"ה:קפ"ח Zohar, Emor 35:171-38:188

Imagine a king who had an only son whom he united in marriage to a noble lady. What did his mother do? All that night she spent in her storeroom, and she brought forth therefrom a noble crown set with seventy precious stones to crown him with; she brought forth silken garments and clad him therewith and adorned him royally. Then she went to the bride and saw how her maidens were arranging her crown and her garments and her jewels. She said to them: I have prepared a bath ...

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

52

ותירץ בזה"ק

The note quotes the Zohar's answer as the Rebbe Rashab gives it there: the verse tells us of the great goodness the

Holy One, blessed be He, did for Israel in choosing them through the Patriarchs and making of them a holy, supernal chariot for His glory.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"ותירץ שמודיע לנו בזה דטיבו סגי עבד קוב"ה בישראל דאיתרעי בהוא באבהתא ועבד לו רתיכא קדישא עילאה ליקריי כו" — סה"מ תרנ"ז ע"ס.

53 במחשבה — כדלעיל באריכות

The note identifies "as explained above at length" as section 3 of this discourse, where "Be silent; thus it arose in thought" is explained through the hidden Chochmah (paragraphs 16-19).

KEHOT'S NOTE

פ"ג [כ].

54 עלו במחשבה מבחי" מחשבה סתימאה

According to the note, the Rebbe Rashab explains at length there how "arose in thought" refers to hidden thought.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נתבאר באריכות בסה"מ תרנ"ז שם ע"ס ואל"ך.

55 ישראל עלו במחשבה

The note quotes the Rebbe's point there: the Sages say "arose" in thought, not merely "were" in thought, meaning that within thought itself Israel are at its most exalted level.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"עלו דוקא, שאינו אומר היו במחשבה, כ"א עלו במחשבה היינו שבבחינת המחשבה גופא הם בבחי" היותר נעלה שבמחשבה" — ד"ה ויאמר יהושע תש"כ (הנחה).

56 ישראל עלו במחשבה

The Midrash lists things that preceded the creation of the world, some created and some that "arose in thought," among them Israel. The Alter Rebbe reads "arose in thought" as the root of the souls in the hidden thought of Arich Anpin.

Bereshit Rabbah 1:4 ד"ה רבה א:

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

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

stands firm from earliest time, [You are from eternity]" (Psalms 93:2). The patriarchs, Israel, ...

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PARAGRAPH 26

57 נהר היוצא מעדן

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden." Eden is Chochmah and the river is Binah, which flows on like thought that never rests.

בראשית ב':10

ונהר יצא מעדן להשקות את־הגן ומשם יפרד והיה לארבעה ראשים:

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads.

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58 ובפרדס בעה"כ ערך מחשבה

The note says that the Pardes entry on "thought" cited here is copied in Or HaTorah, Bereishis, vol. 4.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נעתק באוה"ת בראשית-ד דף תשמ, ב.

PARAGRAPH 27

59 כמ"ש במ"א בענין עד הגל

According to the note, the Siddur discusses there the separation between the level of the "supernal whiteness" (Lavan, whose name means white) and Yaakov, the master of Atzilus.

KEHOT'S NOTE

סדור עם דא"ח דש, ד. בהפסק שבין בחי' לובן העליון ליעקב בעל האצ"י.

60 עד הגל

At their parting covenant Lavan says to Yaakov: "This heap is witness, and the pillar is witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you." The boundary heap is read as the curtain dividing Arich Anpin from Atzilus.

בראשית ל"א:52

עַד הַגֵּל הָזֶה וְעֵדָה הַמַּצֵּבָה אִם־אֶנִּי לֹא־אֶעְבֹּר אֵלָיֶךָ אֶת־הַגֵּל הָזֶה וְאִם־אֶתָּה לֹא־תֵעָבֶר אֵלַי אֶת־הַגֵּל הָזֶה וְאֶת־הַמַּצֵּבָה הַזֹּאת לְרָעָה:

This heap be witness, and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

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61 דאברהם יצחק ויעקב . . חגיגת דא"א

The note refers to the sources listed in this encyclopedia of Chabad concepts for the Patriarchs as Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה בהנסמן בספר הערכים-חב"ד כרך א ע"י.

PARAGRAPH 28

62 טורי נהורא וטורי חשוכא

The Zohar describes a mountain of darkness and a mountain of light. The Alter Rebbe reads the mountains of light as emotions born of understanding and the mountains of darkness as love above understanding.

ספר הזהר, פנחס ק"ד:תרצ"ו-104:696-105:706 Zohar, Pinchas
ק"ה:תש"ו

63 טורי נהורא וטורי חשוכא הנזכר בוהר

There the Alter Rebbe explains that the "mountains of light" are the emotions drawn from intellect, the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Z'eir Anpin, and the "mountains of darkness" the emotions above intellect, great love, the Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferes of Arich Anpin; their flowing down into Z'eir Anpin is "skipping over the mountains."

KEHOT'S NOTE

ח"ג רמט, ב. ועל"ק בשח"ש טו, ג. [כ].

64 שלמעלה — ג' ידות

There the three hands are matched with the three Levite families: the great hand, "abundant in kindness," with the service of the sons of Gershon; the strong hand, "His left hand under my head," with the sons of Merari; and the high hand, from the word for exaltation, with the sons of Kehas, who carried the Ark and the Tablets.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן פ' נשא כא, ב בארוכה.

65 יד הגדולה

After the sea split, "Israel saw the great hand that Havayah had wielded against Egypt." It is the first of the three "hands."

Exodus 14:31 שמות י"ד:ל"א

וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הוּא בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־הוּא וַיֹּאמְרֵם בְּהוּא וּבְמִשֶּׁה עֲבָדוּ:

And Israel saw the great work which the L-RD did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the L-RD; and they believed in the L-RD, and in His servant Moses.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות יד, לא.

66 יד החזקה

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שם ו, א.

67

יד החזקה

G-d tells Moshe: "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh, for with a strong hand he will send them out." It is the second of the three "hands."

Exodus 6:1 שמות ו:א

וַיֹּאמֶר הוּא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲתָה תֵּרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶעֱשֶׂה לְפָרְעֹה כִּי בְיַד חֲזָקָה יִשְׁלַחַם וּבְיַד חֲזָקָה יִגְרֹשֶׁם מֵאֶרֶצוֹ:

And the L-RD said unto Moses: 'Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh; for by a strong hand shall he let them go, and by a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.'

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68

יד הרמה

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שם יד, ח.

PARAGRAPH 29

69 ואקח את אביכם את אברהם מעבר הנהר ואולך אותו בכל ארץ כנען

"And I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan." Here "the land of Canaan" is Malchus of Atzilus, and the leading is the descent of the Patriarchs' souls into the worlds.

Joshua 24:3 יהושע כ"ד:ג

וְאֶקַח אֶת־אֲבִיכֶם אֶת־אַבְרָהָם מֵעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר וְאֹלַךְ אוֹתוֹ בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְאֶרְבָּה אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶתְּוֹלְדוֹ אֶת־יִצְחָק:

And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

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70

הכנעה כמ"ש במ"א

The discourse "And Yaakov dwelt ... in the land of Canaan" asks why the Land of Israel is called the land of Canaan, and explains that Canaan means a merchant, who spends his money in order to earn more: so Knesses Yisrael, in exile, refines the sparks of holiness.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תו"א כו, ג ואילך, ובהגהות לזה באוה"ת בראשית.

71

בד"ה לך לך

The discourse opens: Avram is the hidden intellect, beyond all thought, "Av ram," which must come into revelation, descending level by level through the chain of worlds, so that G-dliness be revealed in Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah and their creatures can receive its delight.

KEHOT'S NOTE

תו"א יא, א ואילך.

72

נחלה בלי מצרים

The Talmud promises one who delights in Shabbos "an inheritance without bounds," the inheritance of Yaakov. The

Alter Rebbe uses it for Yaakov's attribute of compassion, which knows no limit.

שבת קי"ח א"ז: ח"ז: 7-8 Shabbat 118a:

... "כיום בא גוג". אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי יוסי: כל המענג את השבת נותנין לו נחלה בלי מצרים, שנאמר: "אז תתענג על ה' והרפכתה על כמתי ארץ והאכלתה

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73 **במ"א ע"פ המאמר וישב**
The note identifies the explanation "elsewhere" of this Zohar passage as the Mittlerer Rebbe's explanations of the Zohar.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ביאה"ז לאדה"א כב, ג. ועם הגהות בביאה"ז לצ"צ עי קיח ואילך.

74 **וגבה מאד מסטרא דיעקב**
Expounding "He shall be exalted and lifted up and very high," the Zohar says: "lifted up," from the side of Avraham; "high," from the side of Yitzchak; "very," from the side of Yaakov. The Alter Rebbe cites it for the boundless ascent through Yaakov's compassion.

ספר זוהר, וישב ה': מ"ד-נ"ז 5:44-57 Zohar, Vayeshev

"and lifted up", from the side of Abraham; "and shall be high", from the side of Isaac; "very", from the side of Jacob.

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

75 **כנשר יעיר**
In Moshe's song G-d's care for Israel is "as an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young." The verse opens a discourse the Alter Rebbe refers to for the same theme.

דברים ל"ב: י"א 32:11 Deuteronomy

כנשר יעיר קנו על-גוזליו ורחף פרש כנפיו יקחהו ישאהו על-אברותיו:

As an eagle that stirreth up her nest, Hovereth over her young, Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, Beareth them on her pinions—

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76 **והיה הוי' לי לאלקים**
Yaakov's vow at Beis El, on his way to Lavan: "and Havayah will be my G-d." The verse opens a discourse on Parshas Vayetzei to which the Alter Rebbe refers.

בראשית כ"ח: כ"א 28:21 Genesis

ושבתי בשלום אל-בית אבי והיה ה' לי לאלקים:

so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then shall the L-RD be my G-d,

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77 **וכל אשר תתן לי עשר אעשרנו לך**
"And of all that You give me I will surely tithe to You." The verse continues Yaakov's vow, discussed in the same discourse.

בראשית כ"ח: כ"ב 28:22 Genesis

והאבן הזאת אשר-שמתי מצבה והיה בית אלקים וכל אשר תתן-לי עשר אעשרנו לך:

and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be G-d's house; and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.'

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PARAGRAPH 30

78 **בראתה יצרתה נפחתה בי**
The blessing continues, "You formed it within me, You breathed it into me." The Alter Rebbe reads these stages as the soul's descent through the worlds into the body.

ברכות ט' ב: ד"ד 60b:4 Berakhot

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

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

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PARAGRAPH 31

79 **שנתבאר — במ"א**
The note refers to a comment of the Rebbe Rashab printed earlier in the Additions, for the love of a son for his father that is explained "elsewhere."

KEHOT'S NOTE

עיין לעיל בהוספות יח, ג הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר מהורש"ב נ"ע.

80 **שאינ התינוק יודע**
Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ברכות מ, סע"א.

81 **שאינ התינוק יודע**
Rabbi Yehudah holds that the tree of knowledge was wheat, "for an infant does not know how to call 'father' and 'mother' until it tastes the taste of grain." The Alter Rebbe links this "wheat" with the love of a son for his father.

ברכות מ"א: י"ד 40a:14 Berakhot

על פירות הארץ וכו'. פשיטא! אמר רב נתנן בר יצחק: לא נצרכה אלא לרבי יהודה, דאמר חטה מין אילן היא. דתנא: אילן שאכל ממנו אדם הראשון, רבי מאיר אומר: גפן ה'ה, שאין לה דבר שמביא לילה על האדם אלא יין, שנאמר: "וישת מן היין וישכר". רבי נתן אומר: תאנה היתה, שבדבר שנתקלקלו בו נתקנו, שנאמר: "ויתפרו עלה

תאנה". רבי יהודה אומר: חטה היתה, שאין התינוק יודע לקרות "אבא" ו"אמא" עד שיטעום טעם דגן.

If, over fruits of the earth, etc. This is evident ! Rab Nahman b. Isaac said : It is only necessary for R. Judah who declares that wheat is a kind of tree ; for there is a teaching : The tree from which Adam ate was — so says R. Meir — the vine, because thou hast nothing which brings lamentation upon man as does wine; as it is said, "And he drank of the wine, and was drunken" (Gen. ix. 21). R. Nehemiah says: It was the fig-tree, ...

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82

הנה ישכיל עבדי

G-d speaks through Isaiah of His servant, Israel or the Moshiach: "Behold, My servant shall be wise; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and very high." The Alter Rebbe reads "very" (me'od) as the limitless ascent that will be revealed in the Time to Come. (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Isaiah 52:13: ישיעו נ"ב: ייג

הנה ישכיל עבדי ירום ונשא וגבה מאד:

Behold, My servant shall prosper, He shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישיעו נב, יג.

83

בכל מאדך

Moshe commands in the Shema: "And you shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." Love "with all your might" (me'odecha) is the love without limit through which the soul reaches its root.

Deuteronomy 6:5: וי' דברים

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

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים ו, ה.

84

כי לא ידח ממנו נדח

The wise woman of Tekoa, pleading with King David to bring back the banished Avshalom, says that G-d "devises means, so that the banished one shall not be banished from Him." The Alter Rebbe reads "from Him" as from G-d's very being, to which every soul will ultimately return.

II Samuel 14:14: ד"ד ב י"ד שמואל

כ"מות נמות וכמלים הנגזרים ארצה אשר לא יאספו ולא ישא אלקים נפש ויחשב מחשבות לבלתי ידח ממנו נדח:

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth G-d respect any person; but let him devise means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from him.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ש"ב יד, יד (לבלתי ידח).

PARAGRAPH 32

85

בימות המשיח עד תחיית המתים יהי העבודה במצות מעשיות

There the Alter Rebbe writes that the Sages' saying "mitzvos will be nullified in the Time to Come" refers to the Resurrection of the Dead, but in the days of Moshiach, before the Resurrection, they are not nullified; then the mitzvos will be fulfilled with their inner intentions.

Niddah 61b: נדה ס"א ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

אגה"ק ססכ"ו. וראה נדה סא, ב.

86

ע"פ אוסרי לגפן

There the Alter Rebbe explains that the verse speaks of the days of Moshiach, which are not yet the World to Come after the Resurrection, the time of reward.

KEHOT'S NOTE

תו"א מו, א ובאוה"ת לשם.

87

אוסרי לגפן

In Yaakov's blessing, Yehudah's land will have vines so plentiful that one may tie a donkey to them: "Binding his foal to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine." The verse names the Torah Ohr discourse that reads it as referring to the days of Moshiach.

Genesis 49:11: ראשית מ"ט: יא

אסרי לגפן עירה ולשרקה בני אתנו כבס ב"יון לבשו ובדם ענבים סותה:

Binding his foal unto the vine, And his ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washeth his garments in wine, And his vesture in the blood of grapes;

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88

אין אם אלא לשון תחנונים

On "If you walk in My statutes," the Talmud says, "If is nothing but a term of entreaty," G-d pleading with Israel. The Alter Rebbe explains the content of the plea.

Avodah Zarah 5a:20: זרה ה' א: כ"א עבודה

תנו רבנן: "אם בקקתי תלכו", אין "אם" אלא לשון תחנונים, וכן הוא אומר: "לו עמי שומע לי [וגו'] כמעט אויביהם אכניע", ואומר: "לו הקשבת למצותי ויהי כנהר שלומך וגו' ויהי כחול ורעה וצאצאי מעיד וגו'".

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89

תורה ועבודה וגמ"ח

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות א, ב.

90

תורה ועבודה וגמ"ח

Shimon the Righteous taught that the world stands on three things: Torah, service and acts of kindness. The

Alter Rebbe divides all the mitzvos into these three, drawn from the three lines of the Patriarchs.

Pirkei Avot 1:2: משנה אבות א':

שְׁמַעוֹן הַצִּדִּיק הָיָה מְשַׁרְי כְּנֶסֶת הַגְּדוּלָּה. הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חֶסֶדִים:

Shimon the Righteous was one of the last of the men of the great assembly. He used to say: the world stands upon three things: the Torah, the Temple service, and the practice of acts of piety.

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

PARAGRAPH 33

91

ואת מצותי תשמרו

“If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments and do them.” The discourse now explains the second half of the verse as the mitzvos that preserve the light of prayer.

Leviticus 26:3: ויקרא כ"ו:

אם־תִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־מִצְוֹתַי וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם:

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

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92

ויין מלכות רב כיד המלך

At Achashverosh's feast drinks were served “in vessels of gold, vessels of diverse vessels, and royal wine in abundance, according to the hand of the king.” The Alter Rebbe reads the wine as divine light and the vessels as the mitzvos.

Esther 1:7: אסתר א':

וְהַשְׁקוֹת בְּכֵלִי זָהָב וְכֵלִים מְכֻלִּים שׁוֹנִים וְיֵין מַלְכוּת רַב כִּיד הַמֶּלֶךְ:

And they gave them drink in vessels of gold—the vessels being diverse one from another—and royal wine in abundance, according to the bounty of the king.

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93

שאם אין פתילה יסתלק האור

There the Alter Rebbe explains that a flame shines because it takes hold of the wick and consumes it, and the oil is what joins the light to the wick and makes it bright.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תו"א מ, סע"ב.

PARAGRAPH 34

94

כתר . . תר"ך עמודי אור

According to the note, this lexicon of Kabbalistic terms states explicitly that the 620 pillars of light are in Keser.

KEHOT'S NOTE

פרדס ש"ח, פ"ג. כמ"ש להדיא במאמ"א מערכת תר"ך סני"ו. ועלי"ק מטות (פו, ב). (ראה כ, ב). ח' דברים הנ"ל (פג, ג). שה"ש (ב, א, ז, ג, כב, ד ונ[סמן] מאדמו"ר) [כ].

95

כתר תר"ך עמודי אור

Rabbi Moshe Cordovero writes that the Sages received a tradition that Keser holds 620 pillars of light, the numerical value of כתר, first revealed in the prayer of Rabbi Nechunya ben HaKana. The Kehot note gives this chapter as the source of the 620 pillars of light.

Pardes Rimmonim 8:5-6: פרדס רמונים ח':

אחר שנתעסקנו בפרקים הקודמים בענין הכתר, נבוא בפרק זה לבאר שני הנאצלים ממנו והם חכמה ובינה. ובענין מהותם אם הם דין או רחמים נחלקו המפרשים. יש משי"כ כי החכמה בערך הכתר יש בה קצת דין ובערך בינה היא רחמים, וענין זה נבאר בו לפנים. ויש שכתב שהיא רחמים פשוטים והדין הוא מבינה ולמטה. וי"מ שכתבו הפך ואמרו שהבינה רחמים והחכמה דין והיא סבא זרה תכלית הזרות. וז"ל כשעלה הרצון והמחשבה להבראות העולם אותו הרצון והחפץ הוא גלוי הדבר ואותו הרצון כנוהו המקובלים בלשון מחשבה וכשנאצלה אותה המחשבה נתפרסמה עוקץ של ...

Pardes Rimmonim (Public Domain)

96

ובלעדי — כלים רקים אל תמעיטי

Elisha tells the widow, whose creditor threatens to take her sons, to borrow “empty vessels, do not take few,” for the oil will fill them. The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that light is drawn down only as far as there are vessels to receive it.

II Kings 4:3: מלכים ב ד':

וַיֹּאמֶר לְכִי שְׂאִלֶיךָ כְּלִים מִן־הַחוּץ מֵאֵת כָּל־[שְׂכֵנֶיךָ] (שכנכי) כְּלִים רְקִים אֲל־תִּמְעִיטִי:

Then he said: ‘Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מלכים ב ד, ג.

97

אין עוד כלי ויעמוד השמן

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

שם ד, ו.

98

אין עוד כלי ויעמוד השמן

When the vessels were full, her son told her, “There is no other vessel,” and the oil stopped. When the vessels ran out, the flow ceased, as the light would depart without the vessels of the mitzvos.

II Kings 4:6: מלכים ב ד':

וַיְהִי כַּמְּלֹאת הַכְּלִים וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־בְּנָהּ הַגִּישָׁה אֵלַי עוֹד כְּלִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אֵין עוֹד כְּלִי וַיַּעֲמֵד הַשֶּׁמֶן:

And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son: ‘Bring me yet a vessel.’ And he said unto her: ‘There is not a vessel more.’ And the oil stayed.

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99

ועמ"ש מזה בביאור ע"פ וקבל היהודים

The note quotes the point made there: “and had there been more vessels, there would have been a greater drawing down of the lights.” The passage explains that in the

days of Haman the Jews accepted the Torah completely, through self-sacrifice for the sanctification of G-d's Name, and so the Infinite Light entered and was drawn down to them.

KEHOT'S NOTE

תו"א צו, א ואילך. ושם צו, ב "ואילו היו עוד כלים היה עוד ריבוי המשכת האורות כו".

100

וקבל היהודים

"And the Jews accepted what they had begun to do." The verse opens the Torah Ohr discourse to which the Alter Rebbe refers.

אסתר ט:כ"ג

וקבל היהודים את אשר החלו לעשות ואת אשר כתב מרדכי אליהם:

And the Jews took upon them to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them;

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PARAGRAPH 35

101

רצוא ושוב

"And the living creatures ran and returned, like the appearance of a flash." The Alter Rebbe uses the phrase for the two movements of service, rising up in prayer and drawing down through the mitzvos.

יחזקאל א':יד

והיות רצוא ושוב כמראה הבהק:

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

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PARAGRAPH 36

102

ונתנה הארץ יבולה

"I will give your rains in their season, and the land shall give its produce, and the tree of the field shall give its fruit." The land is read as Malchus raising the sparks, and the tree's fruit as the light drawn down in response.

ויקרא כ"ד:ל

ונתתי גשמיכם בעתם ונתנה הארץ יבולה ועץ השדה יתן פריו:

then I will give your rains in their season, and the land shall yield her produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

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103

והתהלכתי בתוכם

"And I will walk among you, and I will be your G-d." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the revelation of the Infinite Light from the Tree of Life.

ויקרא כ"ו:ל

והתהלכתי בתוכם והייתי לכם לאלקים ואתם תהיו לי לעם:

And I will walk among you, and will be your G-d, and ye shall be My people.

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104

פרי צדיק עץ חיים

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life." The lofty souls drawn from the Tree of Life are called the fruit of the righteous.

Proverbs 11:30

פרי צדיק עץ חיים ולקח נפשות חכם:

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; And he that is wise winneth souls.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי יא, ל.

105

בן פורת יוסף

In his blessings Yaakov says, "Yosef is a fruitful bough." The verse names the discourse to which the Alter Rebbe refers for this theme.

Genesis 49:22

בן פורת יוסף בן פרת עלי ציון בנות צעדה עלי שור:

Joseph is a fruitful vine, A fruitful vine by a fountain; Its branches run over the wall. .

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106

ע"פ את שבתותי תשמרו

That discourse explains "My Shabbosos" as a lower and a higher Shabbos within every Shabbos, and prefaces it with the descent of the souls into bodies, a descent for the sake of ascent: even before it they are very high, for "Israel arose in thought," far above the angels, who come from "the breath of His mouth."

KEHOT'S NOTE

לעיל מא, א.

107

ושמתי כדכד

The prophet promises a rebuilt Jerusalem: "I will make your windows of kadkod," a precious stone. The verse opens the discourse cited for "purity brings to holiness." (context: Steinsaltz Tanakh)

Isaiah 54:12

ושמתי כדכד שמשתיך ושעריך לאבני אקדח וכל גבולך לאבני חפץ:

And I will make thy pinnacles of rubies, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy border of precious stones.

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108

וסד"ה אלה מסעי

There Moshe's writing down the journeys is a drawing down from above that gives Israel the power to ascend, since they could not rise by themselves.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקו"ת מסעי צב, א.

109

אלה מסעי

"These are the journeys of the children of Israel." The verse opens the discourse cited at its end.

Numbers 33:1:ג:א:במדר

אלה מסעי בני ישראל אשר יצאו מארץ מצרים לצבאתם ביד משה ואהרן:

These are the stages of the children of Israel, by which they went forth out of the land of Egypt by their hosts under the hand of Moses and Aaron.

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110

מסעיהם למוצאייהם

"And these are their journeys according to their goings out." The discourse on Masei explains it, the subject to which the Alter Rebbe refers.

Numbers 33:2:ב:ג:במדר

ויכתב משה את מוצאייהם למסעיהם עליפי ה' ואלה מסעיהם למוצאייהם:

And Moses wrote their goings forth, stage by stage, by the commandment of the L-RD; and these are their stages at their goings forth.

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111

חרות על הלוחות

The Midrash on Mishpatim says that had Israel not made the golden calf there would have been no exile, and the angel of death would not have ruled over them, and it expounds "engraved (charus) upon the Tablets": Rabbi Yehudah says, free (cherus) from exile; Rabbi Nechemiah, free from the angel of death.

Shemot Rabbah 32:1:א:ב:שמות רבה

... ולא מלאך המות שולט בהן. וכן הוא אומר (שמות לב): והמכתב מכתב אלקים הוא חרות על הלוחות. מהו חרות? ר' יהודה ור' נחמיה, ר' יהודה אומר: חירות מן גליות. ור' נחמיה אומר: חירות ממלאך המות. בשעה שאמרו ישראל כל אשר דבר ה' נעשה ונשמע, אמר הקב"ה: אדם הראשון צויתו מצוה אחת, כדי שיקיימנה והשויתו למלאכי השרת, שנא' (בראשית ג): הן האדם היה כאחד ממנו, אלו שהן עושין ומקיימין תרי"ג מצות, חוץ מן הכללים, ומן הפרטים, ומן הדקדוקים, אינו דין שיהיו הן חיינ וקיימין לעולם?! וכן הוא אומר (במדבר כא): ...

"Behold, I am sending an angel before you to protect you along the way and to take you to the place that I have prepared" (Exodus 23:20). "Behold, I am sending an angel" - that is what is written: "I had said: You are divine beings" (Psalms 82:6). Had Israel waited for Moses and not performed that act, there would have been no exiles, and the angel of death would not have had dominion over them. Likewise it says, "[The tablets were the work of G-d] and the script was ...

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112

חרות על הלוחות

The Midrash on Ki Sisa brings the same teaching on "engraved upon the Tablets," in the names of Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Nechemiah and the Sages.

Shemot Rabbah 41:7:ז:א:שמות רבה

... אוי להם לבריות מעלבונה של תורה, שכל מי שאינו עוסק תדיר בתורה, הרי זה נזוף להקב"ה, שנאמר: והלוחות מעשה אלקים המה חרות על הלוחות. מהו חרות? ר' יהודה ור' ירמיה ורבנן ר' יהודה אומר: אל תקרי חרות אלא חרות מן גליות. ר' נחמיה אומר: חירות ממלאך המות. ורבתינו אומרים: חירות מן היסורין. אמר רבי אלעזר בנו של ר' יוסי הגלילי: אם יבא מלאך המות ויאמר לפני הקב"ה: על חנם בראתני בעולם?! הוא אומר: על כל אומה שבעולם השלטתי אותך, חוץ מאומה זו, שנתתי לה חירות. הוי, חרות על הלוחות. ...

"The tablets were the work of G-d and the writing was the writing of G-d, engraved on the tablets" (Exodus 32:16). "The tablets were the work of G-d." Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Each and every day, a Divine Voice emerges from Mount Horev and proclaims: 'Woe unto the creations for the affront to the Torah, as anyone who does not regularly engage in the Torah is ostracized from before the Holy One blessed be He,' as it is stated: "The tablets were the work of G-d."; see Tanhuma, Ki ...

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113

חרות על הלוחות

The Midrash on Pekudei says that when the Torah was given, Israel were not fit to be ruled by the angel of death, as it says "engraved upon the Tablets": free from exile, and free from the angel of death.

Shemot Rabbah 51:8:ח:א:שמות רבה

דבר אחר: אלה פקודי המשכן מהו אלה? בשעה שנתן הקדוש ברוך הוא התורה לישראל, לא היו ראויים שישלוט מלאך המות בהם, שנאמר (שמות לב): חרות על הלוחות. מהו חרות? ר' יהודה אומר: חירות מן גליות. ור' נחמיה אומר: חירות ממלאך המות. אמר רבי פנחס בן חמא בשם ר"י בשם רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי: אמר הקב"ה: אם יבא מלאך המות ויאמר לי: למה נבראתי, אני אומר לו: סטטינר בראתך על העובדי כוכבים ולא על בני, שכיון שקבלו התורה, הלבישם הקב"ה מזיו הדרו. ומה היה הלבוש? רבי יוחנן אומר: ...

Another matter: "These are the reckonings of the Tabernacle" - what are "these"? When the Holy One blessed be He gave the Torah to Israel, they did not warrant having the angel of death have dominion over them, as it is stated: "Engraved [harut] on the tablets" (Exodus 32:16). What is harut? Rabbi Yehuda says: Freedom [herut] from exile. Rabbi Neḥemya says: Freedom from the angel of death. Rabbi Pinḥas ben Ḥama said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan in the name of Rabbi Eliezer son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili: ...

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114

חרות על הלוחות

On Yisro the Zohar brings Rabbi Yehudah's view that the letters of "engraved upon the Tablets" were bored through

the stones and could be seen from both sides. The text gives only folio 84; the passage is on 84b.

ספר זוהר, יתרו 21:367-378 ש"י-ש"ז: "תרו כ"א: ש"י-ש"ז: 367-378

Said R. Judah: 'When it says that the "writing was... graven upon the tablets" (Ex. 32, 16), it means that the tablets were pierced, so that the writing could be seen from either side; the writing formed an engraving within an engraving.' According to R. Abba, it was possible from one side to see the other side, and read the writing thereon.

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

115 חרות על הלוחות

In the Saba of Mishpatim the Zohar reads "engraved upon the Tablets" as freedom: freedom from the angel of death, from subjugation to the kingdoms, and from everything.

ספר זוהר, משפטים ג' ש"ה-ש"ד: 335-364

As to the words "graven upon the tables" (harut'al haluhoth), it has already been pointed out that this phrase contains an allusion to heruth-that is, freedom. Freedom from what? From the angel of death, from subjection to the kingdoms of this world, from all things earthly and from all things evil. And what is freedom? It is the seal of the world to come, in which is every kind of freedom. Had not the tablets been broken, the world would not have suffered as it subsequently did, and the Israelites ...

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

116 חרות על הלוחות

Continuing, the Zohar calls the engraving the seal of the World to Come, in which there was every kind of freedom, and says the writing of the Tablets was black fire upon white fire.

ספר זוהר, משפטים ג' ש"ד-ש"ע: 364-370

As to the words "graven upon the tables" (harut'al haluhoth), it has already been pointed out that this phrase contains an allusion to heruth-that is, freedom. Freedom from what? From the angel of death, from subjection to the kingdoms of this world, from all things earthly and from all things evil. And what is freedom? It is the seal of the world to come, in which is every kind of freedom. Had not the tablets been broken, the world would not have suffered as it subsequently did, and the Israelites ...

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

117 חרות על הלוחות

The Zohar says that the Torah that comes from there is called freedom, as it is written, "engraved upon the Tablets": do not read charus but cherus.

ספר זוהר, תצוה ז' ט"ד-ט"ז: 64-9:73

Similarly, it is written: "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim freedom throughout all the land" (Lev. 25, 10). Freedom emanates from this fiftieth year to all, and because of this the Torah which proceeded from that fiftieth day is called "Freedom". Concerning this it is written, "Graven (haruth) upon the tablets", which word haruth contains the same letters as heruth, which is Freedom, and the Decalogue, which is the essence of the Law, is thus given its

due appellation, because whatever this supernal day brings forth is ...

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

118 חרות על הלוחות

On Beshalach the Zohar says G-d wished to make Israel like the supernal angels, free from death and from subjugation to the nations, as it says "engraved upon the Tablets": do not read charus but cherus; the sin of the golden calf brought death, subjugation and the breaking of the first Tablets.

ספר זוהר, בשלח ב' כ"ה-ג' ל"ט: 2:28-3:39

Nay, but for that sin Israel would have been, then and forever, that which the Holy One had ordained them to be; namely, pure as the angels and free from all evil: free from death and free from the dominion of earthly powers.

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

119 חרות על הלוחות

The Zohar reads "engraved upon the Tablets" as freedom from the angel of death, for the Tree of Life was drawn down below, had Israel not sinned.

ספר זוהר, בראשית מ"ח:ת"ע-ע"ד: 48:470-49:479

R. Eleazar said that the word beshagam (for that he) signifies Moses, who caused the moon to shine, and this enabled men to abide in the world for great length of days. AND HIS DAYS SHALL BE A HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS. This is an allusion to Moses, through whose agency the Law was given and who thus bestowed life on men from the tree of life. And in truth had Israel not sinned, they would have been proof against death, since the tree of life had been brought down ...

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120 חרות על הלוחות

The Zohar says that whoever toils in Torah is free from the rule of the nations and of the angel of death, and so the Torah given to Israel says "engraved upon the Tablets"; had they not sinned and left the Tree of Life, they would not have brought death upon the world as before.

ספר זוהר, חיי שרה י"ט:ר"י-יד: 19:214-21:221

Such a one also obtains deliverance from the angel of death, who has no power over him. (You may object, What of the martyrs who suffered in times of persecution, such as R. Akibah and his colleagues? These suffered, however, under a special decree from on high in accordance with a special purpose.) Assuredly, had Adam held fast to the tree of life, which is nothing else but the Torah, he would not have brought death upon himself and upon the rest of the world. Hence, in connection with the ...

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121 חרות על הלוחות

The Zohar speaks of the great shofar through which servants go out to eternal freedom; from there the first

Tablets were inscribed, the secret of “engraved upon the Tablets”: do not read charus but cherus, the place on which all freedom depends.

ספר זוהר, ויקרא י"ב:פ"א-פ"ח:88-10:80, Zohar, Vayikra

122 (ברכות משפטים . . ח"ג ד"ו ע"ב)

According to the note, most of the sources in this parenthesis are copied and explained in Or HaTorah on Ki Sisa, on the verse “engraved upon the Tablets.”

KEHOT'S NOTE

רוב המ"מ נעתקו ונתבארו באוה"ת תשא ע' בי"א ואילך על הפסוק.

123 וצויתי את ברכתי

For the Shemittah year G-d promises, “I will command My blessing for you in the sixth year,” and the land will yield enough for three years. The Alter Rebbe reads “I will command” (vetzivisi), from the root of mitzvah, as the blessing over the mitzvos.

ויקרא כ"ה:כ"א:25:21 Leviticus

וְצוֹיְתִי אֶת־בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁשִׁית וְעָשָׂת אֶת־הַתְּבוּאָה לְשָׁלֹשׁ הַשָּׁנִים:

then I will command My blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth produce for the three years.

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124 לא הביט און ביעקב

Bilam, sent to curse Israel, blesses them instead: “He has not beheld iniquity in Yaakov.” The verse names the discourse where prayer is explained as the general intention of the mitzvos.

במדבר כ"ג:כ"א:23:21 Numbers

לֹא־הִבִּיט אֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב וְלֹא־רָאָה עֲמָל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל הִ' אֱלֹקָיו עִמּוֹ וְתִרְעוּת מִלֵּךְ בּוֹ:

None hath beheld iniquity in Jacob, Neither hath one seen perverseness in Israel; The L-RD his G-d is with him, And the shouting for the King is among them.

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125 The Talmud expounds “engraved upon the Tablets”: had the first Tablets not been broken, the Torah would never have been forgotten from Israel; and, reading charus as cherus, freedom, no nation would have ruled over them.

עירובין נ"ד א:כ"א:54a:20 Eruvin

רב אהא בר יעקב אמר: אין כל אומה ולשון שולטת בהן. שנאמר: "חרות" — אל תיקרי "חרות", אלא חירות.

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



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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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

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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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