



LIKKUTEI TORAH • PARSHAS KI SEITZEI • MAAMAR 5

ולא אבה הוי' אלהיך לשמוע אל בלעם ויהפוך...

“But Havayah your G-d was
not willing to listen to Bilam”



G-d's refusal, beyond reason, to hear the accuser answers the Jew's own love for Him beyond reason, the tip of the yud of Havayah in the soul. And when a penitent cries out “with all your might” from the hidden depths of his soul, G-d's love from above does more than ignore his sins: it turns them into merits, the curse into a blessing.

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

G-d's refusal, beyond reason, to hear the accuser answers the Jew's own love for Him beyond reason, the tip of the yud of Havayah in the soul. And when a penitent cries out "with all your might" from the hidden depths of his soul, G-d's love from above does more than ignore his sins: it turns them into merits, the curse into a blessing.

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

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The Torah praises G-d for refusing to listen to Bilam and for turning his curse into a blessing. The Alter Rebbe asks why such a refusal is remarkable, and what was turned if Bilam was never heard. Bilam stands for the accuser who seeks out Israel's real sins; the praise is that G-d refuses to hear him at all, beyond reason. This answers to the Jew's own love beyond reason, the tip of the yud of Havayah: a hidden natural love that would sooner give up life than be separated from G-d. The maamar then maps the rest of the Name onto the soul. The yud is Chochmah, born of tzimtzum; a person echoes it by nullifying his own will, which draws down the tzimtzum that renews creation each day. The first hei is Binah: broad contemplation, love, joy and the higher teshuvah of prayer. The vav and final hei are Torah and mitzvos in action, summed up in charity. Beyond these is a Havayah drawn from above, "because He loved you": the penitent's cry "with all your might" reveals the soul's hidden depths, and from there sins become merits and the curse a blessing, culminating on Yom Kippur.

OUTLINE

1 Why not listening is praise

¶1-2

Bilam stands for the accuser who seeks out Israel's real sins. G-d's praise is that He refuses to hear him, not by refuting him but beyond reason; the verse names Havayah because a radiance of Havayah is in every Jewish soul.

2 The tip of the yud: love beyond reason

¶3

Every Jew has a hidden natural love that would give up life rather than be separated from G-d: the tip of the yud, rooted in the Infinite Light within the soul's Chochmah. Aroused, it brings fear of sin even regarding the words of the Scribes, and it evokes G-d's own "not willing to listen."

3 The yud: Chochmah, tzimtzum and nullifying one's will

¶4-5

Chochmah emerges from the Infinite Light only through a radical tzimtzum, like hair from the brain; without it the worlds could not exist. The daily renewal of creation depends on a person's own tzimtzum, "Nullify your will," in thought, speech and action, through the Chochmah of the soul.

4 The first hei: contemplation, love and teshuvah in prayer

¶6-8

Binah broadens the point of Chochmah into contemplation of G-d's greatness, which brings love and joy into the heart. Its arousal from below is the higher teshuvah, a cry from distress; in prayer it leads to "You shall love Havayah your G-d" and to the request that G-d's "face" be drawn down.

5 The vav and final hei: Torah, mitzvos and charity

¶9

The Torah, the vav, draws G-d's light even into the "wilderness" of this world; the mitzvos in action, the final hei, reveal it there. Charity, their general expression, shows this in its spelling: tzedek becomes tzedakah when Chesed fills it.

6 Havayah from above: the penitent and the depths

¶10-12

"Because Havayah your G-d loved you" is a love from above that turns sins into merits. The penitent's cry "with all your might" reaches the level of Yah and the prohibitions and reveals the soul's ten hidden depths and a new Havayah, from which forgiveness flows, one depth on each of the Ten Days of Teshuvah until Yom Kippur.

KEY CONCEPTS

the tip of the yud קוצו של יו"ד

The point that rises above the first letter of Havayah; in the soul, the hidden natural love beyond reason that reaches toward the Infinite One.

the natural love אהבה הטבעית

A love for G-d built into the G-dly soul, which would give up life rather than be separated from His unity; it stays hidden by the body until it is aroused.

tzimtzum (contraction) צמצום

G-d's concealment of His essence so that Chochmah, and through it the worlds, can exist; a person mirrors it by setting aside his own will.

"Nullify your will" בטל רצונך

The person's own tzimtzum: restraining every desire that is not for G-d, in thought, speech and action, even in what is permitted.

the higher teshuvah תשובה עילאה

A return from below upward that reveals the first hei, Binah: a cry from the distress of distance from G-d that gathers the whole soul to Him.

"with all your might" ובכל מאדך

Love beyond the soul's capacity, revealed above all in baalei teshuvah; it reaches the Name Yah and the hidden depths of the soul.

Yah and vav-hei י"ה / ו"ה

The two halves of Havayah: Yah, the source of the 365 prohibitions, is higher than vav-hei, the source of the positive commandments.

the depths ממעמקים

The hidden roots of the soul's ten powers, "the depth of darkness," revealed through teshuvah; one is drawn out on each of the Ten Days of Teshuvah.

SECTION 1 • ¶1-2

Why not listening is praise

1 ולא אבה^{1,2,3} הוי' אלהיך לשמוע אל בלעם ויהפוך ה' אלקיך לך את הקללה לברכה כו'.

“But Havayah your G-d was not willing to listen to Bilam, and Havayah your G-d turned the curse into a blessing for you,” etc.

The maamar opens with a verse from Parshas Ki Teitzei about Bilam, the prophet hired to curse Israel: G-d refused to listen to him and turned his intended curse into a blessing. The whole maamar explains what this refusal means and how a curse can become a blessing.

להבין מהו הפלא הגדול ועצום מה שלא אבה לשמוע בקול איש בליעל כבלעם הרשע וגם מהו ויהפוך ה' את הקללה לברכה מאחר שלא שמע אל בלעם כלל.

[We need] to understand: what is the great and tremendous wonder in His not being willing to listen to the voice of a base man such as the wicked Bilam? And also, what is [the meaning of] “Havayah turned the curse into a blessing,” since He did not listen to Bilam at all?

The Alter Rebbe asks two questions. First, why the Torah presents it as a great wonder that G-d did not heed a wicked man like Bilam, when no one would expect Him to. Second, if G-d did not listen to Bilam at all, so that the curse never took effect, what there was to “turn” into a blessing.

הענין הוא שיש מקטרגים שמקטרגים על ישראל שלכך נוטלין שופר בר"ה [בראש השנה] לערבב הקטגור והוא שמחפש אחר עוונות בני ישראל ומדקדק אחריהם ללמד עליהם חובה

The matter is that there are accusers who accuse Israel, which is why the shofar is taken up on Rosh HaShanah, to confound the accuser; and he is the one who searches out the sins of the Children of Israel and scrutinizes them, to argue for their guilt.

The answer begins with what Bilam stands for: the accuser on high, who seeks out the sins of Israel and builds a case against them. The shofar is sounded on Rosh HaShanah precisely to confound this accuser, which shows that his charges are a real threat.

וזהו נקי בחי' בלעם שכך היה דרכו של בלעם ג"כ שהיה מחפש ג"כ למצוא מקום עון לישראל ראש הפעור הנשקפה ⁴ ע"פ הישימון וישת אל המדבר פניו ⁵ מקומות שהיו עתידים שם ישראל לחטוא כו'

And this is called the level of Bilam, for such was also Bilam's way: he too searched to find a place of sin for Israel, "the top of Peor, which looks out over the wasteland," and "he set his face toward the wilderness," places where Israel were destined to sin, etc.

Bilam worked the same way: he looked for spots connected with Israel's sins, so that his curse would have a foothold. The verses describe him being taken to "the top of Peor" and turning his face "toward the wilderness," and the Alter Rebbe reads these as places where Israel would later sin, so the accusation had real substance.

וזהו השבח ששיבח הכתוב כי אע"פ [אף על פי] שבא בטענה אעפ"כ [אף על פי כן] ולא אבה הוי' אלהיך לשמוע ופי' שלא אבה לשמוע אל דבריו כלל

And this is the praise that the verse offers: that although he came with a claim, nevertheless "Havayah your G-d was not willing to listen." And the meaning is that He was not willing to listen to his words at all;

This is why the verse counts as praise: Bilam's case was not baseless, and still "Havayah your G-d was not willing to listen." The Alter Rebbe stresses that this means G-d did not hear his words at all.

ולא שיש להשיב על דבריו תשובה נצחת מטעם ודעת המושג ומובן רק שאין מקבלין ושומעין את דבריו כלל בלי טעם ודעת.

not that there is a conclusive answer to give in reply to his words, from reason and knowledge that can be grasped and understood, but only that his words are not received or listened to at all, without reason and knowledge.

G-d's refusal is not the result of a winning argument that disproves the accusation on its own terms. He simply does not take it in, in a way that is beyond reason, and this "beyond reason" becomes the key to the whole maamar.

2 וכ"כ [וכמו כן] למה ביאר הכתוב ולא אבה הוי' אלהיך כי הוי' הוא אלהיך ממש שבכל נפש מישראל יש בחי' והארה משם ⁶ הוי' וכמ"ש

And so too, [this is] why the verse spelled out, "But Havayah your G-d was not willing": because Havayah is truly your G-d. For in every soul of Israel there is an aspect and a radiance of the Name Havayah, and as it is written,

The Alter Rebbe explains why the verse names Havayah, the Name that expresses G-d as He transcends all creation, as "your G-d." It is "yours" in the fullest sense, because every Jewish soul contains an aspect and a radiance of that very Name, and so G-d's refusal to hear the accuser comes from a level that is present within the Jew himself.

כי חלק⁷ הוי' עמו יעקב חבל נחלתו שהם חלק והארה משם הוי' ממש [ועמ"ש מזה בד"ה ראה אנכי].^{8,9}

“For Havayah’s portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance”: that they are a portion and a radiance of the very Name Havayah. [And see what is written about this in the discourse beginning “See, I set before you.”]

The proof is the verse “For Havayah’s portion is His people,” which the Alter Rebbe reads literally: the souls of Israel are a portion of the Name Havayah itself. A bracketed note refers the reader to the discourse on “See, I set before you” for more on this.

SECTION 2 • 13

The tip of the yud: love beyond reason

3 וביאור ענין זה הוא כי הנה בכל נפש מישראל יש בחי' אהבה הטבעית המיוסדת ומוטבעת בטבע נפשו האלהית

And the explanation of this matter is that in every soul of Israel there is the level of the natural love, founded and implanted in the nature of his G-dly soul:

Every Jew has a natural love for G-d, built into the very nature of the G-dly soul. It is not acquired through study or reasoning; it is part of what the soul is.

שלא להיות נפרד מיחודו¹⁰ ואחדותו ית' ואין אדם עובר עבירה¹¹ אא"כ [אלא אם כן] נכנס בו רוח שטות המטעה אותו לומר שאף על פי כן עודנו ביהדותו כו'

not to be separated from His unity and oneness, may He be blessed. And a person does not commit a sin unless a spirit of folly enters him, which misleads him into saying that even so he is still within his Judaism, etc.

The content of this love is the soul’s refusal to be separated from G-d’s unity. The Talmud teaches that a person sins only when a “spirit of folly” enters him, and the Alter Rebbe explains what that folly is: it persuades him that even after the sin he is still a Jew, still bound to G-d, so the sin does not seem to touch that bond.

אבל ליפרד מיחודו ית' הרי אפי' [אפילו] קל שבקלים מוסר נפשו על ק"ה [קידוש השם] כו' מחמת טבע נפשו נר ה' נשמת אדם¹² כנר הדולק שהשלהבת עולה מאליה כו'

But to be separated from His unity, may He be blessed: even the most unworthy of the unworthy gives up his life for the sanctification of G-d's Name, etc., because of the nature of his soul, "The lamp of Havayah is the soul of man," like a burning lamp, whose flame rises of itself, etc.,

When the choice is openly one of being cut off from G-d, as when a Jew is told to deny Him, even the least observant will give up his life for the sanctification of G-d's Name. This comes from the soul's nature, which Proverbs calls "the lamp of Havayah": like a flame that rises upward by itself, the soul strives toward its source.

בלי טעם ודעת אלא שהיא מסותרת ומכוסה בלבוש שק הוא הגוף הגשמי וממנו בא הרוח שטות כו' without reason and knowledge; except that it is hidden and covered by a garment of sackcloth, which is the physical body, and from it comes the spirit of folly, etc.

This readiness to give up one's life involves no reasoning or calculation. Yet the love is usually hidden, covered by the physical body, which the Alter Rebbe calls a "garment of sackcloth," and it is from the body that the spirit of folly comes.

אבל כשמעורר את האהבה עד שתחפץ לצאת מלבושיה הרי הוא בא לידי יראת חטא שלא לעבור אפי' [אפילו] על דבר קל של ד"ס כי חמורים ד"ס יותר מד"ת [מדברי תורה]^{13, 14, 15} שלכן נקראו סופרים¹⁶ כי

But when he arouses the love, until it desires to go out of its garments, then he comes to the fear of sin: not to transgress even a light matter of the words of the Scribes (divrei sofrim), for the words of the Scribes are more stringent than the words of Torah; which is why they are called Sofrim, for

When a person deliberately arouses this love until it "desires to go out of its garments," it produces fear of sin, a care that guards even against light rabbinic prohibitions. The Sages teach that the words of the Scribes are more stringent than the words of Torah, and the Alter Rebbe now explains why the Sages are called Sofrim.

הנה יש בחי' סופר וספר וספור^{17, 18} ספר הוא בחי' תשב"כ [תורה שבכתב] וסופר הוא העושה את הספר היא בחי' תשב"ע"פ [תורה שבעל פה] א"ח [אשת חיל] עטרת בעלה כו'

there are the levels of sofer (scribe), sefer (book) and sippur (telling). The sefer is the level of the Written Torah, and the sofer is the one who makes the sefer, which is the level of the Oral Torah: "A woman of valor is the crown of her husband," etc.

The triad of scribe, book and telling echoes the opening of Sefer Yetzirah. In the Alter Rebbe's image the "book" is the Written Torah and the "scribe," who makes the book, is the Oral Torah; the Oral Torah is thus the "woman of valor" who is the "crown" of her "husband," the Written Torah, and this is why the words of the Scribes carry such weight.

[ועמ"ש מזה בד"ה ושאתם מים בששון¹⁹ ובד"ה שחורה אני ונאווה]²⁰ ובח"י אהבה זו הוא בח"י קוצו של יו"ד²¹ של שם הוי'

[And see what is written about this in the discourse beginning "You shall draw water with joy" and in the discourse beginning "I am black, yet comely."] And this level of love is the level of the tip of the yud of the Name Havayah;

A bracketed note sends the reader to two other discourses on this subject. The Alter Rebbe then identifies the hidden love with the tip of the yud: the small point that rises above the letter yud, the first letter of the Name Havayah.

כי הקוץ שעל היו"ד פונה למעלה ורומז שהוא נמשך למעלה לא"ס ב"ה שהוא למעלה מגדר ההשגה ולית מחשבה תפיסא ביה²² וכולא קמ"י [קמיה] כלא חשיב²³ כי אני ה' לא שנית²⁴ כו'²⁵

for the tip atop the yud points upward, and alludes to its being drawn upward, to the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, who is above the bounds of comprehension, and "no thought can grasp Him," and "all before Him is accounted as nothing"; "For I, Havayah, have not changed," etc.

Because the tip of the yud points upward, beyond the letter itself, it stands for the soul's bond with the Infinite One, who is beyond all comprehension: "no thought can grasp Him," all before Him is "as nothing," and He never changes. That is where the hidden love reaches.

וכך הוא ענין אהבה זו שהיא בלי טעם ודעת היא מצד השראת אור א"ס ב"ה ממש המלוכש בחכמה שמחיה את הנפש שהיא למעלה מגדר ההשגה כו'

And such is the matter of this love, which is without reason and knowledge: it stems from the indwelling of the very Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, which is clothed in the Chochmah (wisdom) that gives life to the soul, which is above the bounds of comprehension, etc.

The love is beyond reason because what dwells in it is the Infinite Light itself, clothed in the soul's Chochmah, the power that gives the soul life and stands above comprehension. Since its root is beyond understanding, the love it produces is beyond understanding too.

ולכן היא כשלהבת העולה מאליה ומעצמה כו' רק לפי שהיא מסותרת צריך האדם לעוררה ובאתעדל"ת [ובאתערותא דלתתא] אתעדל"ע [אתערותא דלעילא] להיות ג"כ ולא אבה לשמוע מבחי'

Therefore it is like a flame that rises of itself and on its own, etc.; but because it is hidden, a person must arouse it. And through an arousal from below (isarusa dilesata) there is an arousal from above (isarusa dile'eila), so that there is also "He was not willing to listen," from the level

Like a flame that rises by itself, this love moves upward of its own accord, but because it is hidden a person must awaken it. When he does, his arousal from below evokes a matching arousal from above: G-d too acts beyond reason and "was not willing to listen" to the accuser.

שהיא למעלה מן הטעם והדעת [ועיין בשע"ק [בשערי קדושה] להרח"ו [להרבי חיים ויטאל] ח"ג [חלק ג'] שער²⁶
א' כי קוצו של יו"ד²⁷ כו' ע"ש וע"ש שער ב' ויחידה כו']:²⁸

that is above reason and knowledge. [And see Sha'arei Kedushah by Rabbi Chaim Vital, Part III, Gate 1: "for the tip of the yud," etc.; see there. And see there, Gate 2: "and Yechidah," etc.]

This answers the first question: G-d's refusal, beyond reason, to hear the accuser mirrors the Jew's love for Him beyond reason. The Alter Rebbe adds a reference to Rabbi Chaim Vital's Sha'arei Kedushah, which speaks of the tip of the yud and of Yechidah, the innermost level of the soul.

SECTION 3 • ¶4-5

The yud: Chochmah, tzimtzum and nullifying one's will

4 ב וביאור ענין היו"ד של שם הוי' איך הוא בנפש הנה היו"ד הוא בחי' חכמה כח מ"ה [מה] שהיא בחי' הצמצום שאינה אלא בחי' נקודה כו'

2. And the explanation of the matter of the yud of the Name Havayah, how it is in the soul: the yud is the level of Chochmah (wisdom), ko'ach mah (the potential of "what"), which is the level of the tzimtzum (contraction), for it is only the level of a point, etc.

The second section explains how the yud of Havayah is present in the soul. The yud stands for Chochmah, called ko'ach mah, "the potential of what": a first point of insight, not yet defined. Being a mere point, it expresses tzimtzum, contraction.

והענין כי הנה נודע שלהיות התהוות בחי' חכמה שהיא ראשית גילוי ההשתלשלות מאור א"ס ב"ה

The matter is this. It is known that the coming into being of the level of Chochmah, which is the beginning of the revelation of the chain of descending worlds (hishtalshelus), from the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He,

It is an accepted principle that Chochmah, the very first revelation in the whole chain of worlds, comes from the Infinite Light, which is utterly beyond that chain.

שהוא למעלה מעלה מבחי' וגדר ההשתלשלות הוא ע"י כמה צמצומים וירידת האור בעולם אחר העולם עד שירדה ונמשכה הארה מועטת ומצומצמת

which is far, far above the level and bounds of the chain of descent, is through many contractions and the descent of the light in concealment after concealment, until there descended and was drawn forth a radiance that is slight and contracted

To bring Chochmah into being, the Infinite Light passed through many contractions, one concealment after another, until only a faint and greatly reduced glimmer of it remained.

מאד כדמיון הארה היוצאת דרך שערות הראש שצומחין ויונקין מן המוחין שבראש דרך הגולגלתא החופפת על המוחין שמעלמת ומסתרת את המוחין עצמן שלא יהיו בגילוי

exceedingly, like the radiance that comes out through the hairs of the head, which grow and draw nourishment from the brain in the head through the skull that overarches the brain, which conceals and hides the brain itself so that it should not be revealed,

The Alter Rebbe offers an analogy: hair grows from a trace of vitality that comes from the brain, but only by way of the skull. The skull covers and hides the brain, so what reaches the hair is not the brain's own life.

כדי שעיי"ז תצמחנה השערות מעצם הגולגלתא החופף ומכסה על המוחין והארה ההיא היא מצומצמת מאד עד שאין לה ערך ויחוס עם הארת המוחין עצמן כמו שאין ערך ויחוס לשערות עם המוחין

so that, through this, the hairs may grow from the bone of the skull that overarches and covers the brain. And that radiance is exceedingly contracted, to the point that it has no comparison or relation to the radiance of the brain itself, just as the hairs have no comparison or relation to the brain;

The skull's covering is what allows hair to grow at all, yet the vitality in the hair is so reduced that it bears no comparison to the life of the brain; hair and brain belong to different categories.

שהרי אפילו אם מגלחין את השערות לא ירגיש כאב במוחין כלל כך ככל המשל הזה ויותר מזה לאין קץ הוא ענין התהוות החכמה²⁹ מלמעלה מן החכמה מאור א"ס ב"ה

for even if the hairs are shaved off, no pain at all is felt in the brain. So, entirely like this analogy, and endlessly more so, is the matter of the coming into being of Chochmah from what is above Chochmah, from the Infinite Light, blessed be He,

The proof is that cutting hair causes the brain no pain. Chochmah's relation to its source above it, the Infinite Light, is like this, and infinitely more so.

שהוא רם ונשא כו' יותר מהתהוות המדות אהוי"ר [אהבה ויראה] מן החב"ד [החכמה בינה ודעת] שעצמיות החב"ד [החכמה בינה ודעת] הן מלוכשות במדות

which is high and exalted, etc., more so than [in] the coming into being of the emotive attributes (middos), love and awe, from Chochmah, Binah (understanding) and Daas (knowledge), for the very essence of Chochmah, Binah and Daas is clothed in the emotive attributes.

The contrast is with the emotions, love and awe, which grow out of the intellect, Chochmah, Binah and Daas: there the very essence of the intellect is present in the emotions it produces. The gap between the exalted Infinite Light and Chochmah is far greater.

אבל התהוות החכמה מאור א"ס ב"ה אין עצמיות אור א"ס ב"ה מלובש בה אלא הארה מועטת ומצומצמת מן העולם

But in the coming into being of Chochmah from the Infinite Light, blessed be He, the essence of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, is not clothed in it; only a slight and contracted radiance, from the concealment,

In the emergence of Chochmah the essence of the Infinite Light is not present at all. Chochmah receives only a faint, contracted glimmer, and even that comes out of concealment.

דהיינו לאחר ההעלם וההסתר עצמיות אוא"ס [אור אין סוף] ב"ה וכמ"ש ישות חשך סתרו³⁰ שמסתתר בבחי' חשך והעלם להיות גילוי הארה בבחי' חכמה ראשית גילוי ההשתלשלות וזהו ה' מלך גאות לבש³¹ כו'

that is, after the concealment and hiding of the essence of the Infinite Light, blessed be He. As it is written, "He made darkness His hiding place": He hides Himself in the level of darkness and concealment, so that there may be a revelation of the radiance in the level of Chochmah, the beginning of the revelation of the chain of descent. And this is [the meaning of] "Havayah reigns; He is clothed in majesty," etc.,

The glimmer appears only after the essence of the Infinite Light has been hidden, as the verse says, "He made darkness His hiding place": G-d conceals Himself so that a measured revelation, Chochmah, can appear. "Havayah reigns; He is clothed in majesty" says the same thing: G-d puts on a "garment."

אף תכון תבל כו' שכדי להיות תכון תבל הוצרך להתלבש אור א"ס ב"ה בבחי' לכוש וכסוי שלא יאיר ויתגלה כמו שהוא אלא בבחי' צמצום כו'

"the world, too, is firmly established," etc.: in order that "the world be firmly established," the Infinite Light, blessed be He, had to clothe itself in the level of a garment and covering, so that it would not shine and be revealed as it is, but only in the level of tzimtzum, etc.

The verse goes on, "the world, too, is firmly established": the world can stand only because the Infinite Light has clothed itself and does not shine as it is, but only through tzimtzum.

וז"ש [וזהו שכתוב] בראשית ברא אלקים^{32,33} כו' בראשית בגילוי בחי' ראשית הגילוי היא בחי' חכמה ברא אלקים במדת הצמצום וכמארו"ל [וכמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] בתחלה עלה³⁴ במחשבה לברא במדה"ד [במדת הדין]³⁵ כו'

And this is [the meaning of] what is written, "In the beginning Elokim created," etc.: "Bereshis," with the revelation of the level of the beginning of revelation, which is the level of Chochmah; "Elokim created," with the attribute of tzimtzum. And as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "At first it arose in [His] thought to create [it] with the attribute of judgment," etc.

The first verse of the Torah teaches the same. "Bereshis," "in the beginning," refers to Chochmah, the reishis or "beginning" of revelation, and it was created by "Elokim," the Name associated with tzimtzum and judgment; so too Rashi brings the Sages' teaching that G-d first thought to create the world with the attribute of judgment.

כי היא הארה מצומצמת כדי להיות ראשית הגילוי בהשתלשלות העולמות כי החכמה ראשית גילוי ההשגה וההבנה באור א"ס ב"ה המתגלה בבחי' בינה

For it is a contracted radiance, so that it may be the beginning of revelation in the chain of descent of the worlds; for Chochmah is the beginning of the revelation of the comprehension and understanding of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, which is revealed in the level of Binah,

Chochmah has to be a contracted glimmer because it is the starting point of the worlds' chain of descent. It is the first flash of grasping the Infinite Light, a grasp that is then unfolded in Binah.

שהיא ה' עילאה בחי' התפשטות אורך ורוחב כו' ממכ"ע [ממלא כל עלמין] וסוכ"ע כו' אלא שבחכמה ההשגה ההיא בבחי' העלם שאינה מאירה ומתגלה

which is the upper hei, the level of expansion, in length and breadth, etc., of the light that fills all worlds (memalei kol almin) and the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), etc. Except that in Chochmah that comprehension is in a state of concealment, for it does not shine and become revealed

Binah is the first hei of the Name, a letter that extends in length and breadth: the developed understanding of how G-d fills and encompasses all worlds. In Chochmah this grasp is still concealed and not yet spread out.

אלא כברק המבריק³⁶ במוח שכלו של אדם עד"מ ובלתי צמצום אור א"ס ב"ה והתלבשותו בבחינת חכמה לא היה יכול להיות התפשטות בחי' ממכ"ע [ממלא כל עלמין] וסוכ"ע שהיו העולמות בטלים במציאות לגמרי והיו אין ואפס ממש

except like lightning that flashes in the mind of a person's intellect, by way of analogy. And without the tzimtzum of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, and its being clothed in the level of Chochmah, there could not have been the expansion of the level of the light that fills all worlds and the light that encompasses all worlds; for the worlds would have been utterly nullified out of existence, and would have been truly nothing and naught.

Chochmah is like a flash of lightning in the mind. Without the tzimtzum of the Infinite Light into Chochmah, the divine light that fills and encompasses the worlds could not have spread forth; the worlds would have been wholly nullified and would not exist at all.

כי גם עכשיו אחר שנבראו העולמות הרי קמ"י [קמיה] כולא כלא^{37, 38, 39} אלא שהוא כלא בכ"ף הדמיון ולא לא ממש ואף גם זאת אינו אלא קמ"י [קמיה] ולא לגבי הנבראים.

For even now, after the worlds have been created, “before Him all is as nothing”; but it is “as nothing” (kelo), with the kaf of comparison, and not actually “nothing” (lo); and even this is only before Him, and not in relation to the created beings.

Even now that the worlds exist, before G-d they are kelo, “as nothing,” where the letter kaf means “like”: they resemble nothingness without actually being nothing. Even this is so only from G-d's side; from the side of the creations, they truly exist.

אבל אם היה אור א"ס ב"ה מתגלה כמו שהוא היו בטלים ממש והיו אין ולא ממש

But if the Infinite Light, blessed be He, were revealed as it is, they would be truly nullified, and would be nothing (ayin) and actually “nothing” (lo).

Were the Infinite Light revealed as it is, the worlds would cease entirely: not “as nothing,” but actually nothing.

ולכן אמרז"ל [אמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] בשעה שקטרגו המלאכים ואמרו מה אנוש⁴⁰ כו' הושיט אצבעו הקטנה ב יניהן ושרפן פי' שהושיט והמשיך גילוי עצמותו ית' יותר מכדי מדה ושיעור המצומצם בהשגת המלאכים מעט מזער בחי' אצבעו הקטנה

Therefore our Sages, of blessed memory, said that when the angels accused and said, "What is man," etc., "He stretched out His little finger among them and burned them." The meaning is that He extended and drew forth a revelation of His essence, may He be blessed, beyond the contracted measure and limit of the angels' comprehension: a tiny bit, the level of "His little finger"

This explains the Talmud's account: when angels objected to the creation of man, saying "What is man," G-d "stretched out His little finger among them and burned them." The Alter Rebbe reads the "little finger" as a tiny revelation of G-d's essence, slightly beyond the measure fitted to the angels' grasp, and that alone consumed them.

(וע' בפרדס בתחלתו בשם ספר יצירה עשר ספירות בלי מה מספר עשר אצבעות^{41,42} כו' ובזח"ב [ובזהר חלק ב'] ר"פ יתרו)

(And see Pardes at its beginning, citing Sefer Yetzirah: "Ten Sefiros without 'what' (beli mah), the number of the ten fingers," etc.; and Zohar, Part II, at the beginning of Parshas Yisro.)

A parenthesis supports the image of the finger: Pardes quotes Sefer Yetzirah, which matches the ten Sefiros to the ten fingers, and the Zohar speaks of the fingers at the beginning of Parshas Yisro. A "finger" is thus a divine attribute, a measured revelation.

ואזי ושרפן שנשרפו ונתבטלו במציאות לגמרי והיו כלא היו רק הצמצום הוא הגורם התהוות העולמות.

And then "and burned them": they were burned and utterly nullified out of existence, and were as though they had never been. It is only the tzimtzum that brings about the coming into being of the worlds.

Faced with more revelation than they could hold, the angels were burned and ceased to exist. The lesson is that it is only the tzimtzum that allows the worlds to come into being.

והנה תחלת בריאת העולמות היה מפני כי חפץ חסד הוא ⁴³ אך מה שבטובו מחדש ⁴⁴ בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית מחדש בבחי' יש מבחי' חכמה וצמצום בכל יום

Now, the beginning of the creation of the worlds was because “He desires kindness.” But [the fact] that “in His goodness He renews each day, continually, the work of Creation,” renewing [it] as existence (yesh) from the level of Chochmah and tzimtzum each day,

The first creation came from G-d's own desire for kindness, without any prompting. But, as the blessing before the morning Shema says, “in His goodness He renews each day, continually, the work of Creation,” bringing the world into being anew each day as a distinct existence, through Chochmah and tzimtzum.

כי בכל יום מתחדשת הארה אחרת [וגם בכל שעה מתחדש צירוף שם הוי' כו'] באתעדל"ת [באתערותא דלתתא] תליא מילתא וצ"ל צמצום והעלם זה גם באתעדל"ת [באתערותא דלתתא] והוא להיות בחי' בטל רצונך ^{45, 46} כו'

since each day a different radiance is renewed [and also each hour a combination of the Name Havayah is renewed, etc.], depends on the arousal from below (isarusa dilesata). And this tzimtzum and concealment must also be in the arousal from below: namely, to be the level of “Nullify your will,” etc.;

Since each day brings a new divine radiance, and even each hour a new combination of the letters of Havayah, this daily renewal depends on human initiative, the arousal from below. A person must therefore make a tzimtzum of his own, in the spirit of the Mishnah's “Nullify your will before His will.”

דהיינו לצמצם ולכבוש את כל רצונותיו אשר לא לה' המה הן במחשבה רבות מחשבות בלב איש ⁴⁷ that is, to contract and subdue all his desires that are not for G-d: whether in thought, “Many are the thoughts in a man's heart,

This personal tzimtzum means restraining and subduing every desire that is not for G-d. It begins in thought: a person has many plans of his own, but only G-d's counsel will stand.

ועצת ה' היא תקום והן בדבור שלא להיו' [להיות] דבורו ורוח פיו כרצונו והן במעש' עוצם עיניו מראות ברע ⁴⁸ ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ⁴⁹ כו'

but the counsel of Havayah, it shall stand”; or in speech, that his speech and the breath of his mouth not be as he wishes; or in action, “he shuts his eyes from seeing evil,” and “you shall not stray after your heart,” etc.;

It extends to speech, not saying whatever one wishes, and to action, as in “he shuts his eyes from seeing evil” and “you shall not stray after your heart.”

בין באיסור בין בהיתר כמארז"ל [כמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] קדש א"ע [את עצמו]⁵⁰ במותר לך והוא בכל שיעור קומה של אדם להשליך נפשו ורצונו מנגד כו'

whether in what is forbidden or in what is permitted, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you." And this is in the entire stature of a person: to cast aside his soul and his will, etc.

The restraint applies even to what is permitted, in keeping with the Talmud's "Sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you," and it takes in the whole person, all his faculties, setting aside his own self and will.

וביטול זה הוא בבחי' חכמה כי בחכמה אתברירו⁵¹ לברר הטוב מהרע ולבטל רצון הרע מפני הטוב ככח החכמה שבנפש

And this self-nullification (bittul) is in the level of Chochmah, for "through Chochmah they were refined": to sift the good from the evil and to nullify the will for evil before the good, by the power of the Chochmah in the soul.

Such self-nullification belongs to Chochmah, for "through Chochmah they were refined": Chochmah sorts good from evil, and the soul's Chochmah is what enables a person to set aside his desire for evil in favor of the good.

ולכן ארז"ל [אמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] קדש א"ע [את עצמו] כו' כי קדש הוא בחכמה⁵² כמו קדש לי כל בכור^{53, 54} כו'.^{55, 56}

Therefore our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "Sanctify yourself," etc.; for kodesh (holiness) is in Chochmah, as in "Sanctify to Me every firstborn," etc.

This is why the Sages put it as "sanctify yourself": holiness is bound up with Chochmah. The verse "Sanctify to Me every firstborn" shows the link, for Chochmah is the "firstborn," the first of all levels.

5 ועיי' בחי' ביטול זה שבאתעדל"ת [שבאתערותא דלתתא] שמבטל ומסלק א"ע [את עצמו] ורצונו ליבטל אליו ית' אתעדל"ע [אתערותא דלעילא] להיות ביטול וסילוק עצמיות אור א"ס ב"ה שלא יאיר ויתגלה

And through this level of self-nullification (bittul) in the arousal from below (isarusa dilesata), in which he nullifies and removes himself and his will so as to be nullified to Him, may He be blessed, there is an arousal from above (isarusa dile'eila): that there be a nullification and withdrawal of the essence of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, so that it does not shine and become revealed

Here is the effect of the person's self-nullification. When he sets aside himself and his will before G-d, this arousal from below evokes a matching arousal from above: the essence of the Infinite Light withdraws and conceals itself, so that it does not shine openly.

אלא בבחי' צמצום בהעלם אחר העלם בבחינת ישת חשך סתרו⁵⁷ חשך ולא אור ויהי' [ויהיה] גילוי בחי' יו"ד שהיא חכמה כו' ע"י בחי' יו"ד חכמה שבנפש:

except in the level of tzimtzum (contraction), in concealment after concealment, in the mode of "He made darkness His hiding place," darkness and not light. And there will be a revelation of the level of the yud, which is Chochmah (wisdom), etc., through the level of the yud, the Chochmah, that is in the soul.

The Infinite Light then shines only through tzimtzum, concealment after concealment, "He made darkness His hiding place," and this is exactly what allows the yud, Chochmah, to be revealed above. The yud above is revealed through the yud of the soul, its Chochmah, which carries out the self-nullification.

SECTION 4 • ¶6-8

The first hei: contemplation, love and teshuvah in prayer

6 ג וענין הה' של שם הוי' שבנפש הוא כי הנה ה' ראשונה היא בחי' בינה עילאה בחי' התפשטות הה' באורך ורוחב ממכ"ע [ממלא כל עלמין] וסוכ"ע מן צמצום הנקודה כו'

3. And the matter of the hei of the Name Havayah in the soul is this: the first hei is the level of supernal Binah (understanding), the level of the expansion of the hei, in length and breadth, of the light that fills all worlds (memalei kol almin) and the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), from the tzimtzum (contraction) of the point, etc.

The third section turns to the first hei of Havayah, which is supernal Binah. Unlike the yud, a mere point, the letter hei extends in length and breadth: Binah unfolds the point of Chochmah into a full understanding of how G-d fills and encompasses all worlds.

ובנפש הוא התפשטות והתרחבות ההשגה מן ברק המבריק במוח שהיא בחי' נקודה כו' להיות מרחיב דעתו ובינתו בגדולת א"ס ב"ה איך שהוא ממכ"ע [ממלא כל עלמין] וסוכ"ע בהארה אחת מצומצמת כו'.

And in the soul it is the expansion and broadening of comprehension from the lightning that flashes in the brain, which is the level of a point, etc.: that he broaden his knowledge and understanding in the greatness of the Infinite One (Ein Sof), blessed be He, how He fills all worlds and encompasses all worlds with one contracted radiance, etc.

In the soul, this hei is contemplation: taking the flash of insight and broadening it, expanding one's mind and understanding in the greatness of the Infinite One. One reflects on how all the worlds, those He fills and those He encompasses, come from a single contracted glimmer of His light.

7 ועיי' יהיה ג"כ ההתפשטות וההתגלות בלב והתלהבות והתלהטות רשפי אש⁵⁸ האהבה וכן שמחת הנפש בה' עושה הוא ע"י התרחבות

And through this there will also be the expansion and revelation in the heart, and the flaming and blazing of the fiery flashes of love; and likewise the soul's joy in G-d, its Maker, comes through the broadening

Broad contemplation in the mind brings an expansion and revelation in the heart: blazing, fiery love for G-d, and the soul's joy in its Maker. Both come from the breadth of the contemplation.

ההתבוננות בלב אם הבנים שמחה⁵⁹ ואתעדל"ת [ואתערותא דלתתא] לגילוי בחי' ה' זו היא בחי' תשובה עילאה ממטה למעלה [וזהו תשובה תשוב⁶⁰ ה'] ויצעקו אל⁶¹ ה' בצר להם

of contemplation in the heart: "a joyful mother of children." And the arousal from below (isarusa dilesata) for the revelation of this level of hei is the level of the higher teshuvah (return), from below upward [and this is "teshuvah": tashuv hei, "the hei shall return"]: "and they cried out to Havayah in their distress,"

Binah is called "a joyful mother of children," since it gives birth to the emotions with joy. The arousal from below that reveals this hei is the "higher teshuvah," a return from below upward; the Zohar reads teshuvah as tashuv hei, "the hei shall return," and it takes the form of a cry from distress, "they cried out to Havayah in their distress."

כי הירידה מאור פניו ית' הוא בבחי' צר בבחי' הארה מועטת ומצומצמת ובפרט אם ישים אשם נפשו מכל מעשיו דבוריו ומחשבותיו אשר לא לה'

for the descent from the light of His countenance, may He be blessed, is in the level of "distress" (tzar, narrowness), in the level of a slight and contracted radiance; and especially if he holds his soul guilty for all his deeds, words and thoughts which are not for G-d,

The "distress" (tzar, also "narrowness") is the soul's awareness that it receives only a narrow, contracted glimmer of G-d's light. It is felt all the more when a person holds himself guilty for deeds, words and thoughts that were not for G-d.

המה אשר בהבל בא ובחשך ילך⁶² ואי לזאת ישים אליו לבו רוחו ונשמתו אליו יאסוף⁶³ לדבקה בו ית' ממש ורוח אייתי רוח⁶⁴ ואמשיך רוח כו'.

he who "came in vanity and goes in darkness." And therefore "he sets his heart toward Him; his spirit and his soul he gathers to Him," to cleave to Him, may He be blessed, truly; and "spirit brings spirit and draws spirit," etc.

He sees that such a life "comes in vanity and goes in darkness," and so he turns his whole heart, spirit and soul to G-d, to cleave to Him. The Zohar's principle "spirit brings spirit and draws spirit" means that this outpouring of the person's spirit draws down G-d's spirit in return.

8 ועדי' סובב הולך כל ענין התפלה להתבונן בירידת והשתלשלות אור א"ס ב"ה בהארה מועטת ומצומצמת בחי' ממכ"ע [ממלא כל עלמין] וסוכ"ע עד שיהללו את שם ה' כו' בחי' שם בלבד וישתבח שמך לעד כו'

In the same way, the whole matter of prayer revolves around this: to contemplate the descent of the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, and its chain of descent (hishtalshelus), in a slight and contracted radiance, the level of the light that fills all worlds (memalei kol almin) and the light that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin), until "they praise the Name of Havayah," etc., the level of a name alone, and "May Your Name be praised forever," etc.;

The whole of prayer follows this pattern: one contemplates how the Infinite Light descends, step by step, as a faint, contracted glimmer that fills and encompasses all worlds. The morning prayers reach "let them praise the Name of Havayah" and "May Your Name be praised forever," for all of creation comes only from G-d's "Name," a mere glimmer of Him.

בכדי שעיי' יבא לקיום ואהבת בק"ש [בקריאת שמע] את ⁶⁵ הוי' אלהיך ממש להיות גילוי אור א"ס ב"ה ממש ואותה אנו מבקשים שיהי' [שיהיה] בבחי' גילוי ההתפשטות באורך ורוחב בלב ונפש

so that through this he will come to fulfill, in the Shema, "You shall love Havayah your G-d," truly: that there be a revelation of the very Infinite Light, blessed be He. And this is what we ask for: that it be in the level of a revealed expansion, in length and breadth, in the heart and soul.

This contemplation leads to the Shema's command "You shall love Havayah your G-d": love for G-d Himself, the Infinite Light as it is, and not only for its glimmer. We ask that this love be revealed and expand in length and breadth, filling the heart and soul.

וזהו והחזירנו בתשובה שלימה לפניך פי' להיות המשכת פניך פנימיותך דהיינו בחי' אור א"ס ב"ה ממש וכמ"ש יאר ה' פניו כו'. ⁶⁶

And this is [the meaning of] "Bring us back in complete teshuvah (return) before You (lefanecha)": the meaning is that there be a drawing-down of "Your face" (panecha), Your inner dimension (pnimiyus), that is, the level of the very Infinite Light, blessed be He; as it is written, "May Havayah make His face shine," etc.

This is the request in the daily Amidah, "Bring us back in complete teshuvah before You": lefanecha, "before You," contains panim, "face," which suggests pnimiyus, G-d's innermost being. We ask that the Infinite Light itself be drawn down, as in the priestly blessing, "May Havayah make His face shine upon you."

SECTION 5 • 19

The vav and final hei: Torah, mitzvos and charity

9 וענין הוי' הנפש הוא להיות גילוי המשכה בתורה ומצות בקיום המעשה בפוי"מ [בפועל ממש] כי התורה היא בחי' וי"ו קול קורא במדבר⁶⁷ פנו דרך ה'

And the matter of the vav and the [final] hei in the soul is that there be a revelation of the drawing-down in Torah and mitzvos, in the fulfillment of the deed in actual practice. For the Torah is the level of the vav: "A voice calls in the wilderness: Clear the way of Havayah,"

Next come the last two letters of the Name, the vav and the final hei. In the soul they are the drawing-down of G-d's light through Torah and mitzvos, carried out in actual deeds; the Torah is the vav, the letter of drawing down, and it is Isaiah's "voice that calls."

להיות המשכת קול התורה קורא דרך ה' וגילוי אורו ית' אפי' [אפילו] בבחי' מדבר שהוא העוה"ז שיהי' [שיהיה] בו כן בקדש חזיתך⁶⁸ המשכת קודש עליון [ועמ"ש בד"ה]

that there be a drawing-down of the voice of the Torah, calling "the way of Havayah," and a revelation of His light, may He be blessed, even in the level of "wilderness," which is this world: that in it there be "So have I beheld You in holiness," a drawing-down of supernal holiness. [And see what is written in the discourse beginning

The voice of Torah calls out "the way of Havayah," drawing G-d's light even into the "wilderness," this lowly world, so that even here one can say, "So have I beheld You in holiness": supernal holiness drawn down below. A bracketed note sends the reader to another discourse on this.

כי תשמע בקול פ' ראה] והמשכה זו היינו בה' תתאה היא בחי' המעשה והיה מעשה הצדקה⁶⁹ מעשה דייקא וצדקה היא כללות המצות^{70,71} כי

"When you hearken to the voice," Parshas Re'eh.] And this drawing-down is in the lower hei, which is the level of action: "And the deed of charity (tzedakah) shall be," "deed" specifically. And charity is the general and collective expression (klalus) of the mitzvos; for

The drawing-down reaches its goal in the final hei, the level of action. The verse speaks of "the deed of charity," stressing deed, and charity is the general expression of all the mitzvos, as the Talmud teaches that charity equals all the other mitzvos together.

כמו שצדקה הוא להחיות רוח שפלים⁷² כוי כך כללות המצות הן להיות המשכת חיות ואור אי"ס ב"ה למטה בעולם השפל הגשמי ונגלה כבוד⁷³ ה' למטה כוי

just as charity is “to revive the spirit of the lowly,” etc., so the mitzvos, in their general and collective expression, are for drawing down life-force and the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He, below, into the lowly physical world, “and the glory of Havayah shall be revealed” below, etc.

Just as charity “revives the spirit of the lowly,” giving life to the poor, all the mitzvos together bring divine life-force and the Infinite Light down into the lowly physical world, so that “the glory of Havayah” is revealed even below.

והוא בחי' ה' כי צדק מלאה ימינך⁷⁴ שנקי צדק בלא^{75,76} ה' וכשמלאה ימינך התפשטות והמשכות החסד

And this is the level of the hei; for “Your right hand is full of tzedek (righteousness)”: it is called tzedek, without a hei; and when “Your right hand is full,” [that is,] the expansion and drawings-down of Chesed (kindness),

The final hei shows in the very spelling of charity. Tzedek, “righteousness,” is spelled without a hei, and the verse “Your right hand is full of tzedek” shows what completes it: the right hand stands for Chesed, G-d’s expansive kindness, which fills tzedek.

אזי הוא נקי בתוספת^{77,78} ה' צדקה (ועי' בזהר פי' בחקתי דקי"ג ע"ב ובפי' הרמ"ז [הרב משה זכות] שם ובאדר"ז [ובאדרא זוטא] דרצ"א סע"ב [סוף עמוד ב] ודרצ"ב ע"א).⁷⁹ והנה גילוי זה שבבחי' המעשה הוא ע"י בחי' הוי"ו שהוא ענין ההמשכה כוי:

then, with the addition of a hei, it is called tzedakah. (And see the Zohar, Parshas Bechukosai, folio 113b, and the commentary of the Ramaz (Rabbi Moshe Zacuto) there; and the Idra Zuta, folio 291, end of side b, and folio 292a.) Now, this revelation in the level of action comes through the level of the vav, which is the matter of drawing down, etc.

When Chesed fills tzedek, a hei is added and it becomes tzedakah, charity; the Zohar passage the Alter Rebbe cites teaches that tzedakah gives to tzedek and joins with it. He then notes that this revelation in action comes through the vav, which stands for drawing down.

SECTION 6 • ¶10-12

Havayah from above: the penitent and the depths

10 ד אך הנה כ"ז [כל זה] הוא ענין בחי' הוי"ה שבנפש האלקית שיש לה בחי' התלכשות בגוף ונפש הבהמית אבל יש בחי' הוי' הנמשך מלמעלה וזהו כי אהבך ⁸⁰ ה' אלקיך.

4. However, all this is the matter of the level of Havayah in the G-dly soul, which is clothed in the body and the animal soul. But there is a level of Havayah that is drawn from above; and this is [the meaning of] “because Havayah your G-d loved you.”

The fourth section turns to a different level. All the letters described so far are Havayah as it is within the G-dly soul, which is clothed in the body and the animal soul, and revealed through the person's own service; but there is also a Havayah drawn down from above, to which the verse's closing words allude: “because Havayah your G-d loved you.”

פ"י אהבך לשון פועל יוצא שהוא הממשיך כך מדת האהבה הבאה מלמעלה שהיא אתעדל"ע [אתערותא דלעילא] שלפני אתעדל"ת [אתערותא דלתתא] ומשם ויהפוך ה' לך את הקללה לברכה שזדונות נעשו כוכיות ⁸¹ ממש.

The meaning: “loved you” (ahevcha) is a transitive form: that He is the one who draws into you the attribute of love that comes from above, which is the arousal from above (isarusa dile'eila) that precedes the arousal from below (isarusa dilesata). And from there [comes] “Havayah turned the curse into a blessing for you”: that intentional sins become literally like merits.

The Alter Rebbe reads “loved you” (ahevcha) as transitive: G-d puts into you a love that comes from above. This is the arousal from above that comes before, and does not depend on, any arousal from below, and from it comes the turning of the curse into a blessing: intentional sins become, in truth, like merits.

11 וביאור ענין זה הוא כי הנה גדול כח בע"ת [בעלי תשובה] דמשכין ליה בחילא יתיר ⁸² כו' והיינו ע"י בחי' ובכל מאדך ⁸³ למעלה מכדי שתוכל נפשו שאת הן במס"נ [במסירות נפש] בפו"מ [בפועל ממש] כמעשה דר"א [דרבי אלעזר] ב"ד [בן דורדיא] ⁸⁴ כו'

And the explanation of this matter is that great is the power of baalei teshuvah (penitents), “who draw Him down with greater strength,” etc. And this is through the level of “with all your might,” beyond what his soul can bear: whether through self-sacrifice (mesirus nefesh) in actual fact, as in the episode of Rabbi Elazar ben Durdaya, etc.,

The Zohar says that baalei teshuvah, those who return to G-d after sin, “draw Him down with greater strength.” Their strength comes from “with all your might,” a love that exceeds what the soul can contain, which can show itself in actual self-sacrifice, as with Rabbi Elazar ben Durdaya, a great sinner who repented and wept until his soul left him.

והן בבחי' ביטול אליו ית' וכלות הנפש בקי"ש [בקריאת שמע] וכמ"ש אליך ה' נפשי אשא⁸⁵ וגוי' ובחי' ובכל מדך הוא המתגלה בבע"ת [בבעלי תשובה] יותר מבצדיקים שבצדיקים היא בחי' ובכל נפשך כו'

or in the level of self-nullification (bittul) to Him, may He be blessed, and the expiry of the soul in the Shema, as it is written, "To You, Havayah, I lift up my soul," etc. And the level of "with all your might" is what is revealed in baalei teshuvah more than in the most righteous of the righteous, which is the level of "with all your soul," etc.

It can also show itself in the soul's complete self-nullification and "expiry" during the Shema, as in "To You, Havayah, I lift up my soul." This "with all your might" is revealed in baalei teshuvah more than in the most perfect tzaddikim, whose love is "with all your soul."

והיינו לפי שיתרון האור הוא הבא מתוך החשך⁸⁶ דוקא שע"י הזדונות שישים אשם נפשו איך שבהכל בא⁸⁷ כו' ונגעה בו עד הנפש.

This is because the advantage of light is that which comes out of the darkness specifically: through the intentional sins, when he holds his soul guilty, how he "came in vanity," etc., and it touches him to the soul.

The reason is that light is most precious when it comes out of darkness. The penitent's past sins make him feel his guilt, that his life "came in vanity," and the pain reaches the depth of his soul.

אי לזאת יצעק אל ה' בצר לו מאד ותהי' [ותהיה] הצעקה גדולה לאלקים למעלה מכדי שתוכל נפשו שאת וזהו ענין י"ה עם שמי שס"ה^{88,89} כו'

Therefore he will cry out to Havayah in his very great distress, and the cry will be great unto G-d, beyond what his soul can bear. And this is the matter of "Yah with Shemi (My Name) is 365," etc.:

From that distress he cries out to G-d with a cry beyond his soul's capacity. This is linked to the Zohar's teaching that the Name Yah together with shemi, "My Name," makes 365, the number of the prohibitions.

שהל"ת [שהלא תעשה] הן בשם י"ה למעלה מבחי' עשה שהן בשם וי"ה וכמ"ש בארץ לא זרועה⁹⁰ שבחי' לא הוא הנזרע כו'

for the prohibitions are in the Name Yah, above the level of the positive [commandments], which are in the Name vav-hei; and as it is written, "in a land not (lo) sown," that the level of lo ("not") is what is sown, etc.,

The 365 prohibitions belong to Yah, the first two letters of Havayah, which are higher than the vav-hei, the source of the positive commandments. Jeremiah's "in a land not sown" hints at this: the "not" (lo), the prohibitions, is itself what is sown.

כמ"ש במ"א כי לפי ששם י"ה הוא למעלה משם ו"ה א"א בכח הנפש להמשיך משם בבחי' המשכה שהוא בקיום מ"ע [מצות עשה] רק בשמירת הלי"ת [הלא תעשה]

as is explained elsewhere. For since the Name Yah is above the Name vav-hei, it is impossible, by the power of the soul, to draw down from there in the mode of drawing-down, which is through fulfilling the positive commandments; only through keeping the prohibitions,

Because Yah is higher than vav-hei, the soul cannot draw from it by positive action, the mode of drawing-down that belongs to the positive commandments. It reaches Yah only through keeping the prohibitions, that is, through refraining.

שהוא ענין עקירת הרצון מן ההיפך ועיקרה זו שמן ההיפוך תגדל מאד עד שיבא ויגיע לבחי' ובכל מאדך⁹¹ למעלה מכדי שתוכל הנפש שאת.

which is the matter of uprooting the will from the opposite; and this uprooting, from the opposite, will grow very great, until he comes and reaches the level of "with all your might," beyond what the soul can bear.

Keeping a prohibition means uprooting one's will from its opposite. In a penitent, who has known that opposite from within, the uprooting becomes so intense that it reaches "with all your might," beyond the soul's capacity.

12 והנה ע"ז נאמר ממעמקים קראתיך⁹² הוי' כי יש יו"ד עמקים שהם כנגד עשר בחינות הנפש ז' מדות וג' שכליים והעומק שלהן הוא השרש שבכל בחי' שנק' עומקא דחשוכא

Now, about this it is said, "From the depths I have called You, Havayah." For there are ten depths, which correspond to the ten levels of the soul, seven emotive attributes (middos) and three intellectual ones, and their depth is the root in each level, which is called "the depth of darkness" (umka dechashucha):

The Alter Rebbe now reads Psalm 130, "From the depths I have called You, Havayah." The depths are ten, matching the soul's ten powers, seven emotional and three intellectual, and the "depth" of each power is its hidden root, called in Aramaic "the depth of darkness."

דהיינו בחי' החשך שעדיין לא בא לידי גילוי בנפש שאין בו בחי' התלבשות בגוף ונפש הבהמית הוא מהמדות עליונות הבאות מלמעלה שהן למעלה מכוחות המתגלות בנפש

that is, the level of the darkness that has not yet come into revelation in the soul, in which there is no aspect of being clothed in the body and the animal soul. It is from the supernal attributes that come from above, which are above the powers that are revealed in the soul.

This "darkness" is the part of each power that has never come into revelation in the soul and is not clothed in the body or the animal soul. It comes from supernal attributes that come from above, beyond the faculties the soul shows openly.

רק ע"י בחי' ובכל מאדך מתגלה בחי' ממעמקים ומשם קראתיך הוי' להיות התחדשות בחי' הוי' בנפש ולהיות בנפש הוי' זו של בחי' ממעמקים

Only through the level of "with all your might" is the level of "from the depths" revealed; and from there, "I have called You, Havayah": that there be a renewal of the level of Havayah in the soul, and that there be in the soul this Havayah of the level of "from the depths,"

These depths are revealed only through "with all your might," the penitent's love beyond measure. From there the person calls to G-d, and a new level of Havayah comes into being in the soul, one that rises from its hidden depths.

שעדיין לא היתה בגילוי הנפש ועי"ז ויהפוך ה' את הקללה לברכה⁹³ שמשם נמשך מחילת וסליחת העוונות וזרקתי עליכם מים טהורים⁹⁴ כו' מחיתי כעב פשעיך⁹⁵ כו'

which was not yet revealed in the soul. And through this, "Havayah turned the curse into a blessing": for from there is drawn the forgiveness and pardon of sins, "And I will sprinkle pure water upon you," etc.; "I have wiped away your transgressions like a thick cloud," etc.

This new revelation is what turns the curse into a blessing: from it flow forgiveness and pardon of sins, as in "I will sprinkle pure water upon you" and "I have wiped away your transgressions like a thick cloud." This answers the opening question: the curse is not merely ignored but transformed.

ולכן אומרים בעשי"ת [בעשרת ימי תשובה] מזמור זה ממעמקים שבכל יום ממשיך עומק א' עד שביוהכ"פ [שביום הכפורים] לפני הוי' תטהרו לפני הוי' המתגלה בנפש שמשם נמשך להיות תטהרו:⁹⁶

Therefore, during the Ten Days of Teshuvah, we say this psalm, "From the depths"; for each day one draws down one depth, until on Yom Kippur: "Before Havayah you shall be purified," before the Havayah that is revealed in the soul, from which it is drawn down that "you shall be purified."

This is why Psalm 130 is recited during the Ten Days of Teshuvah: each day draws out one of the ten depths, until on Yom Kippur "before Havayah you shall be purified." The Havayah "before" whom we are purified is the one now revealed in the soul, the source of the purification.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Arouse the hidden love for G-d and let it guard you even in small matters of the words of the Scribes. Set aside your own will in thought, speech and action, even in what is permitted. In prayer, broaden your contemplation of G-d's greatness until it becomes love and joy, and draw His light into the world through Torah, mitzvos and above all charity. And let remorse over the past become a cry "with all your might" that reveals the depths of the soul, especially during the Ten Days of Teshuvah.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the maamar see more praise in G-d's refusal, beyond reason, to hear the accuser than in a refutation of his charges, and how does that refusal mirror the Jew's own love?
2. How does the analogy of hair and the brain show the gap between the Infinite Light and Chochmah, and why is that gap necessary for the worlds to exist?
3. What does it mean that the daily renewal of creation depends on the arousal from below, and how does "Nullify your will" act as a person's own tzimtzum?
4. Why is charity the general expression of all the mitzvos, and what does the added hei of tzedakah signify?
5. Why is "with all your might" revealed more in baalei teshuvah than in perfect tzaddikim, and how does it turn the curse into a blessing?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 ולא אבה

The note points to the Mittlerer Rebbe's transcript (hanachah) of this discourse, printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5566, p. 334: another record of the same maamar.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הנחת כ"ק אדמו"ר האמצעי בסה"מ תקס"ו ע' שלד. עוד הגהות באוה"ת ע' תתקצו, שם ע' תתקפא מיוסד על הנחת אדה"א עם הגהות אחרות. שם ע' תתקצו הגהות נוספות.

2 ולא אבה ה"א לשמוע אל בלעם

"But Havayah your G-d was not willing to listen to Bilam, and Havayah your G-d turned the curse into a blessing for you, because Havayah your G-d loved you." The whole maamar explains this verse; its closing words, "because He loved you," are taken up in paragraph 10.

דברים כ"ג:6

וְלֹא־אָבָה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַת אֶל־בִּלְעָם וַיַּהֲפֹךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָךְ אֶת־הַקְלָלָה לְבִרְכָּה כִּי אָהָבָה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

Nevertheless the L-RD thy G-d would not hearken unto Balaam; but the L-RD thy G-d turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the L-RD thy G-d loved thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים כג, ו. בסה"מ תקס"ו ובאוה"ת יש עוד כמה קושיות.

3 Kehot's note points to II Samuel 13:14 for these words.

II Samuel 13:14

וְלֹא אָבָה לְשִׁמְעַת בְּקוֹלָהּ וַיַּחֲזֶק מִמֶּנָּה וַיַּעֲנֶה וַיִּשְׁכַּב אִתָּהּ:

Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but being stronger than she, he forced her, and lay with her.

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4 ראש הפעור הנשקפה

Balak took Bilam to the top of Peor, which looks out over the wasteland, for another attempt to curse Israel. The Alter Rebbe counts it among the places Bilam chose because Israel were destined to sin there.

Numbers 23:28

וַיִּקַּח בָּלָק אֶת־בִּלְעָם רֹאשׁ הַפְּעוֹר הַנִּשְׁקָף עַל־פְּנֵי הַיְּשִׁימוֹן:

And Balak took Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh down upon the desert.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

במדבר כג, כה.

5 וישת אל המדבר פניו

When Bilam saw that it pleased Havayah to bless Israel, he no longer went after omens as before but set his face to-

ward the wilderness. The Alter Rebbe reads this, too, as Bilam looking toward a place of Israel's sin.

Numbers 24:1

וַיֵּרָא בִּלְעָם כִּי טוֹב בְּעֵינָיו ה' לְבָרְכוֹ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא־הָלַךְ כְּפַעַם־כְּפַעַם לְקִרְאָת נְחָשִׁים וַיֵּשֶׁת אֶל־הַמְּדַבֵּר פָּנָיו:

And when Balaam saw that it pleased the L-RD to bless Israel, he went not, as at the other times, to meet with enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

במדבר כד, א.

PARAGRAPH 2

6 שבכל נפש מישראל יש בחי' והארה משם ה'

The note says that part of this passage, on the aspect and radiance of the Name Havayah in every Jewish soul, is quoted in a discourse of the Rebbe Maharash printed in Sefer HaMaamarim 5629.

KEHOT'S NOTE

חלק מכאן מובא בסה"מ תרכ"ט (הוצאת תשנ"ב) ע' רצט. וראה גם בספר השיחות תשנ"א ע' 799 ואילך.

7 כי חלק ה' עמו

"For Havayah's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." The Alter Rebbe reads "portion" literally: the souls of Israel are a portion and a radiance of the Name Havayah itself.

Deuteronomy 32:9

כִּי חֵלֶק ה' עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֵלֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ:

For the portion of the L-RD is His people, Jacob the lot of His inheritance.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דברים לב, ט.

8 כי הנה בכל נפש מישראל . . קוצו של יו"ד

Kehot's note points to where this is explained further: Or HaTorah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מובא באוה"ת שה"ש כרך א ע' קלא.

9 בדי"ה ראה אנכי

There the Alter Rebbe explains how the Name Havayah is present in every Jew: at the Giving of the Torah Havayah was drawn into each one's inner self, so that He is "your G-d," called by your name.

KEHOT'S NOTE

לעיל יח, א.

PARAGRAPH 3

10

ויחידה

In the next gate Rabbi Chaim Vital explains that the levels of the soul are drawn from the different worlds, Chayah from Atzilus "and Yechidah from Adam Kadmon," the tip of the yud. The reference links the love beyond reason to Yechidah, the soul's highest level.

שערי קדושה, חלק ג ב' כ"ט:29 Part 3 Sha'arei Kedusha, אחר כך לוקח רוח אחד מעולם היצירה וגם הוא נחלק לכמה מדרגות על דרך הנזכר לעיל. אך בבחינת כללות כל העולמות נקרא רוח. ועל דרך זה נשמה מבריאה, וחיה מאצילות, ויחידה מא"ק:

Afterwards he obtains a Ru'ach from the world of Formation-Yetzirah, and it too is divided into a number of levels in the same manner mentioned before. Nevertheless, in relation to the aspect of the general worlds, it is called a Ru'ach. The same is likewise so with the Neshamah from the world of Creation-Briyah, as well as with the Chayah from the world of Emanation-Atzilut, and with the Yechidah from Primordial Man-Adam Kadmon.

Shaarei Kedusha (Public Domain) • Gates of Holiness, translated by Rabbi Amiram Markel, 2013 (CC-BY)

11

ואין אדם עובר עבירה

The Talmud teaches that a person does not commit a sin unless a spirit of folly enters him. The Alter Rebbe explains the folly as the illusion that one remains bound to G-d even while sinning.

סוטה ג' א:ד'-ה' 4-5 Sotah 3a:4-5

ריש לקיש אמר: אין אדם עובר עבירה אלא אם כן נכנס בו רוח שטות, שְׁנֵאֲמַר: "איש איש כי תשטה אשתו", "תשטה" כתיב. תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: מפני מה האמינה תורה עד אחד בסוטה — שרגלים לדבר, שיהי קינא לה, ונסתרה, ועד אחד מעידה שהיא טמאה.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

סוטה ג, א.

12

נר ה' נשמת אדם

"The lamp of Havayah is the soul of man, searching all the inner chambers." The Alter Rebbe uses the image of the lamp: like a flame, the soul rises upward of itself, toward its source.

משלי כ"ז:27 Proverbs 20:27

נר ה' נשמת אדם חפש כל־חֲדָרֵי־כֶסֶן:

The spirit of man is the lamp of the L-RD, searching all the inward parts.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי כ, כז.

13

חמורים ד"ס יותר מד"ת

The Mishnah states that there is greater stringency in the words of the Scribes than in the words of Torah: one who says there is no mitzvah of tefillin, contradicting the

Torah, is exempt, but one who says tefillin have five compartments, adding to the words of the Scribes, is liable.

סנהדרין פ"ח ב88b Sanhedrin

KEHOT'S NOTE

שהש"ר א ע"פ כי טובים דודיך (ב). עירובין (כא, ב). וראה סנהדרין פח, ב במשנה. [כ].

14

חמורים ד"ס יותר מד"ת

The Talmud expounds the verse "My son, take heed" as "be more careful with the words of the Scribes than with the words of Torah," for one who transgresses the words of the Scribes is liable to death.

עירובין כ"א ב21b Eruvin

15

חמורים ד"ס יותר מד"ת

On "For your love is better than wine," the Midrash teaches that the words of the Scribes are dearer than the words of Torah.

שיר השירים רבה א:ג'1:3 Shir HaShirim Rabbah

... רבי אליעזר אומר, אם יהיו כל הימים דיו, ואנמים קולמוסין, ושמים וארץ מגלות, וכל בני האדם לבלרים, אין מספיקין לכתוב [דברי תורה שלמדתי], ואני לא חסרתיה אלא כאדם שמתביל וזרותו כמקחול בים. רבי יהושע אומר אם יהיו כל הימים דיו, ואנמים קולמוסין, ושמים וארץ ריעות, וכל בני אדם לבלרין, אין מספיקין לכתוב דברי תורה שלמדתי, ולא חסרתיה רק כאדם שמתביל וזרותו כמקחול בים. רבי עקיבא אומר אני אין בי ...

"By the fragrance of your good oils, your name is like poured oil; therefore, the young women love you" (Song of Songs 1:3). "By the fragrance of your good oils," Rabbi Yanai son of Rabbi Shimon [said]: All the songs that the patriarchs recited before You were fragrances, but we, "your name is like poured oil," like a person who empties from his vessel to the vessel of another. All the mitzvot that the patriarchs performed before You were fragrances, but we, "your name is like poured oil," [we have] ...

Midrash Rabbah -- TE (Public Domain) • The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022 (CC-BY)

16

נקראו סופרים

The Talmud says the early Sages were called Sofrim because they counted (sofrim) all the letters of the Torah. The Alter Rebbe offers another meaning: they are the "scribe" (sofer) who makes the "book," that is, the Oral Torah.

קידושין ל' א:י"א 30a:11 Kiddushin

לפיכך נקראו ראשונים "סופרים", שהיו סופרים כל האותיות שבתורה, שהיו אומרים: וא"ו ד"גחז"ו - חציון של אותיות של ספר תורה. "דרש דרש" - חציון של תיבות. "והתגלח" - של פסוקים. "יכרסמנה חזיר מעצר" - ע"ז דיער חציון של תהלים. "והוא רחום יכפר ע"ז" - חציון דפסוקים.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

קידושין ל, א.

17 י"ח סופר וספר וספור

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ס"י בתחלתו.

18 סופר וספר וספור

Sefer Yetzirah opens by saying that G-d created His world "with three sefarim: with sefer, sefar and sippur." The Alter Rebbe's triad of scribe, book and telling echoes these words.

ספר יצירה א'1:1 Sefer Yetzirah

בשלישם ושתים נתיבות פליאות חכמה חקק י' ה' צבאות אלקי ישראל אלקים חיים ומלך עולם אל שדי רחום וחנן רם ונשא שוכן עד מרום וקדוש שמו וברא את עולמו בשלשה ספרים בספר וספר וספור:

Yah, the L-rd of hosts, the living G-d, King of the Universe, Omnipotent, All-Kind and Merciful, Supreme and Extolled, who is Eternal, Sublime and Most-Holy, ordained (formed) and created the Universe in thirty-two mysterious paths of wisdom by three Sepharim, namely: 1) S'for 2) Sippur (סִפּוּר; סִפָּר; and 3) Sapher סִפֵּר which are in Him one and the same.

Sefer Yetzirah, Warsaw 1884 (Public Domain) • Sefer Yezirah, trans. by Isidor Kalisch. New York, 1877 (Public Domain)

19 בד"ה ושאתם מים בששון

the passage shares nothing with the note

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקמן דרושים לסוכות פ, ב.

20 ובד"ה שחורה אני ונאווה

There the Alter Rebbe explains "I am black, yet comely": the soul's "blackness" is its cleaving to G-d by keeping the prohibitions, and through it the future will reveal the light that encompasses all worlds, which the soul can grasp only by negation, "a land not sown." A parenthesis there applies the verse to the Oral Torah, along the lines explained regarding the words of the Scribes.

Song of Songs 7:1 א'1:1 שיר השירים

שׁוּבִי שׁוּבִי הַשּׁוֹלֵמִית שׁוּבִי וְנִחַזְּהָּ כֶּךָּ מִהַתְּחַזּוּ בַשּׁוֹלֵמִית כְּמַחֲלֵת הַמִּתְקַנִּים:

Return, return, O Shulammitte; Return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulammitte? As it were a dance of two companies.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

לקמן שה"ש ז, א.

21 בחי' קוצו של יוד

A discourse of the Rebbe Rashab from 5647 (1887), to which the note points on the tip of the yud; we do not describe its content.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ד"ה וכל העם רואים תרמ"ז (בסה"מ תרמ"ו-ג) ע' תל. ובספר השיחות תנש"א ע' 800 הערה 43, שיחת ש"פ תצא.

22 ולית מחשבה תפיסא ביה

In the prayer of Elijah (Patach Eliyahu) in the introduction to Tikkunei Zohar: "You are the Highest of all the high, the Hidden of all the hidden; no thought can grasp You at all." The Alter Rebbe cites it for the Infinite One, toward whom the tip of the yud points.

תקוני זוהר י"ז א'11-12 Tikkunei Zohar 17a:10-12

אנת הוא עלאה על כל עלאין סתימא על כל סתימין. לית מחשבה תפיסא בך כלל. אנת הוא דאפיקת עשר תקונין. וקרינן לון עשר ספירן. לאנהגא בהון עלמין סתימין דלא אתגליין. ועלמין דאתגליין. ובהון אתכסיאת (נ"א אתכסיא) מבני נשא. ואנת הוא דקשיר לון ומיחד לון. ובגין דאנת מלגאו. כל מאן דאפריש חד מן חבריה מאלין עשר. אתחשיב ליה כאלו אפריש בך.

Constantinople, 1740 (CC-BY-NC)

23 כולא קמ"י כלא חשיב

In its teaching on the fear of G-d, the Zohar says that He is great and rules over all, "and all before Him is accounted as nothing." The Alter Rebbe uses it to describe the Infinite One, beyond all comprehension.

Zohar I, 11b, י"א, כ

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א י"א, ב.

24 אני ה' לא שניתי

"For I, Havayah, have not changed." G-d's unchanging essence, beyond all the worlds, is what the tip of the yud points to.

מלאכי ג'6:1 Malachi 3:6

כִּי אֲנִי ה' לֹא שִׁנִּיתִי וְאַתֶּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא קִלִּיתֶם:

For I the L-RD change not; and ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

מלאכי ג, ו.

25 ולית מח' תפיסא ב"י

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"ז בהקדמה (פתח אלי').

26 בשע"ק להרח"ו ח"ג שער א'

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן שה"ש מ, ד.

27 כי קוצו של יו"ד

Rabbi Chaim Vital writes that the five worlds are called one Havayah, "for the tip of the yud is Adam Kadmon," the yud is Atzilus, the first hei Beriah, the vav Yetzirah and the fi-

nal hei Asiyah. The Alter Rebbe cites it, in his own text, for the tip of the yud.

שערי קדושה, חלק ג א'ר:1:6 Sha'arei Kedusha, Part 3

והאציל חמשה עולמות, זה נשמה לזה וזה לזה, והן, אדם הקדמון הנזכר בספר התקונים (בתקון י"ט ובריש תיקון ע' ובכמה מקומות) ובלשון הגאונים נקרא צחצחות, השני עולם האצילות, השלישי עולם הבריאה, הרביעי עולם היצירה, החמישי עולם העשיה. ואלו החמשה עולמות נקראו הוי"ה אחת, כי קוצו של יו"ד הוא א"ק [אדם קדמון], והיו"ד אצילות, והי"א ראשונה בריאה והוא"ו יצירה, והי"א אחרונה עשיה.

He emanated five worlds, one world being the soul for the next, and the next world being the soul for the next. These are: Primordial Man-Adam Kadmon, as mentioned in Sefer Tikkunim, which in the nomenclature of the Ge'onim is called, "Exceedingly Brilliant-Tzachtzechoot." The second is the world of Emanation-Atzilut. The third is the world of Creation-Briyah. The fourth is the world of Formation-Yetzirah. The fifth is the world of Action-Asiyah. These five worlds are considered as One Being-Havayah Achat-Asiah. For, the thorn of the letter Yod-() is ...

Shaarei Kedusha (Public Domain) • Gates of Holiness, translated by Rabbi Amiram Markel, 2013 (CC-BY)

18 א"ח עט"ב

"A woman of valor is the crown of her husband." Here the woman of valor is the Oral Torah, the crown of the Written Torah.

משלי י"ב:ד' Proverbs 12:4

KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי יב, ד.

PARAGRAPH 4

29 התהוות החכמה מלמלעה מן החכמה

The note points to Or HaTorah on Parshas Korach for the emergence of Chochmah from what is above Chochmah; we do not describe its content.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת קרח ע' תשכא.

30 ישת חשך סתרו

"He made darkness His hiding place, His canopy around Him." The Alter Rebbe reads it as G-d concealing His essence so that the measured revelation of Chochmah can appear.

Tehillim י"ח:12 Psalms 18:12

יִשְׁתַּחֲשֹׁךְ סִתְרוֹ סִבְיֹתָיו סָכְתוֹ הַשְׁכֵּת־מִים עֲבִי שְׁהָקִים:

He made darkness His hiding-place, His pavilion round about Him; darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים יח, יב.

ה' מלך גאות לבש

"Havayah reigns; He is clothed in majesty ... the world, too, is firmly established; it shall not falter." The Alter Rebbe reads the "garment" as G-d's self-concealment, which allows the world to stand.

Tehillim צ"א:93 Psalms 93:1

ה' מֶלֶךְ גָּאוֹת לָבַשׁ לְבָשׁ ה' עָז הַתְּאֵזֶר אֶף־תִּכְוֶן תִּבְל כָּל־תְּמוּט:

The L-RD reigneth; He is clothed in majesty; The L-RD is clothed, He hath girded Himself with strength; Yea, the world is established, that it cannot be moved.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים צג, א.

32 וז"ש בראשית ברא אלקים

The note quotes the Tzemach Tzedek there: the level of Bereshis is Chochmah, called the beginning of revelation, created through the Name Elokim, which is tzimtzum; and he notes that the Mikdash Melech, at the beginning of Parshas Va'eira (22b), explains it the same way.

KEHOT'S NOTE

"דר"ל דבחי בראשית הוא חכמה הנק' ראשית הגילוי נברא ע"י שם אלקים שהוא בחי צמצום כו', וכן פי' המק"מ ר"פ וארא דכ"ב ע"ב וז"ל בראשית שהוא מל' ברא אותה אלקים כו'" — אוה"ת תולדות כרך ד תתיג, ב.

33 בראשית ברא אלקים

"In the beginning Elokim created the heavens and the earth." The Alter Rebbe reads "Bereshis" as Chochmah, the beginning of revelation, created through Elokim, the Name of tzimtzum.

בראשית א'1:1 Genesis 1:1

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

In the beginning G-d created the heaven and the earth.

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34 בתחלה עלה במה' לברא במדה"ר

Kehot's note points to Zohar I, 120b for these words.

Zohar I, 120b, כח"א

KEHOT'S NOTE

רש"י ריש בראשית. וראה ב"ר ספ"י"ב. וראה ג"כ זח"א קכ, ב. ובניצוצי זהר שם.

35 בתחלה עלה במחשבה לברא במדה"ד

Rashi explains that the verse says "Elokim created" and not the Name Havayah because at first it arose in G-d's thought to create the world with the attribute of judgment; seeing that the world could not endure, He joined the attribute of mercy to it. The Kehot note also cites the Midrash, Bereshit Rabbah 12:15, where G-d says that with judgment alone the world could not stand.

Rashi on Genesis 1:1:3 א'ג:1:3 על בראשית

ברא אלקים ולא נאמר ברא ה', שבתחלה עלה במחשבה לבראתו במדת הדיון, ראה שאין העולם מתקיים, הקדים מדת רחמים ושתפה למה"ד, והנינו דכתיב כיום עשות ה' אלקים ארץ ושמים:

ברא' GOD [AS JUDGE] CREATED — It does not state 'The L-rd (the Merciful One) created, because at first G-d intended to create it (the world) to be placed under the attribute (rule) of strict justice, but He realised that the world could not thus endure and therefore gave precedence to Divine Mercy allying it with Divine Justice. It is to this that what is written in (Genesis 2:4) alludes — "In the day that the L-rd G-d made earth and heaven".

Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain) • Pentateuch with Rashi's commentary by M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silbermann, 1929-1934 (Public Domain)

36 כבדק המבריק

There the Alter Rebbe describes an encompassing level (makif) as "like lightning that flashes" in the mind and comprehension, which is not grasped and absorbed into the comprehension itself: the same image this maamar uses for Chochmah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

עי לעיל בד"ה אז ישיר ישראל (ג, סב), ושי"ג [כ].

37 קמי כולא כלא

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

דניאל (ד, לב), ועיי זח"א (יא, ב), [כ].

38 קמי כולא כלא

"All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing." The Zohar's phrase "all before Him is accounted as nothing" quotes this verse.

דניאל ד':32

וְכָל-אֲרֶעָא (דארי) אֲרֶעָא כְּלָה חֲשִׁיבִין וְכַמְצָנָה עֲבַד בְּחִיל שְׁמִיָּא וְדִירִי אֲרֶעָא וְלֹא אִיתִי דִּי־יִמְחָא בִּידָה וְיֹאמַר לָהּ מָה עֲבַדְתָּ:

And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; And He doeth according to His will in the host of heaven, And among the inhabitants of the earth; And none can stay His hand, Or say unto Him: What doest Thou?

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

39 קמי כולא כלא

The Zohar says that before G-d "all is accounted as nothing," citing Daniel. The Alter Rebbe stresses the word "as": before G-d the worlds are like nothing, not actually nothing.

ספר הזהר, הקדמה כ"קפ"ח-20:188-22:199 Zohar, Introduction כ"ב:קצ"ט

40 בשעה שקטרגו המלאכים ואמרו מה אנש

When G-d wished to create man, a group of ministering angels objected, "What is man that You should remember him?", and He stretched out His little finger among them and burned them. The Alter Rebbe reads the little finger as a tiny excess of divine revelation beyond their measure.

סנהדרין ל"ח ב:ד'4:38b Sanhedrin

(שעה, בסוף, ארמי - סימן). אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: בשעה שבקש הקדוש ברוך הוא לקבאות את האדם, ברא פת אחת של מלאכי השתר.

...ולא אבה הוי' אלהיך לשמוע אל בלעם ויהפוך

אמר להם: רצונכם נעשה אדם בצלמנו? אמרו לפניו: רבנו של עולם, מה מעשיו? אמר להם: כך וכן מעשיו.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

סנהדרין לח, ב. וראה לעיל פי' אמור לו, א.

41 עשר ספירות בלי מה מספר עשר אצבעות

At the opening of Pardes Rimmonim, Sefer Yetzirah is quoted: "Ten Sefiros beli mah, the number of the ten fingers, five corresponding to five." The Alter Rebbe cites it to show that the fingers stand for the Sefiros, G-d's measured attributes.

פרדס רמונים א"ד-ה'5:4-1:4 Pardes Rimmonim

... אחרי אשר נסענו מהר ה' הר גבוה ותלול המשנה הקודמת ובה הכרחנו הסכמת המקובלים היות הספירות י' ולא יותר. נלך אל הר המור המשנה השניה אליה ואם היא רביעית לראש הפרק. וז"ל עשר ספירות בלי מה. עשר ולא תשע. עשר ולא אחד עשר. הבן בחכמה, וחכם בכנינה. בחון בהם וחקור מהם ודע וחשוב מהם והעמד דבר על בוריו והשב יוצר על מכונו עכ"ל. הסכמנו שלא לעורר על המשנה הזאת כלל להיות דבריה מעצמם בלתי מסודרים והמקרא אומר דורשני ואין שטחיותה סובל פי' כלל עד שבו נשא ונתן. ונכתוב את ...

Pardes Rimmonim (Public Domain)

42 עשר אצבעות

At the beginning of Parshas Yisro the Zohar speaks of the mystery of raising the fingers, which may be raised only in prayer, supplication and blessing, and of ten ruling powers that stand over the raised fingers. The Alter Rebbe cites it for the fingers as an image of the divine attributes.

ספר הזהר, יתרו א"א-ח'8:1-1:8 Zohar, Yitro

NOW JETHRO, THE PRIEST OF MIDIAN, MOSES' FATHER-IN-LAW, HEARD OF ALL THAT GOD HAD DONE FOR MOSES AND FOR ISRAEL. R. Hezekiah opened here with a discourse on the verse: And Aaron lifted up his hand¹ So the k'tib. toward the people and blessed them (Lev. 9, 22). 'The use of the word "hand" here', he said, 'in the singular indicates that he meant to lift up his right hand above his left; and this for a certain esoteric reason. We find, namely, in the book of King Solomon, that he who ...

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

43 כי הפץ חסד הוא

"Who is a G-d like You, who pardons iniquity ... for He desires kindness." The Alter Rebbe uses it for the first creation, which came from G-d's own desire for kindness, without any human prompting.

מִיכָה ז':18 Micah

מִי־אֵל כְּמוֹךָ נִשְׂא עוֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל־פֶּשַׁע לְשֹׁאֲרֵית נִחְלָתוֹ לֹא־הִחְזִיק לְעַד אִפּוֹ כִּי־הִפֵּץ חֶסֶד הוּא:

Who is a G-d like unto Thee, that pardoneth the iniquity, And passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, Because He delighteth in mercy. .

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

מיכה ז, יח.

44 שבטובו מחדש בכי"ת

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ברכת יוצר.

45 בטל רצונו

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות ב, ד.

46 בטל רצונו

"Nullify your will before His will, so that He will nullify the will of others before your will." The Alter Rebbe makes it the human counterpart of the divine tzimtzum.

Pirkei Avot 2:4: משנה אבות ב'ד'

הוא ה'ה אומר, עשה רצונו כרצונה, כדי שיעשה רצונה כרצונו. בטל רצונה מפני רצונו, כדי שיכבד רצון אחרים מפני רצונה. הלל אומר, אל תפרש מן הצבור, ואל תאמין בעצמך עד יום מותך, ואל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו, ואל תאמר דבר שאי אפשר לשמע. שסופו להשמע. ואל תאמר לך שאפנה אשנה, שמא לא תפנה:

He used to say: do His will as though it were your will, so that He will do your will as though it were His. Set aside your will in the face of His will, so that he may set aside the will of others for the sake of your will. Hillel said: do not separate yourself from the community, Do not trust in yourself until the day of your death, Do not judge your fellow man until you have reached his place. Do not say something that cannot be ...

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

47 רבות מחשבות בלב איש

"Many are the thoughts in a man's heart, but the counsel of Havayah, it shall stand." It illustrates the tzimtzum of thought: setting aside one's own plans for G-d's.

Proverbs 19:21: משלי י"טכ"א

רבות מחשבות בלב איש ועצת ה' היא תקום:

There are many devices in a man's heart; But the counsel of the L-RD, that shall stand.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי יט, כא.

48 עוצם עיניו מראות ברע

Isaiah describes the one who will dwell on high as one who "shuts his eyes from seeing evil." It illustrates the tzimtzum of action.

Isaiah 33:15: ישעיהו ל"גט"ו

הלך צדקות ודבר מישרים מאס בקצוץ מעשקות נער כפיו מתמך בשחד אטם אזנו משמע דמים ועצם עיניו מראות ברע:

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; He that despiseth the gain of oppressions, That shaketh his hands

from holding of bribes, That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, And shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיי לג, טו.

49 ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם

From the passage of tzitzis: "and you shall not stray after your heart and after your eyes." It, too, illustrates restraining one's desires in action.

Numbers 15:39: במדבר ט"ו:ל"ט

והיה לכם לציצת וראיתם אתו וזכרתם את כל מצות ה' ועשיתם אתם ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם אשר יאמרו זנים אחריהם:

And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the L-RD, and do them; and that ye go not about after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go astray;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

במדבר טו, לט.

50 קדש א"ע

On "for you are a holy people to Havayah your G-d," the Sifrei teaches: "sanctify yourself"; where others treat a permitted thing as forbidden, you may not treat it as permitted in their presence. The Kehot note cites it with the Talmud for the call to holiness even in what is permitted.

Sifrei Devarim 104:7: ספרי דברים ק"ד:ל"ד

כי עם קדוש אתה לה' אלקיך - קדש את עצמך. דברים המותרים ואחרים נהגו בהם אסור - אי אתה רשאי לנהוג היתר בפניהם.

"for a holy people are you to the L-rd your G-d": Sanctify yourself with what is permitted to you, viz.: That which is permitted and others forbid to themselves (as a special act of piety), you are forbidden to permit to yourselves in their presence.

Vocalized Edition (CC0) • Sifrei by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein (CC-BY)

51 בחכמה אתבריור

The Zohar describes how, within the supernal Thought, the waste was sifted out and the rest refined. The Kehot note points there for the principle that refinement, separating good from evil, takes place through Chochmah.

Zohar II, 254b: זח"ב רנד, כב

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"ב רנד, ב.

52 קדש הוא בחכמה

A lexicon of Kabbalistic terms; the note points to its entry on kodesh (holy) for the identification of holiness with Chochmah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מא"א בערכו.

53 להיות בטל רצונו . . כל בכור

The note points to Or HaTorah on Parshas Yisro for this

62

בהבל בא ובחשך ילך

“For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and its name is covered in darkness.” Here it describes a life spent in deeds that are not for G-d.

Ecclesiastes 6:4:יד:קהלת ו

כִּי־בֹהַבֵּל בָּא וּבְחֹשֶׁךְ יֵלֶךְ וּבְחֹשֶׁךְ שְׁמוֹ יִכְסֶה:

for it cometh in vanity, and departeth in darkness, and the name thereof is covered with darkness;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

קהלת ו, ד.

63

ישים אליו לבו רוחו ונשמתו אליו יאסוף

“If He sets His heart upon him, if He gathers to Himself his spirit and his breath.” The Alter Rebbe reads it as the penitent setting his heart toward G-d and gathering his whole spirit and soul to Him.

Job 34:14:יד:איוב ל

אִם־יִשֶּׁם אֱלֹהֵי לְבוֹ רֹחוֹ וְנִשְׁמָתוֹ אֵלָיו יֶאֱסֹף:

If He set His heart upon man, If He gather unto Himself his spirit and his breath;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

איוב לד, יד.

64

רוח אייתי רוח

On Parshas Terumah the Zohar teaches that everything depends on desire: “spirit draws spirit and brings spirit,” with Job’s verse as its sign. A person’s outpouring of spirit toward G-d draws down G-d’s spirit to him.

Zohar II, 162b:בסב, ח”ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח”ב קסב, ב. ע”ל (כה, ב). וש”נ. [כ].

PARAGRAPH 8

65

ואהבת בק”ש את הוי' אלהיך

“You shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might.” Contemplation in prayer brings a person to fulfill this verse of the Shema.

Deuteronomy 6:5:ה:דברים ו

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ:

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

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66

יאר ה' פניו

From the priestly blessing: “May Havayah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.” The Alter Rebbe cites it for the drawing-down of G-d’s “face,” His inner being.

Numbers 6:25:ה:במדבר ו

יָאֵר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחַנֶּנָּךְ:

The L-RD make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

במדבר ו, כה.

PARAGRAPH 9

67

קול קורא במדבר

“A voice calls: in the wilderness clear the way of Havayah.” The Alter Rebbe reads the voice as the voice of Torah, drawing G-d’s way even into the wilderness of this world.

Isaiah 40:3:ג:ישעיהו מ

קוֹל קוֹרֵא בַּמִּדְבָּר פָּנוּ דֶּרֶךְ ה' יִשְׂרוּ בְּעֶרְבָה מְסֻלָּה לְאַלְקֵינוּ:

Hark! one calleth: ‘Clear ye in the wilderness the way of the L-RD, make plain in the desert a highway for our G-d.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע” מ, ג.

68

כן בקדש חזיתך

In a psalm David composed in the wilderness of Judah: “So have I beheld You in holiness, to see Your might and Your glory.” The Alter Rebbe uses it for supernal holiness revealed even in this world.

Psalms 63:3:ג:תהילים סג

כֵּן בִּקְדֹשׁ חֲזִיתְךָ לְרֹאוֹת עֲזֶךָ וּכְבוֹדְךָ:

So have I looked for Thee in the sanctuary, To see Thy power and Thy glory. .

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהילים סג, ג.

69

והי מעשה הצדקה

“And the deed of charity (tzedakah) shall be peace.” The Alter Rebbe stresses the word “deed”: charity belongs to the level of action, the final hei.

Isaiah 32:17:ז:ישעיהו ל”ב

וְהָיָה מַעֲשֵׂה הַצְדָּקָה שְׁלוֹם וְעִבְדֵי הַצְדָּקָה הַשְׁקֵט וְכַטָּח עַד־עוֹלָם:

And the work of righteousness shall be peace; And the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע” לב, ז.

70

וצדקה היא כללות המצות

The Talmud teaches that charity is equal to all the other mitzvos together, learning it from a verse that speaks of “mitzvos” in the plural. This underlies the Alter Rebbe’s statement that charity is the general expression of the mitzvos.

Bava Batra 9a:12-13:ב-י”ג-י”א בתרא ט

... “וְהַעֲמַדְנוּ עֲלֵינוּ מִצְוֹת לְתַת עֲלֵינוּ שְׁלִישִׁית הַשְּׁקָל בְּשָׁנָה לַעֲבֹדֶת בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ.” וְאָמַר רַב אָסִי: שְׁקוּלָה צְדָקָה כְּנֶגֶד כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת, שְׁנֵאמַר: “וְהַעֲמַדְנוּ עֲלֵינוּ מִצְוֹת וְגו’” - “מִצְוָה” אֵין כְּתִיב כָּאן, אֶלָּא “מִצְוֹת”.

(סימן: גְּדוּל, מְקַדֵּשׁ, מִשָּׁה) אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלֵעָזָר: גְּדוּל הַמַּעֲשֶׂה יוֹתֵר מִן הַעוֹשֶׂה - שְׁנֵאמַר: "וְהָיָה מַעֲשֶׂה הַצְדָקָה שְׁלֹום, וְעִבְדַת הַצְדָקָה הַשְׁקֵט וְכֻטַּח עַד עוֹלָם"; וְכֵן - "הֲלֹא פָּרַשׁ לְרַעֲב לַחֲמֶה". לֹא זָכָה - וְעֲנִיִּים מְרֻדִים תִּבְיֵא בִּיתָה.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ב"ב ט, א. רמב"ם הלי מתנות עניים ר"פ יו"ד. ביאור הגמרא באוה"ת ענינים עי מא ואילך. אוה"ת ואתחנן עי רסג.

71

וצדקה היא כללות המצות

Maimonides writes that we must be more careful with the mitzvah of charity than with any other positive commandment, for charity is the sign of the righteous descendants of Avraham. The Kehot note cites it with the Talmud for the place of charity among the mitzvot.

Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:1 מתנות עניים י"א

חִיבֵינוּ אֲנוּ לְהוֹדִיעַ בְּמִצְוַת צְדָקָה יוֹתֵר מִכָּל מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה. שֶׁהַצְדָקָה סִימָן לְצִדִּיק זֶרַע אֲבֵרָהֶם אֲבִינוּ שְׁנֵאמַר (בראשית יח יט) "כִּי יִדְעֲתִיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְנֶה אֶת בְּנָיו" (בראשית יח יט) "לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה". וְאִין כִּסָּא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתְכַּוֵּן וְדַת הָאֱמֶת עוֹמֶדֶת אֵלָּא בְּצִדָקָה שְׁנֵאמַר (ישעיה נד יד) "בְּצִדָקָה תִּכְוֶנֶי". וְאִין יִשְׂרָאֵל נִגְאָלִין אֵלָּא בְּצִדָקָה שְׁנֵאמַר (ישעיה א כז) "צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפַּט תִּפְדֶּה וְשִׁבְיָהּ בְּצִדָקָה":

We must be especially careful to observe the mitzvah of tzedakah, more so than any other positive mitzvah, for tzedakah is a sign of the righteous [tzadik] lineage of Abraham, our father, as it is said, (Genesis 18:19) For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity [to keep the way of the L-RD] by doing what is just [tzedakah]. The throne of Israel is established and the religion of truth stands only on tzedakah, as it is said, (Isaiah 54:14) You shall be ...

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72

להחיות רוח שפלים

G-d, "high and exalted," dwells with the contrite and lowly of spirit, "to revive the spirit of the lowly." Charity, which revives the poor, is the model for all the mitzvot, which bring life to the lowly world.

Isaiah 57:15 י"ט:טו

כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְיָ וְנָשָׂא שְׁכֵן עַד וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ אֶשְׁכֵּן וְאֶת־דָּכָא וְשִׁפְלֵי־רוּחַ לְהַחְיֹת רוּחַ שְׁפִלִים וְלְהַחְיֹת לֵב נִדְכָּאִים:

For thus saith the High and Lofty One That inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

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73

ונגלה כבוד ה'

"And the glory of Havayah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see together." The mitzvot bring this revelation

down into the physical world.

Isaiah 40:5 מ"ה:ה

וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה' וְיֵרָא כָל־בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי ה' ה' דָּבָר:

And the glory of the L-RD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the L-RD hath spoken it.'

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74

צדק מלאה ימינה

"As Your Name, O G-d, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness (tzedek)." The Alter Rebbe reads it as tzedek, without a hei, filled by the right hand of Chesed.

Psalms 48:11 מ"ח:יא

כְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹקִים כֹּן תִּהְלֶתָה עַל־קְצוֹי־אָרֶץ צְדָק מְלֵאָה יְמִינָה:

As is Thy name, O G-d, So is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth; Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים מח, יא.

75

שנקי צדק בלא ה'

The Idra Zuta describes the "son," who inherits a crown of Chesed from the father and of Gevurah from the mother and passes them to the "daughter," who is nourished from him; it adds that these are called tzaddik and tzedek, and are one. The Alter Rebbe cites it for tzedek receiving Chesed from above.

ספר הזהר, האדרא זוטא י"ט:פ"ז 19:87-22:95 Zohar, Idra Zuta כ"ב:ב

76

שנקי צדק בלא ה'

The Idra Zuta continues that tzedek is nourished from mishpat (justice); when the two are joined its judgments are sweetened and all descends to the world in mercy, and when they are apart tzedek draws from elsewhere. The Alter Rebbe cites it for tzedek's need to be completed from above.

ספר הזהר, האדרא זוטא כ"ב:צ"ה 22:95-23:105 Zohar, Idra Zuta כ"ג:ק"ה

77

נקי בתוספת ה' צדקה

On Parshas Bechukosai the Zohar teaches that one who gives charity to the poor makes the holy Name complete above, for "tzedakah gives to tzedek" and joins them together; tzedek is perfected only through tzedakah.

ספר הזהר, בחקותי ד':י"ט-ז':כ"ו 4:19-7:26 Zohar, Bechukotai

78

נקי בתוספת ה' צדקה

The Ramaz (Rabbi Moshe Zacuto) explains there that tzedakah alludes to the chassadim (kindnesses) of the right hand, which are five, and "therefore it is called

tzedakah with a hei." This is the Alter Rebbe's point that Chesed, filling tzedek, adds the hei.

מקדש מלך, Mikdash Melekh, RaMaZ Commentary on Zohar פירוש הרמ"ז על ספר הזהר ... וסלקא ויתבא על רישא דצדיק כי הרב שיש שני דיעות בועיר אי המכריע בין תרין עטרין שהם חו"ג שלו וזהו השולח פארותיו להסתעף בגופא דזעיר והבי' הוא המכריע בין חו"ב ומקורו הוא מתיקון ז' דאריך שהוא ואמת גי' ז' פעמים ס"ג שמז' מילואיהם יוצאים ז' הבלים וזה הוא פנימי ואינו מתפשט למטה. ודעת תחתון הוא נקי ראש צדיק שהוא ראש ליסוד בסוד עליונו של חוט השדרה כמ"ש בכוונת הלולב שתחתונו יסוד ועליונו סוד הדעת וזהו ויתבא על רישא דצדיק שהוא הדעת: וטסא מתמן פירוש שמשם מקבלת עוז לעופף לגבוה ...

Zholkva, 1864 (Public Domain)

79 **בוהר פ' בחקתי דק"ג ע"ב . . ובאד"ז דרצ"א סע"ב ודרצ"ב ע"א**
The note says these Zohar passages, the Alter Rebbe's own sources here for tzedek and tzedakah, are explained in Or HaTorah, Inyanim, p. 43 and on.

KEHOT'S NOTE

נתבאר באוה"ת ענינים ע' מג ואילך.

PARAGRAPH 10

80 **כי אהבך ה' אלקיך**
The verse ends: "because Havayah your G-d loved you." The Alter Rebbe reads "loved you" as G-d drawing His love into the person, the source of turning the curse into a blessing.

דברים כ"ג:ו' Deuteronomy 23:6

וְלֹא־אָבָה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁמֵּעַ אֶל־בִּלְעָם וַיַּהֲפֹךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָךְ אֶת־הַקְלָלָה לְבִרְכָּה כִּי אָהַבְךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

Nevertheless the L-RD thy G-d would not hearken unto Balaam; but the L-RD thy G-d turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the L-RD thy G-d loved thee.

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81 **שזדונות נעשו כזכויות**
The Talmud teaches that teshuvah is so great that intentional sins become like merits, and explains that this is when one returns out of love, while teshuvah out of fear makes them like unintentional sins.

יומא פ"ו ב:ג' Yoma 86b:3

אמר ריש לקיש: גדולה תשובה שזדונות נעשות לו כשגגות, שנאמר: "שובה ישראל עד ה' אלקיך כי כשלת בעונך", הו"ל עון — מזיד הוא, וקא קרי לקה מכשול. איני?! והאמר ריש לקיש: גדולה תשובה שזדונות נעשות לו כזכויות, שנאמר: "ובשוב רשע מרשעתו ועשה משפט וצדקה עליהם (חיה) יחיה!" לא קשיא: כאן מאהבה, כאן מיראה.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

יומא פו, ב. "שלא רק שאין שומעים להמקטרגים (אבל העוונות לא נמחקו), אלא שנעשה כפרת העוונות, ויתירה מזו, שזדונות נהפכים לזכויות" — ד"ה השקפה תשכ"ז סעי' ד (סה"מ מלוקט ח"ד ע' שעב). ראה אוה"ת ויקרא כרך א ע' צה.

PARAGRAPH 11

82 **בע"ת דמשכין לי' בחילא יתיר**
The Zohar teaches that the perfectly righteous cannot stand in the place where baalei teshuvah stand, because these are closer to the King and draw upon themselves with greater yearning of the heart and with great strength. The Alter Rebbe explains this strength as "with all your might."

זח"א קכט, Zohar I, 129b

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א קכט, ב.

83 **ובכל מאדך**
"You shall love Havayah your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." The Alter Rebbe sets "with all your soul," the love of the tzaddikim, against "with all your might," the penitent's love beyond measure.

דברים ו:ה' Deuteronomy 6:5

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ:

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

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84 **כמעשה דר"א ב"ד**
The Talmud tells of Rabbi Elazar ben Durdaya, a notorious sinner, who resolved that "the matter depends only on me," put his head between his knees and wept until his soul departed; a heavenly voice declared him destined for the World to Come.

עבודה זרה י"ז א' Avodah Zarah 17a

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע"ז יז, א. ראה בסה"מ תקס"ה כרך א ע' תצו בגודל תשובתו.

85 **אליך ה' נפשי אשא**
"To You, Havayah, I lift up my soul." It describes the soul's giving of itself in prayer, the second way "with all your might" is expressed.

תהילים כ"ה:א' Psalms 25:1

לְדוֹד אֱלֹהֶיךָ ה' נַפְשִׁי אֲשָׂא:

[A Psalm] of David. Unto Thee, O L-RD, do I lift up my soul.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים כה, א.

86 **שיתרון האור הוא הבא מתוך החושך**
"Wisdom has an advantage over folly, as light has an advantage over darkness." The Alter Rebbe reads it as the special worth of light that comes out of darkness, as in the penitent.

קהלת ב':י"ג Ecclesiastes 2:13

וְרֵאִיתִי אֲנִי שֵׁשׁ יִתְרוֹ לְחֻכְמָה מִן־הַסְּכָלוֹת כִּי־תֵרוֹן הָאֹר מִן־הַחֹשֶׁךְ:

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה קהלת ב, יג.

87 שבהכל בא

"For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness." The penitent sees his past in these terms, and his remorse reaches his soul.

Ecclesiastes 6:4 ו:ד"ד קהלת

כִּי־בָהֶבֶל בָּא וּבְחֹשֶׁךְ יֵלֶךְ וּבְחֹשֶׁךְ שָׁמוּ יָכֹסֶה:

for it cometh in vanity, and departeth in darkness, and the name thereof is covered with darkness;

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88 י-ה עם שמי שס"ה

The Zohar teaches that all the positive and negative commandments depend on the Name Havayah: "My Name" with Yah is 365, the prohibitions, and "My remembrance" with vav-hei is 248, the positive commandments.

Zohar I, 24a זח"א כד, א

Zohar III, 278b זח"ג רעח, ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

ת"ז בהק'. זח"א כד, א. שם בהשמות תג, א. זח"ג רעח, ב. וראה לעיל פקודי ג, ב.

89 י"ה עם שמי שס"ה

In the introduction to Tikkunei Zohar the same reading of "This is My Name forever" appears, and the 365 prohibitions, which are awe, are placed before the 248 positive commandments, which are love.

Tikkunei Zohar 5a:4 אד"ד:5 תקוני זוהר

ובארח רזא, אדנ"י תמן י' יראת יי', ואליו ארבע אתון אינון מפתחות תחיצוניים דילה, י' מן יהוה איהי חכמה, וארבע אתון דהאי שמא אינון מפתחות הפנימיים, ובגין דא אקדימו בצלותא אדנ"י שפתי תפתח, ולבתר תתמין לה בשם יהוה, ברור אתה יהוה מגן אברהם, ואור הכי אקדים שב"א דאיהי יראת בשם יהוה, לאהבה דאיהי קמ"ץ רחמי, שב"א מסטרא דגבורה, כי באש יהוה נשפט (ישעיהו סו טז), קמ"ץ מימינא, וקמ"ץ הכהן משם (ויקרא ה יב), בגין דמצלין ...

Tikkunei Zohar - Vocalized (Public Domain)

90 בארץ לא זרועה

"I remember for you the kindness of your youth ... your following Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown." The Alter Rebbe reads lo zeru'ah as "the lo (not) is sown": the prohibitions themselves are the seed.

Jeremiah 2:2 ב:ב' ירמיהו

הלך וקראת באזני ירושלם לאמר כה אמר ה' זכרתי לך חסד נעורייך אהבת כלולתיך לכתה אחרי במדבר בארץ לא זרועה:

Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying: Thus saith the L-RD: I remember for thee the affection of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמ' ב, ב.

...ולא אבה וי' אלהיך לשמוע אל בלעם ויהפוך

91 ובכל מאדך הוא המתגלה בבע"ת

The Mitteler Rebbe's work on teshuvah, to which the note points for the idea that "with all your might" is revealed in baalei teshuvah; we do not describe its content.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה שערי תשובה לאדה"א ח"ב חינוך פמ"ב.

PARAGRAPH 12

92 ממעמקים קראתיך ה'

"A song of ascents: From the depths I have called You, Havayah." The Alter Rebbe reads the depths as the hidden roots of the soul's ten powers, revealed through teshuvah.

Psalms 130:1 א"ל:130 תהילים

שיר המעלות ממעמקים קראתיך ה'

A Song of Ascents. Out of the depths have I called Thee, O L-RD.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קל, א.

93 ויהפוך ה' את הקללה לברכה

The maamar's opening verse: Havayah turned the curse into a blessing. Here it is explained as forgiveness drawn from the Havayah revealed from the depths.

Deuteronomy 23:6 ו"ג:23 דברים

ולא־אָבָה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁמֵּעַ אֶל־בִּלְעָם וַיַּהֲפֹךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֵךְ אֶת־הַקְּלָלָה לְבִרְכָּה כִּי אָהָבָה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

Nevertheless the L-RD thy G-d would not hearken unto Balaam; but the L-RD thy G-d turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the L-RD thy G-d loved thee.

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94 וזרקתי עליכם מים טהורים

"And I will sprinkle pure water upon you, and you shall be pure from all your impurities." It describes the purification and forgiveness drawn from that level.

Ezekiel 36:25 ל"ו:25 יחזקאל

וְזָרַקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מַיִם טְהוֹרִים וְטָהַרְתֶּם מִכָּל טְמֵאוֹתֵיכֶם וּמִכָּל־גִּלּוּלֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁהָר אֶתְכֶם:

And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

יחזקאל לו, כה.

95 מחיתי כעב פשעיך

"I have wiped away your transgressions like a thick cloud, and your sins like a mist; return to Me, for I have redeemed you." This is forgiveness that erases the sins themselves.

Isaiah 44:22 מ"ד:22 ישעיהו

מחיתי כעב פשעיך וכענן חטאותיך שובה אלי כי גאלתיך:

I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, And, as a cloud, thy sins; Return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעי' מד, כב.

96

לפני הוי' תטהרו

“For on this day He shall atone for you, to purify you from all your sins; before Havayah you shall be purified.” The Alter Rebbe reads “before Havayah” as before the Havayah revealed in the soul on Yom Kippur.

ויקרא ט"ז:ל"א

כִּי־בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִכָּפֵר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטָהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי ה' תִּטְהָרוּ:

For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the L-RD.

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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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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