



LIKKUTEI TORAH • SHIR HASHIRIM • MAAMAR 6

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

“I Am Black, yet Comely, O
Daughters of Jerusalem”



The soul that has descended into a body is “black”: it receives G-d’s wisdom as the dark mass of halachic detail and the rabbinic fences around the prohibitions, and it lives among worldly business. Yet this very blackness makes it more beautiful than the souls that never came down, because the prohibitions, and tzedakah given from hard-earned money, join it to the light that surrounds all worlds, which no positive deed can reach.

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

The soul that has descended into a body is “black”: it receives G-d’s wisdom as the dark mass of halachic detail and the rabbinic fences around the prohibitions, and it lives among worldly business. Yet this very blackness makes it more beautiful than the souls that never came down, because the prohibitions, and tzedakah given from hard-earned money, join it to the light that surrounds all worlds, which no positive deed can reach.

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 daughters of Jerusalem” are the souls before their descent, still one with G-d and so possessed of complete awe (yirah shalem), beyond anything angels can attain. The souls in bodies are the “bride,” Knesses Yisrael, into whom G-d, the groom, drew His infinite wisdom at Sinai. The bride says: I am black, yet more comely than you. Her blackness is the halachos, the “black locks” of the Song. White hairs, from G-d’s kindness, are the laws of the positive commandments, which elevate the physical; black hairs are the laws of the prohibitions, which “cruelly” reject even what holds a divine spark. She is also black through tzedakah, bound up with business, yet it exalts the whole animal soul and draws down revelation and the “four hands” of divine help. The words of the Scribes are the hidden source of the Torah’s light, and the prohibitions, rooted in the hidden half of the Name, reach the surrounding light through negation. So the animal soul, rooted in the ofanim, rises above the seraphim in thirst for G-d’s very self, and in the future that light will be revealed.

OUTLINE

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|---|---|------|
| 1 | The daughters of Jerusalem and the bride | ¶1-2 |
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| <p>The souls above are the daughters of Jerusalem, of complete awe; the souls below are the bride, into whom the groom drew His infinite wisdom at Sinai, each soul receiving its letter of the Torah.</p> | | |
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| 2 | Black locks and white hair | ¶3-5 |
| <hr/> | | |
| <p>The bride’s blackness is the halachos. Hairs are far-reaching channels of G-d’s kindness: white for the positive commandments, which lift the physical into holiness; black for the prohibitions, which separate evil from good.</p> | | |
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| 3 | The raven’s cruelty, and tzedakah | ¶6 |
| <hr/> | | |
| <p>The prohibitions reject even what holds a divine spark, and a person must be “cruel” to himself with fences. Tzedakah, bound up with worldly business, is also black, yet it exalts the whole animal soul.</p> | | |
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- 4 **A fifth to Pharaoh: revelation and the four hands** ¶7-8
Giving a fifth to tzedakah brings revelation (paroh) into the soul, as in the blessing over every mitzvah, and draws down the four hands: kindness that awakens teshuvah, help against the evil inclination, elevation to love, and the embracing arm, all sown now in exile.
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- 5 **The words of the Scribes and the higher root of the prohibitions** ¶9
The Oral Torah, the “scribe,” is the hidden source of the Written Torah’s light. The prohibitions, from the hidden Yud-Hei, join the soul to the surrounding light through “not,” which no positive deed can reach.
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- 6 **Ofanim above seraphim** ¶10-13
The animal soul, rooted in the ofanim, rises above the seraphim in a fiery thirst for G-d’s very “I,” beyond His outer glory; this foreshadows the future, when the Infinite Light present in space, time and soul will be revealed.
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- 7 **Black, and therefore comely** ¶14
Through the blackness of keeping the prohibitions, the surrounding light will be revealed in the future; in this the descended soul is more beautiful than the daughters of Jerusalem.
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KEY CONCEPTS

Daughters of Jerusalem בנות ירושלים

The souls before their descent, still included in G-d; read as yirah shalem, complete awe.

The bride (kallah) כלה

Knesses Yisrael, the souls that have descended into bodies, into whom G-d, the groom, draws His Infinite Light and wisdom.

Black locks and white hair קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות / שער רישיה כעמר נקא

Hairs are far-reaching channels of divine flow: the white are the laws of the positive commandments, the black the laws and fences of the prohibitions.

The words of the Scribes דברי סופרים

The Oral Torah and rabbinic enactments, the “scribe” above the “book,” the hidden source of the Written Torah’s light.

Yud-Hei and Vav-Hei י"ה / ו"ה

The hidden and revealed halves of the Name Havayah: the 365 prohibitions and the 248 positive commandments.

The surrounding light סובב כל עלמין

Divine light beyond the bounds of the worlds, reached now only through negation and revealed in the future.

Paroh as revelation פרעה

From the root meaning “uncovered”: tzedakah brings an open revelation of the Infinite Light into the soul.

SECTION 1 • ¶1-2

The daughters of Jerusalem and the bride

1 שחורה אני ונאווה¹ בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה. הנה בנות ירושלים נקי הנשמות שעדיין לא ירדו לעולם הזה להתלבש בגוף

“I am black, yet comely, O daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Shlomo.” Now, “the daughters of Jerusalem” is the name given to the souls that have not yet descended into this world to be enclothed in a body

The maamar opens with Song of Songs 1:5, where the maiden speaks to “the daughters of Jerusalem.” The Alter Rebbe first identifies these daughters: they are the souls that have not yet come down into this world to be clothed in a body.

ונפש הבהמית ועודן כלולות במאצילן ב”ה בבחי” אין ממש ונקרא טהורה היא כי טהורה פי” שעדיין היא בבחי” אין ואח”כ אתה בראתה² יש מאין כו’.

and an animal soul, and are still included in their Emanator, blessed be He, at the level of utter nothingness (ayin). And [the soul] is called “pure is she,” for “pure” means that it is still at the level of ayin; and afterwards, “You created it,” something from nothing, etc.

Before its descent, a soul is still included within G-d, its Emanator, in a state called ayin, “nothing”: it has no existence of its own apart from Him. He reads the morning blessing “the soul You placed in me is pure; You created it” as a sequence: “pure” is the soul while it is still ayin, and “You created it” is its later coming into being as a separate “something.”

לפי שכל נשמות טרם ירידתם לעוה”ז הן עומדות שם בביטול והתכללות ממש באור א”ס ב”ה.

For all souls, before their descent into this world, stand there in self-nullification (bittul) and in actual inclusion within the Infinite Light (Or Ein Sof), blessed be He.

Bittul here means that the soul does not experience itself as a separate being at all; it is wholly absorbed in the Infinite Light. This is the state of every soul “there,” above, before it is born.

וכמ”ש באליהו חי ה’ אשר עמדתי לפניו^{3,4,5} ולא אליהו בלבד אלא כל נשמות קודם ירידתן והתלבשותן בגוף ונפש הבהמית

As it is written of Eliyahu, “As G-d lives, before whom I have stood.” And not Eliyahu alone, but all souls, before their descent and their enclothing in a body and an animal soul;

The prophet Eliyahu swears “by G-d before whom I have stood,” describing himself as one who stands before G-d. The Alter Rebbe applies the phrase to every soul before its descent: each one stood before G-d in complete bittul.

ואזי נקראו בנות ירושלים (בפרדס בערכי הכינויים ערך בנות ירושלים הביא בשם הזהר פרשת ויחי שני פירושים בזה והפ"י הראשון הוא כדפ"י כאן ע"ש בפ' ויחי דרמ"ב ע"א)⁶

and then they are called “the daughters of Jerusalem.” (In the Pardes, in the Erchei HaKinuyim, under the entry “the daughters of Jerusalem,” he cites two interpretations of this in the name of the Zohar, Parshas Vayechi, and the first interpretation is as it has been explained here; see there, and in Parshas Vayechi, page 242a.)

In that state the souls are called “the daughters of Jerusalem.” The parenthesis is a scholarly note: the Pardes (Pardes Rimmonim, R. Moshe Cordovero’s classic work of Kabbalah), in its section defining Kabbalistic terms, quotes two Zohar readings of the phrase, and the first of them is the reading given here.

שמקבלים עליהם בחי' יראה שלם דהיינו שלימות היראה כי היראה הוא מבחינת מלכותו ית' מלכות כל עולמים⁷ למעלה עד אין קץ ולמטה עד אין תכלית

For they take upon themselves the level of a complete awe (yirah shalem), that is, the completeness of awe. For awe stems from the level of His sovereignty, may He be blessed, “a kingship over all worlds,” upward without end and downward without limit,

The name Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) is read as yirah shalem, “complete awe.” Awe of G-d comes from His Kingship, and Psalms calls that Kingship “a kingship over all worlds,” boundless both upward and downward, that is, infinite.

שהיא בחי' א"ס ובהשתלשלות המדרגות בנבראים אין בהם כח לקבל יראה זו בשלימות וכמ"ש להודיע לבני האדם גבורותיו⁸ וכבוד הדר מלכותו שכבוד הדר

which is the level of the Infinite. And in the chain of descending levels (hishtalshelus) among created beings, they have no power to receive this awe in its completeness. As it is written, “To make known to the sons of man His mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of His kingdom”: the glorious splendor of

Because the Kingship is infinite, no created being within the descending order of levels can take on the full measure of awe that it calls for. A verse from Psalms shows how awe does reach creatures: through “His mighty deeds” and “the glorious splendor of His kingdom.”

מלכותו הוא מה שהמלאכים מקבלים עליהם עול מלכות שמים מחנה מיכאל באהבה ומחנה גבריאל כו' אלף אלפים וריבוא רבבות כו'⁹ ולגדודיו אין מספר.¹⁰

His kingdom is that the angels take upon themselves the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, the camp of Michael with love and the camp of Gavriel, etc., “a thousand thousands and ten thousand myriads,” etc., and “His troops are beyond number.”

“The glorious splendor of His kingdom” is the angels’ acceptance of G-d’s rule. The camp of the angel Michael serves with love and the camp of Gavriel (the text breaks off with “etc.”) in its own way, and their numbers are vast, “a thousand thousands” and beyond counting.

שכל זה הוא יקר ותפארת גדולת מלכותו ית' ולהודיע לבני האדם אין זה אלא בבחי' גבורותיו הן בחי' הצמצומים רבים ושונים שבהשתלשלות המדרגות משא"כ הנשמה טרם בואה

For all this is the glory and splendor of the greatness of His kingship, may He be blessed; and “to make known to the sons of man” is only through the level of “His mighty deeds,” which are the many and varied contractions (tzimtzumim) in the chain of descending levels. But the soul, before it comes

All this angelic service is the glory of G-d’s Kingship, yet it is made known to creatures only through “His mighty deeds” (gevuros), which the Alter Rebbe reads as the many contractions (tzimtzumim) that limit the light at each step of the descent. Created beings therefore receive awe only in a limited, contracted form.

לעוה"ז להתלבש בגוף שהן בחי' אין ממש הם מקבלים עליהם עול מלכות שמים בשלימות כמו שהוא בבחי' א"ס ממש ונקראו בנות ירושלים בבחי' בתולות אחריה רעותיה מובאות לך¹¹

into this world to be enclothed in a body, [the souls] being at the level of utter nothingness, take upon themselves the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven in completeness, as it is at the level of the Infinite itself. And they are called “the daughters of Jerusalem,” at the level of “virgins, her companions following her, are brought to you.”

The souls before their descent are ayin, with no self of their own, so they accept G-d’s Kingship in its full, infinite measure. That is why they are “the daughters of Jerusalem,” of complete awe, and they are also the “virgins, her companions” of the Psalm, who follow the bride.

(עיינ בזח"ב קצ"ז ב' דרל"ה א' רל"ח¹² א' ובמק"מ שם וצ"ל דהוא לפירוש השני שבפרדס וממילא מובן דלפ"י הראשון יש לפרש גם זה כמ"ש כאן ועיינ עוד בפ' משפטים דק"ה סע"ב ובפ' אחרי דס"ז ע"ב)¹³

(See Zohar II, 197b, page 235a and 238a, and the Mikdash Melech there. And it must be said that this follows the second interpretation in the Pardes; and consequently it is understood that according to the first interpretation this too can be explained as written here. See further in Parshas Mishpatim, page 105, end of side b, and in Parshas Acharei, page 67b.)

A second scholarly parenthesis points to passages of the Zohar on the verse of the “virgins” and to the Mikdash Melech commentary on them. It notes that those passages follow the Pardes’s second interpretation, but that according to the first interpretation they too can be read as they are here.

ונקראו ג"כ עלמות כמ"ש עלמות אהבוך.¹⁴ והנשמות שירדו ונתלכשו בגוף ונפש הבהמ"י בעוה"ז היא נקרא כנסת ישראל היא מקור נשמות ישראל בשם כלה

They are also called alamos (maidens), as it is written, “therefore the maidens love You.” And the souls that have descended and been en clothed in a body and an animal soul in this world, [collectively] called Knesses Yisrael, which is the source of the souls of Israel, are called by the name “bride” (kallah),

“Therefore the maidens (alamos) love You” gives these unborn souls another name. The souls that have descended are called, as one whole, Knesses Yisrael, the “community of Israel” understood as the source of all Jewish souls, and she is called “the bride.”

כי הקב"ה נקרא אצלם בשם חתן¹⁵ מלשון חות דרגא¹⁶ הוא בחי' המשכות אור א"ס ב"ה בנשמות.¹⁷ because the Holy One, blessed be He, is called, in relation to them, by the name “groom” (chasan), from the expression chaus darga (descending a level), which is the drawing down of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, into the souls.

G-d is “the groom” (chasan), a word the Alter Rebbe links to the Aramaic chaus darga, “going down a step,” as a man goes down a step to take a wife. The groom’s descent to the bride is the drawing down of the Infinite Light into the souls.

2 והיינו במ"ת דכתי' ביום חתונתו שאז הוא זמן הנשואין שכמו הנשואין עד"מ בחי' הזוג והיחוד הוא המשכת הטפה הנמשכת מן המוח של המשפיע בבחי' המקבל כו'.¹⁸

And this is [what took place] at the Giving of the Torah, of which it is written, "on the day of his wedding," for that is the time of the marriage. For just as in marriage, by way of analogy, the union and joining is the drawing down of the drop that is drawn from the brain of the giver into the recipient, etc.,

The Mishnah reads "on the day of his wedding" in Song of Songs as the Giving of the Torah at Sinai: that was the wedding of G-d and Israel. The analogy is marital union, in which (in the older physiology the text assumes) a drop drawn from the brain of the giver passes to the recipient.

כך התורה היא בחי' חכמתו ורצונו ית' בבחי' א"ס ב"ה ממש חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעא כו'

so the Torah is His wisdom and will, may He be blessed, at the level of the Infinite One (Ein Sof) itself, blessed be He: "He is wise, but not with a knowable wisdom," etc.

The "drop" in this analogy is the Torah, which is G-d's own wisdom and will as they are in the Infinite itself. The classic Kabbalistic phrase "wise, but not with a knowable wisdom" stresses that G-d's wisdom is unlike any wisdom we could grasp.

והמשכה זו בבחי' א"ס ממש היא נתפסת ונקלטת בנשמות ישראל ס"ר אותיות התורה¹⁹ הן ס"ר המשכות לס"ר נשמות ישראל

And this drawing down, at the level of the Infinite itself, is grasped and absorbed in the souls of Israel: the six hundred thousand letters of the Torah are six hundred thousand channels of flow to the six hundred thousand souls of Israel.

This infinite wisdom is received and "absorbed" by Jewish souls, as a seed is absorbed and takes hold. The Torah is said to contain six hundred thousand letters, matching the six hundred thousand root souls of Israel, so that each soul has its own letter as its channel.

ולכן ארז"ל שמלמדין את התינוק בבטן אמו²⁰ את כל התורה כו' כדי להיות נתפס ונקלט בנשמתו אור וחיות מאותיות התורה שהן הארת אור א"ס ב"ה חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעא כו'

Therefore our Sages, of blessed memory, said that the infant in its mother's womb is taught the entire Torah, etc., so that light and life-force (chayus) from the letters of the Torah be grasped and absorbed in its soul; for they are a radiance of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, "wise, but not with a knowable wisdom," etc.

The Talmud teaches that an unborn child is taught the entire Torah in the womb. The Alter Rebbe explains its purpose: so that the light of the Torah's letters, a radiance of the Infinite, takes hold in the soul from the very start.

ואזי נקרא נשמות ישראל בשם כלה שמקבלת הטפה כו' ועיין באדרא זוטא²¹ (דף ר"צ ע"ב):

And then the souls of Israel are called by the name “bride,” for she receives the drop, etc. See the Idra Zuta (page 290b).

Because the souls receive this “drop” of divine wisdom, they are called “the bride.” The text refers the reader to the Idra Zuta, the concluding section of the Zohar, for this theme.

SECTION 2 • 13-5

Black locks and white hair

3 ב והנה בחיי כלה זו שהיא בחיי מקור לנשמות שירדו ונתלבשו בגוף אומרת לבנות ירושלים הן הנשמות שלא ירדו שעדיין הן בבחי' טהור' היא שהן כלולות במאצילן בבחי' אין ממש.

2. Now, this level of “bride,” which is the source of the souls that have descended and been enclothed in a body, says to the daughters of Jerusalem, that is, the souls that have not descended and are still at the level of “pure is she,” being included in their Emanator at the level of utter nothingness:

The second section begins. The “bride,” the source of the souls that have descended into bodies, now speaks to the “daughters of Jerusalem,” the souls that remain above, still “pure” and included in G-d.

עם היות כי שחורה אני מחמת ירדתי לעוה"ז והתלבשותי בגוף הגשמי הריני נאווה יותר מבנות ירושלים כי

Though “I am black” because of my descent into this world and my enclothing in the physical body, I am nevertheless more comely than the daughters of Jerusalem. For

Her claim is paradoxical: she has been darkened by her descent into a physical body, yet she is more beautiful than the souls that never descended. The rest of the maamar explains how the blackness itself is the source of her beauty.

הנה ענין שחורה אני בבחי' כלה הוא כמ"ש קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות כעורב²² תלתלים תלי תלים של הלכות²³ שהן קוצותיו בחי'

the meaning of “I am black” at the level of the bride is as it is written, “His locks are curled (taltalim), black as a raven”: taltalim [means] tilei tilim (heaps upon heaps) of halachos, which are “his locks,” the level of

Song of Songs describes the beloved's locks as “curled, black as a raven.” The Talmud reads taltalim, “curled,” as tilei tilim, “heaps upon heaps”: from every stroke of the Torah's letters, heaps of laws can be derived. So the “black locks” are the vast body of halachic detail.

שערות ונימין הנמשכות מן המוח בריבוי התחלקות וכך הן תלי תלים של הלכות המשכות מחכמה עילאה חכים ולא בחכמה ידיעא כו'. הן בבחי' שחורות.

hairs and strands drawn from the brain in great subdivision. And so too, the heaps upon heaps of halachos are channels drawn from the Supernal Wisdom (Chochmah Ila'ah), "wise, but not with a knowable wisdom," etc. They are at the level of "black."

Hair grows out of the head and divides into countless strands; so the laws of the Torah branch out from G-d's Supernal Wisdom into endless details. These branches of halachah are what the verse calls "black."

4 והענין יובן בהקדים לבאר כי הנה כתיב ושער רישי' כעמר נקא²⁴ שהשערות הן בבחי' לבנונית וכתיב קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות²⁵ כו'.

The matter will be understood by first explaining that it is written, "And the hair of His head was like pure wool," [meaning] that the hairs are in a state of whiteness; and it is written, "His locks are curled, black," etc.

Daniel sees the "Ancient of Days" with hair "like pure wool," that is, white hair, while the Song of Songs speaks of black locks. The Alter Rebbe will explain why the "hairs" are sometimes white and sometimes black.

אך הענין כי הנה בחי' השערות הן המשכות שהן מבחי' חסד ורב חסד²⁶ שנמשך ונתפשט עד למטה כמשל השערות שנמשכות באורך

But the explanation is that the level of the hairs is channels of flow that stem from the level of Chesed and "abundant in kindness," which is drawn and spreads down below, like the analogy of the hairs that extend to a great

In Kabbalah, "hairs" stand for channels of divine flow that extend far from their source, just as hair grows far out from the head. These channels come from Chesed, G-d's kindness, which reaches down even to the lowest levels, and from "abundant in kindness," one of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

רב והן תלי תלים של הלכות ודקדוקי סופרים²⁷ שבכל מצוה כמ"ש (משלי ד') סלסלה ותרוממך²⁸. פי' סלסלה כמארז"ל (ר"ה כ"ו ב') קא מהפך בשעריה²⁹ כו'.

length. And they are the heaps upon heaps of halachos and the fine points of the Scribes that are in every mitzvah, as it is written (Proverbs 4), "Extol her (salseleha), and she will exalt you." The meaning of salseleha is as our Sages, of blessed memory, said (Rosh HaShanah 26b), "she was turning over her hair," etc.

These long, many-stranded channels are the heaps of halachos and the fine rabbinic details in every mitzvah. The Talmud explains the word salseleha in Proverbs ("extol her") from a maidservant of Rabbi's household who spoke of someone "turning over his hair": to "extol" the Torah is to turn it over constantly, like hair, down to every detail.

אך יש שערות שנמשכות ומתלבשות בבחי' לבנונית הוא בחי' חסד שהן ההלכות רבות שבמ"ע בקרבנות ותרומות ומעשרות וציצית ותפילין ושבת כו'. איך תהי' המצות נעשית בקרבן להיות עולה לרצון לפניו³⁰ וריח ניחוח³¹ כו'.

But there are hairs that are drawn down and encloded in the level of whiteness, which is the level of Chesed: these are the many halachos in the positive commandments, concerning sacrifices, terumos, tithes, tzitzis, tefillin, Shabbos, etc.: how the mitzvah is to be done with a sacrifice so that it ascend favorably before G-d and as a pleasing fragrance, etc.

Some "hairs" are white: the many laws of the positive commandments, such as sacrifices, terumah, tithes, tzitzis, tefillin and Shabbos. They teach how to perform the mitzvah, for example how to offer a sacrifice so that it is "accepted before G-d" and becomes a "pleasing fragrance."

5 וכן בשאר כל המצות שהן המשכות חכמה עילאה בבחי' חסד להעלות הדברים הגשמי' בעשייתן כמצותן ולקשרם באור ה' וקדושתו והן השערות הנמשכות מבחי' שער רישיה כעמר נקא³² שהוא לובן העליון וחסד עליון דאקרי רב חסד³³ כו'

And so too with all the other mitzvos, which are channels of the Supernal Wisdom through the level of Chesed, to elevate physical things through their being performed according to their commandment, and to bind them to the light of G-d and His holiness. These are the hairs drawn from the level of "the hair of His head was like pure wool," which is the supernal whiteness and the supernal Chesed that is called "abundant in kindness," etc.

Every positive mitzvah is a channel of G-d's Supernal Wisdom through Chesed, and doing it properly raises the physical objects it uses (the wool of tzitzis, the parchment of tefillin) and binds them to G-d's holiness. These are the "white hairs" of Daniel's vision, from the supernal whiteness that is G-d's kindness.

אבל השערות השחורות הן הלכות שנמשכו ונתפשטו במצות ל"ת להפריד הרע מן הטוב ולדחותו מן הקדושה שאינו עולה ונכלל באור ה' וקדושתו.

But the black hairs are the halachos that were drawn and spread into the prohibitive commandments, to separate the evil from the good and to push it away from holiness, since it does not ascend and become included in the light of G-d and His holiness.

The "black hairs" are the laws of the prohibitions. Their work is the opposite of elevation: they separate evil from good and push it away from holiness, because what is forbidden cannot be raised up and included in G-d's light.

SECTION 3 • 16

The raven's cruelty, and tzedakah

6 וע"ז נאמר שחורות כעורב.³⁴ פי' כעורב שהוא אכזרי כך יש בבחי' שערות הללו בחי' אכזריות שהרי גם בדבר האסור ופסול כו'

And of this it is said, "black as a raven." The meaning of "as a raven" is: just as the raven is cruel, so in the level of these hairs there is an element of cruelty. For even in a thing that is forbidden or unfit, etc.,

The raven was proverbially cruel (it was thought to neglect its young), so "black as a raven" hints that these "black hairs" contain an element of cruelty. The Alter Rebbe explains the cruelty by looking at what is forbidden.

נמשך נצוץ וחיות אלקי המחיה ומהווה אותו שבלעדי ניצוץ וחיות אלקי לא יתקיים כלל ועכ"ז לא יעלה הניצוץ אלקי שבו לרצון לפני הוי' להתכלל באורו וקדושתו ית' רק נדחה לחוץ

there is drawn a divine spark and life-force that gives it life and brings it into being, for without the divine spark and life-force it would not exist at all; and nevertheless the divine spark within it does not ascend favorably before G-d, to be included in His light and holiness, may He be blessed, but is simply pushed outside.

Nothing can exist without a divine spark that gives it life, so even a forbidden thing has one. Yet the prohibition means that this spark cannot be raised up into holiness through use; the thing is simply rejected, pushed outside.

והרי זה כמו אכזריות על הניצוץ אלקי שבו גם צריך האדם להתנהג בנפשו במדת אכזריות להיות סר מרע בבחינת אתכפייא כו' בכמה גדרים וסייגים דקדוקי סופרים קדש א"ע במותר לך³⁵ כו'

And this is like cruelty toward the divine spark within it. A person, too, must conduct himself toward his own soul with the attribute of cruelty, turning away from evil in the manner of iskafya (subjugation), etc., through many fences and safeguards, the fine points of the Scribes: "Sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you," etc.

Rejecting a thing that holds a divine spark is a kind of cruelty toward that spark. A person must show the same "cruelty" toward himself: iskafya, subduing his own desires, and adding rabbinic fences, as the Talmud says, "sanctify yourself even in what is permitted to you."

ולכן נקרא בבחי' שחורות כעורב (וע' בזהר ח"ג קל"ב א' ק"מ ע"א ע"ט ב' כ"ז ב'. ח"ב קי"ו א')

Therefore it is at the level of "black as a raven." (See Zohar III, 132a, 140a, 79b, 127b; Zohar II, 116a.)

This is why the laws of prohibition are called "black as a raven." The parenthesis lists passages in the Zohar where these black and white hairs are discussed.

וע"ז נאמר שחורה אני שמקבלת בחי' הטפה היא בחי' ח"ע בבחי' שחורה דהיינו בבחי' ההלכות ודקדוקי סופרים שהן קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות כעורב כנ"ל.

And of this it is said, "I am black": for she receives the drop, which is the Supernal Wisdom (Chochmah Ila'ah), in the manner of "black," that is, in the form of the halachos and the fine points of the Scribes, which are "his locks are curled, black as a raven," as explained above.

Now the verse "I am black" can be read: the bride, the descended soul, receives G-d's Supernal Wisdom in its "black" form, the details of halachah and the rabbinic safeguards. Above, the souls have no need for such laws; they belong to the soul that lives in this world.

וגם שחורה אני בבחי' קיום המצות מעשיות שהן בדברים המלובשים בגשמיות ממש וכללותן היא צדקה

And also, "I am black" in the fulfillment of the practical mitzvos, which are done with things en-clothed in actual physicality; and the sum of them all is tzedakah (charity),

A second sense of "I am black": the practical mitzvos are done with physical things, and they all come together in tzedakah, charity. Chassidus often calls tzedakah the sum of all the mitzvos.

שהיא בגשמיות ממש וחיובה הוא ע"י עסק האדם בעוה"ז שעוסק בפרקמטיא ומרויח בה שע"ז נתחייב בצדקה. ובשעה שהוא עוסק בפרקמטיא נמצא שהוא מלובש בעניני עוה"ז ממש.

which is in actual physicality, and whose obligation comes through a person's involvement in this world: he engages in business and profits from it, and through this becomes obligated in tzedakah. And while he is engaged in business, he is thus en-clothed in the matters of this world itself.

Tzedakah is "black" because it is bound up with physical money, and a person becomes obliged to give it only because he is busy earning a living. While he does business, he is immersed in the affairs of this world.

עכ"ז ונאווה שבצדקה כתיב וצדקה תרומם גוי³⁶ שע"י שנותן צדקה לעני מעמלו ויגיעו חיי נפשו הוא מעלה ומרומם את כל נפש הבהמית וחיותה:³⁷

Even so, "yet comely": for of tzedakah it is written, "Tzedakah exalts a nation"; for by giving tzedakah to a poor person from his toil and labor, the very life of his soul, he elevates and exalts his entire animal soul and its life-force.

Yet tzedakah makes the soul "comely," because "tzedakah exalts." Money earned by effort holds a person's very life, so giving it away lifts up the animal soul and all the life-force it spent earning it.

SECTION 4 • ¶7-8

A fifth to Pharaoh: revelation and the four hands

7 וזהו ונתתם חמישית לפרעה³⁸ שע"י הצדקה שנותן חומש מיגיעו נעשה בחיי פרעה הוא בחיי גילוי מלשון כי פרעה אהרן³⁹ שנמשך גילוי אור א"ס ב"ה ממש על נפשו

And this is [the meaning of] "you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh (Paroh)": through the tzedakah, in which he gives a fifth of his labor, there comes about the level of paroh, which is the level of revelation, from the expression "for Aharon had exposed them (pera'o)": a revelation of the Infinite Light itself, blessed be He, is drawn down upon his soul.

Yosef told the Egyptians to give a fifth of their harvest to Pharaoh (Paroh). The Alter Rebbe reads Paroh by its root, as in "Aharon had exposed them (pera'o)," meaning uncovering and revelation: giving a fifth of one's earnings to tzedakah brings a revelation of the Infinite Light upon one's soul.

לכן אומרים קודם כל מצוה ברוך אתה הוי' אלקינו שברוך ונמשך אור א"ס ב"ה מעולם ועד עולם בבחי' אתה

Therefore, before every mitzvah we say, "Blessed are You, Havayah, our G-d": that the Infinite Light, blessed be He, be "blessed," [that is,] drawn down, "from world to world," at the level of "You,"

This is the meaning of the blessing said before every mitzvah. "Blessed" (baruch) is read as "drawn down": the mitzvah draws the Infinite Light down from the highest world into this one, to be addressed as "You."

דהיינו בבחי' גילוי כאלו הוא לנוכח להיות הוי' אלקינו ממש להיות נתפס ונקלט אלקותו ית' בנפש
ממש

that is, at the level of revelation, as if He were face to face, so that Havayah be truly “our G-d”: that His G-dliness, may He be blessed, be grasped and absorbed in the soul itself.

“You” is how one speaks to someone present, face to face, so the blessing asks that G-d be revealed. “Havayah, our G-d” means that the transcendent G-d becomes truly ours, His G-dliness taken in by the soul itself.

ועל ה' אמרו רז"ל אשרי מי שבא לכאן ותלמודו בידו⁴⁰ דהיינו שיהא נתפס ונקלט בו בחי' תלמודו
שהוא בחי' חכמה עילאה

And of this our Sages, of blessed memory, said, “Fortunate is he who comes here with his learning in his hand”; that is, that his learning, which is the Supernal Wisdom, be grasped and absorbed in him,

The Talmud says: “Fortunate is he who comes here (to the World to Come) with his learning in his hand.” “In his hand” means the learning has truly been absorbed and held, since what one learns is the Supernal Wisdom.

כמו האשה שקולטת הטפה עד"מ שאם אינו נתפס ונקלט בבחי' נשמתו אור התורה הרי זה
like a woman who absorbs the drop, by way of analogy. For if the light of the Torah is not grasped and absorbed in his soul, this is

Holding on to one's learning is compared to conception, in which the seed takes hold. A soul in which the Torah's light does not take hold is like a woman who does not conceive.

כמו האשה הפולטת כו' (עמ"ש מענין קליטה גבי שמיני עצרת בד"ה ה' לי בעוזרי ובד"ה טוב לחסות
וגם בשאר דרושים שם)

like a woman who discharges [it], etc. (See what is written on the subject of absorption regarding Shemini Atzeres, in the discourse beginning “G-d is for me among my helpers” and in the discourse beginning “It is better to take refuge,” and also in the other discourses there.)

The parenthesis sends the reader to discourses on Shemini Atzeres, where the theme of “absorbing” (kelitah) is developed at length.

וזהו ונתתם חמישית לפרעה⁴¹ שנעשה בחי' פרעה וגילוי בנפשו ממש (עמ"ש על פסוק זה בע"ה) (שער ל"א פ"ז)^{42, 43} ובלק"ת פי' ויגש ומזה נמשך להיות וארבע הידות⁴⁴ יהי לכם כי

And this is “you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh”: that the level of paroh, revelation, comes about in his soul itself. (See what is written on this verse in Etz Chaim) (Sha'ar 31, chapter 7), and in Likkutei Torah [of the Arizal], Parshas Vayigash. And from this there follows “and the four hands (yados) shall be yours,” for

The verse of “a fifth to Pharaoh” therefore means revelation within one's very soul, and the text notes that Etz Chaim and the Arizal's Likkutei Torah on Parshas Vayigash also interpret this verse. Its next words, “four parts shall be yours,” literally “four hands,” describe what follows from that giving.

הנה בחי' ארבע הידות הן יד הגדולה יד החזקה יד רמה וזרוע הנטויה. יד הגדולה הוא מ"ש וירא ישראל את היד הגדולה⁴⁵ אשר עשה ה' במצרים.

the four hands are the great hand, the strong hand, the high hand and the outstretched arm. The great hand is as it is written, “And Israel saw the great hand that G-d had wrought in Egypt.”

The four “hands” are four expressions of divine power named in the Torah: the great hand, the strong hand, the high hand and the outstretched arm. The great hand is the one that Israel “saw” at the Splitting of the Sea.

פי' שאפילו בבחינת מצרים יש בחי' המשכת והתפשטות בחי' היד הגדולה שנמשכה ונתפשטה עד למטה מאד אפילו בבחינת מצרים

Meaning: even in the level of Egypt there is a drawing down and spreading of the level of the great hand, which was drawn and spread very far down, even into the level of Egypt;

“The great hand that G-d wrought in Egypt” shows that G-d's kindness reached even into Egypt, the lowest place. The Alter Rebbe reads Egypt as a spiritual state, the lowest levels of the soul.

דהיינו שנמשך חסד עליון כ"כ שאפילו בבחינת נפש השפלה ממדרגות תחתונות שבעשיה ומלובשת בגשמיות ממש נופלין הרהורי תשובה.

that is, the supernal Chesed is drawn down so greatly that thoughts of teshuvah fall even into a lowly soul, from the lowest levels of Asiyah and enclothed in actual physicality.

The great hand is the supernal Chesed that reaches so far down that thoughts of teshuvah come even to a lowly soul sunk in physicality. Such a thought is not the person's own achievement; it “falls” into him from above.

8 וזהו ענין יד הגדולה אך הנה נודע שלאום מלאום יאמץ⁴⁶ וזה לעומת זה עשה אלקים⁴⁷ ואלמלא הקב"ה עוזרו⁴⁸ כו'

And this is the matter of the great hand. But it is known that "one nation shall be stronger than the other nation," and "G-d has made one opposite the other," and "were it not that the Holy One, blessed be He, helps him," etc.

After the great hand comes the need for help. Holiness and its opposite are balanced ("G-d made one opposite the other"), and when one side grows strong the other weakens, like the two nations in Rivkah's womb. The Talmud says that a person's evil inclination would overpower him "were it not that the Holy One, blessed be He, helps him."

ועזר זה וסיוע זה נקרא יד החזקה לנצח ולכבוש כו' ויד רמה היינו לרומם ולקשר נפשו בקיום ואהבת ככל לכבך⁴⁹ כו'

And this help and this assistance is called the strong hand, to prevail and to conquer, etc. And the high hand is to exalt and bind his soul in the fulfillment of "And you shall love... with all your heart," etc.

That divine help, which lets a person win his inner struggle, is the "strong hand." The "high hand" lifts the soul higher still, binding it to the love of G-d "with all your heart."

וזרוע הנטויה הוא ג"כ בחי' יד שביד יש ג' פירקין העליונה נקרא זרוע היא בבחי' נטויה שהיא פשוטה למטה מטה בבחי' וימינו תחבקני⁵⁰ כאדם החובק כו'. שלא להיות בבחי' נפרד ח"ו כו'.

And the outstretched arm is also the level of a hand, for the hand has three sections, and the uppermost is called the arm. It is "outstretched," extended far, far downward, in the manner of "and His right hand embraces me," like a person who embraces, etc., so that there not be a state of separation, G-d forbid, etc.

The arm, the upper section of the limb, is the fourth "hand": it is "outstretched," reaching far downward to embrace, as in "His right hand embraces me." This embrace keeps the soul from being separate from G-d.

וכ"ז הוא נמשך ע"י הצדקה שע"י זה וארבע הידות יהי לכם לזרע השדה⁵¹ שבזמן הגלות הכל הוא רק בבחינת זריעה אור זרוע לצדיק⁵² כו' כמ"ש במדרש:

And all this is drawn down through tzedakah, for through it "the four hands shall be yours, as seed for the field"; for in the time of exile everything is only in the manner of sowing, "Light is sown for the righteous," etc., as stated in the Midrash.

All four hands are drawn down through tzedakah, as the verse continues, "as seed for the field." In exile everything is only "sown," as the verse says, "Light is sown for the righteous"; what is sown now will sprout and be revealed in the future.

SECTION 5 • 19

The words of the Scribes and the higher root of the prohibitions

9 ג ובבחי התורה שהיא בבחי שחורה והלכות ודקדוקי סופרים שבמצוי ל"ת שהן בבחינת שחורות כעורב הנ"ל.

3. And as for the aspect of the Torah that is at the level of "black," [namely] the halachos and the fine points of the Scribes in the prohibitive commandments, which are at the level of "black as a raven" mentioned above:

The third section begins. The Alter Rebbe returns to the "black" side of the Torah, the rabbinic laws and fences around the prohibitions, and now shows why it is in fact superior.

הנה אמרו ז"ל ערבים עלי ד"ס יותר מיינה של תורה.^{53,54} והענין כי הנה בשלשה דברים ברא הקב"ה את עולמו בספר וסופר וסיפור.^{55,56}

Our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "The words of the Scribes are dearer to Me than the wine of the Torah." The explanation is that the Holy One, blessed be He, created His world with three things: sefer, sofer and sippur (book, scribe and telling).

The Midrash on Song of Songs reads "your love is better than wine" as G-d saying that the words of the Scribes, the rabbinic enactments, are dearer to Him than the "wine" of the Torah itself. To explain this he cites Sefer Yetzirah: the world was created with sefer, sofer and sippur, "book, scribe and telling."

ספר זו תורה שבכתב וסופר למעלה מבחי ספר היא בחי תורה שבעל פה כי לכן נקרא דברי חכמים דברי סופרים שהן למעלה מבחי ספר

Sefer (book) is the Written Torah; and sofer (scribe), which is above the level of sefer, is the level of the Oral Torah. For this is why the words of the Sages are called "the words of the Scribes (soferim)": they are above the level of sefer.

He maps these terms onto the two Torahs: the "book" is the Written Torah, and the "scribe," who stands above the book because he writes it, is the Oral Torah. This is why the Sages' words are called "the words of the Scribes."

(ועמ"ש מזה בד"ה זה שמי וד"ה לבך יהגה אימה איה סופר ובמ"א על פסוק ושאתם מים בששון) הוא בחי' תורה שבכתב שמח"ע שהוא בחי' נר מצוה ותורה אור.⁵⁷

(See what is written on this in the discourse beginning "This is My Name," and in the discourse beginning "Your heart will meditate in awe: Where is the scribe?", and elsewhere on the verse "And you shall draw water with joy.") [Sefer] is the level of the Written Torah, which is from the Supernal Wisdom (Chochmah Ila'ah), the level of "a mitzvah is a lamp, and the Torah is light."

The parenthesis sends the reader to other discourses that develop the same idea. The Written Torah comes from G-d's Supernal Wisdom and is called "light," as in the verse "a mitzvah is a lamp, and the Torah is light."

והנה אור הנר המאיר הוא מגוון הסמוך לפתילה אבל הגוון לבן המקיף עליו הוא אינו מאיר בעצמו

Now, the illuminating light of the lamp comes from the hue that is close to the wick; but the white hue that surrounds it does not itself illuminate;

An analogy from the flame of a lamp: the light that actually illuminates comes from the part of the flame near the wick. The white hue that surrounds it does not itself give light.

אלא הוא מקור האור שממנו נמשך ומתפשט האור המאיר וכך הם דברי חכמים נק' דברי סופרים

rather, it is the source of the light, from which the illuminating light is drawn and spreads. And so it is with the words of the Sages, called "the words of the Scribes,"

Yet that surrounding white hue is the source from which the illuminating light is drawn. The words of the Scribes are like it.

שמהם נמשך להיות בחי' הספר היא בחי' תורה אור והם הם בבחי' מקור האור בחי' המקיף שהוא בחי' ישת חשך סתרו⁵⁸

from which the level of the sefer, the level of "the Torah is light," comes to be drawn; and they themselves are the level of the source of the light, the level of the makif (the surrounding), which is the level of "He made darkness His hiding place."

The rabbinic words are the hidden source from which the "light" of the Written Torah emerges. They are a makif, a "surrounding" level too high to shine openly, described by the verse "He made darkness His hiding place": their "darkness" is higher than revealed light, and that is why they are "black."

ולכן רוב דקדוקי סופרים הם במצות לא תעשה ששם הרבה גדרים וסייגים לתורה יותר מבמצות עשה כי בחי מצות ל"ת יש בהן יתרון ומעלה יתירה מבמצות עשה.

Therefore most of the fine points of the Scribes are in the prohibitive commandments, where there are many more fences and safeguards for the Torah than in the positive commandments; for the prohibitive commandments have an advantage and a superiority over the positive commandments.

This is why most rabbinic fences surround the prohibitions rather than the positive commandments. The prohibitions, as he will now show, have a higher root.

כמארוז"ל זכרי עם^{59,60} ו"ה רמ"ח שמי עם י"ה שס"ה שהל"ת הם בבחינת י"ה שהוא למעלה מו"ה כי המ"ע הם בבחי' שם ו"ה עלמא דאתגליא

As our Sages, of blessed memory, said, "‘My remembrance’ with Vav-Hei [equals] 248; ‘My Name’ with Yud-Hei [equals] 365." The prohibitions are at the level of Yud-Hei, which is higher than Vav-Hei; for the positive commandments are at the level of the Name Vav-Hei, the revealed world (alma de'isgalya).

The verse "This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance" is read by the Zohar numerically: shmi ("My Name") plus the letters Yud-Hei equals 365, the number of prohibitions, and zichri ("My remembrance") plus Vav-Hei equals 248, the number of positive commandments. Yud-Hei, the first half of the Name Havayah, is the higher, hidden half; Vav-Hei is the lower half, "the revealed world."

כי רמ"ח פיקודין רמ"ח אברים דמלכא⁶¹ שהן כלים ומשכן להחיות הנמשך ומתפשט בהם מעצם הנפש שהחיות מתלבש בהם ממש להיות האברים נשמעים לרצונו כו'.

For "the 248 commandments are the 248 limbs of the King": they are vessels and a dwelling for the life-force that is drawn and spreads into them from the essence of the soul, the life-force being truly encloded in them, so that the limbs obey its will, etc.

The Tikkunei Zohar calls the 248 positive commandments "the 248 limbs of the King." Just as the soul's life-force is openly clothed in the body's limbs so that they do its will, the positive commandments are vessels that openly hold G-d's light.

אבל הל"ת הם בבחינת י"ה שהוא בבחי' עלמא דאתכסיא שאין החיות ואור א"ס מבחי' זו מתלבש בגילוי הנפש

But the prohibitions are at the level of Yud-Hei, the level of the hidden world (alma de'iskasya), for the life-force and the Infinite Light from this level are not encloded in the soul in a revealed way,

The prohibitions belong to "the hidden world": the light that comes through them does not enter the soul in a revealed, felt way.

אלא בבחי' העלם בבחי' ואתה משמרה בקרבי⁶² לפי שאין בנפש כלי ומשכן להשראת אור א"ס ב"ה בבחי' זו להיות בבחי' גילוי בהתלבשות ממש

but in concealment, in the manner of “and You guard it within me”; because the soul has no vessel or dwelling for the Infinite Light, blessed be He, to rest [in it] at this level so as to be revealed in actual enclothing,

That light is present in the soul only in concealment, as the morning blessing says of the soul, “You guard it within me.” The soul simply has no vessel that could hold this level openly.

אלא בבחי' שלילה בחי' לא כמ"ש בארץ לא זרועה⁶³ שהוא זרועה בבחי' לא כו' וכמ"ש במ"א שזהו ענין דביקת הנפש באלקות למעלה בשרשה בבחינת סובב ישת חושך סתרו כו'

but only in the manner of negation, the level of “not,” as it is written, “in a land not sown”: it is “sown” in the manner of “not,” etc. And as explained elsewhere, this is the soul’s cleaving to G-dliness above, in its root, at the level of sovev, “He made darkness His hiding place,” etc.,

It is received only through negation, by not doing. Jeremiah’s phrase “a land not sown” is read as a land “sown with not”: the prohibitions, whose form is “do not,” plant this light in the soul and join it to G-d in its root, at the level of sovev, the light that surrounds all worlds.

בחי' חושך ולא אור נגלה כו' שא"א להגיע לבחי' זו בבחי' מעשה המצות אשר יעשה אותם האדם אלא בבחי' ל"ת שהוא בחי' שלילה ולא כו'.

the level of darkness and not of revealed light, etc.; for it is impossible to reach this level through the deed of the mitzvos that a person performs, but only through the prohibitions, which are the level of negation and “not,” etc.

“Darkness” here means a light too high to be revealed. No positive deed can reach it; only refraining, the “not” of the prohibitions, connects the soul to it.

SECTION 6 • ¶10-13

Ofanim above seraphim

10 ועי"ז יערה עליו רוח ממרום^{64, 65} השראת אור א"ס ב"ה הסובב כל עלמין בנפשו וכזה תתעלה גם נפשו

הבהמית כי

And through this “a spirit from on high will be poured upon him”: the indwelling in his soul of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin). And through this his animal soul, too, will be elevated. For

Isaiah's words “a spirit from on high will be poured upon us” describe the result: through the prohibitions, the surrounding light (sovev) comes to rest in the soul. Then even the animal soul is raised up, and he now explains how.

הנה הנפש הבהמית שרשה מבחי" פני אריה פני שור שבמרכבה כו' משמרי אופנים שהן למטה מהשרפים כו'.

the animal soul has its root in the level of “the face of a lion” and “the face of an ox” in the Chariot, etc., from the guardians of the ofanim, which are below the seraphim, etc.

In Ezekiel's vision of the Chariot, the living creatures have the faces of a lion, an ox, an eagle and a man. The animal soul is rooted in the “lion” and the “ox,” among the ofanim, a class of angels lower than the seraphim.

אך הנה כתיב והאופנים ינשאו לעומתם⁶⁶ והאופנים ברעש גדול כו'. כי הנה השרפים אומרים קדוש ומובדל כו'

But it is written, “and the ofanim rise up opposite them,” and “the ofanim, with a great noise,” etc. For the seraphim say, “Holy,” [meaning] separate, etc.,

Yet Ezekiel says that the ofanim “rise up,” and the morning liturgy describes them rising “with a great noise.” The seraphim, by contrast, say “Holy,” which means separate and transcendent.

הוי' צבאות אות היא בצבא דילי^{67, 68} אלף אלפים ורבוא רבבן⁶⁹ מספר גדוד אחד ולגדודיו אין מספר⁷⁰ כולם אין מקבלים חיות רק מבחינת אות אי מלא כל הארץ כבודו.⁷¹

“Havayah Tzevakos”: “He is a sign (os) among His host.” “A thousand thousands and ten thousand myriads” is the number of a single troop, and “His troops are beyond number”; all of them receive life-force only from the level of a single letter (os). “The whole earth is full of His glory”:

The Talmud reads the Name Tzevakos (“of Hosts”) as “He is a sign (os) among His host,” and os also means “letter.” All the countless angelic hosts draw their life from one single letter of G-d's speech; that is what Isaiah's “the whole earth is full of His glory” refers to.

כבודו הוא ל"ב נתיב ות החכמה כי אין כבוד אלא תורה^{72,73} והיא המתלבשת להיות מלא כל הארץ
הלז התחתונה בבחי' כבוד

"His glory" is the thirty-two paths of Chochmah, for "there is no glory but Torah"; and it is [the Torah] that is enclothed so that "the whole earth," this lowest [earth], is "full" of it at the level of "His glory,"

"His glory" is the Torah ("there is no glory but Torah"), described as the thirty-two paths of Chochmah. This Torah is clothed in the lowest world and fills it, but only as "glory," an outer radiance.

היינו בבחינת זיו והארה בעלמא והאופנים המקבלים מהם ינשאו לעומתם ומרעשים ברעש גדול
מחמת עוצם קדושת אור א"ס שכשמו כן הוא אין לו סוף כו'.⁷⁴

that is, at the level of a mere ray and radiance. And the ofanim, which receive from them, "rise up opposite them" and quake "with a great noise," because of the immense holiness of the Infinite Light, which, like its Name, has no end, etc.

The ofanim receive from the seraphim, yet they quake "with a great noise," because they sense the overwhelming holiness of the Infinite Light, which, as its name says, has no end.

11 והנה לא ברעש^{75,76} ה' ואחר הרעש אש⁷⁷ בבחינת צמאון ותשוקה בכלות הנפש ממש בבחי' ביטול
והתכללות באור א"ס ב"ה למעלה מכדי שתוכל נפשם שאת וצמאון ותשוקה זו אינה בבחי' כבודו היא
בחי' זיו והארה בלבד.

Now, "G-d is not in the noise," and "after the noise, fire": in the manner of thirst and longing, an actual expiring of the soul, in a state of self-nullification and inclusion in the Infinite Light, blessed be He, beyond what their soul can bear. And this thirst and longing is not for the level of "His glory," which is only a ray and radiance,

At Chorev Eliyahu was told that G-d was not in the noise, and after the noise came fire. The Alter Rebbe reads the "fire" as a burning thirst of the soul to dissolve into G-d, beyond what it can contain, and says this thirst is not for "His glory," the outer radiance.

אלא בבחי' את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא^{78,79} בחינת אני ממש דהיינו השראת א"ס ב"ה הסוכ"ע
ממש.

but for the level of "the heavens and the earth I fill," the level of "I" itself, that is, the indwelling of the Infinite One, blessed be He, that encompasses all worlds, itself.

It is a thirst for G-d's very self, the "I" of "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" That "I" is the Infinite One Himself, the surrounding light (sovev) that is present everywhere without being contained anywhere.

12 וזהו והאופנים ינשאו שמתנשאים לעומת השרפים למעלה מהם. ומבחינת צמאון זה ותשוקה זו נמשך להיות כמ"ש צמאה לך נפשי כו' כן בקדש⁸⁰ חזיתך⁸¹ קדש מלה בגרמי⁸² בחי' קדש ומוכדל חזיתך להיות גילוי אלקות

And this is "the ofanim rise up": they are lifted up opposite the seraphim, above them. And from this thirst and this longing comes what is written, "My soul thirsts for You," etc., "so in holiness I have beheld You": "holiness" is a word in its own right, the level of holy and separate, [and] "I have beheld You," so that there be a revelation of G-dliness,

This is why the ofanim "rise up" above the seraphim: their longing reaches higher. King David's words "My soul thirsts for You ... so in holiness I have beheld You" describe the same thing, and the Zohar says "holiness" is a word by itself, meaning the separate, transcendent G-d, who becomes revealed through this thirst.

וכמו שיהיה לעתיד ונגולו כספר השמים⁸³ וכתוב השמים החדשים והארץ החדשה⁸⁴ שלא יהיו שמים וארץ גשמיים המעלימים ומסתירים כבוד ה' להיות יש ודבר בפני עצמו

and as it will be in the future, "and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll," and it is written, "the new heavens and the new earth": there will not be physical heavens and earth that obscure and conceal the glory of G-d, so as to be a thing and an entity in its own right.

This revelation is a foretaste of the future, when "the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll" and there will be "new heavens and a new earth." Then the physical world will no longer hide G-d or appear to exist on its own.

שהרי בכל דבר נמשך אור א"ס ב"ה כמ"ש והר סיני עשן כולו⁸⁵ עולם שנה נפש עולם בחינת מקום ששם נמשך בחי' א"ס כמ"ש הנה מקום אתי.⁸⁶

For in every thing the Infinite Light, blessed be He, is drawn, as it is written, "And Mount Sinai was all in smoke (ashan)": olam, shanah, nefesh (world, year, soul). Olam is the dimension of space, into which the level of the Infinite is drawn, as it is written, "Behold, there is a place with Me."

The Infinite Light is already present in everything. The word ashan ("smoke") at Sinai is read as the initials of olam, shanah, nefesh (world, year, soul): space, time and life. Of space G-d says "there is a place with Me": space itself is drawn from the Infinite.

13 וכן בבחינת שנה בבחי' זמן מלך מלך עתיד הוה הכל הוא בבחי' א"ס כו'.

And so too in the dimension of shanah (year), the dimension of time: "He is King, He was King and He will be King," past, future and present; all is at the level of the Infinite, etc.

The same holds for time. The liturgical phrase "G-d is King, G-d was King, G-d will be King" spans present, past and future, and all of time is rooted in the Infinite.

וכן בנפש יש הארת אור א"ס וכל החיים יודוך סלה וגן עדן העליון ותחתון ויש גן עדן למעלה מגן עדן עד אין קץ ותכלית בעילוי אחר עילוי כו'.

And so too in nefesh (the soul) there is a radiance of the Infinite Light: “and all the living shall thank You, Selah,” and the higher and the lower Gan Eden; and there is a Gan Eden above Gan Eden, without end or limit, in ascent after ascent, etc.

The soul, too, holds a radiance of the Infinite Light, as the prayer says, “all the living shall thank You.” The endless ascending levels of Gan Eden, a Gan Eden above every Gan Eden, show that the soul’s dimension also reaches toward the Infinite.

SECTION 7 • ¶14

Black, and therefore comely

14 ולעתיד כשיזדכך העולם וחומריות וגסות שבו אזי עין בעין יראו⁸⁷ כו'. וזהו שחורה אני ונאווה⁸⁸ שעל ידי

And in the future, when the world, and its materiality and coarseness, will be refined, then “eye to eye they shall see,” etc. And this is “I am black, yet comely”: for through

In the future the world’s coarseness will be refined away, and then, as Isaiah says, “eye to eye they shall see” G-d. This lets the Alter Rebbe give the full meaning of “I am black, yet comely.”

בחי' שחורה היא בחי' דביקת הנפש בקיום ושמירת מצות לא תעשה שהן בבחי' שחורות כעורב⁸⁹ על ידי זה יהיה לעתיד גילוי אור א"ס ב"ה הסוכ"ע

the level of “black,” which is the soul’s cleaving [to G-d] through fulfilling and observing the prohibitive commandments, which are at the level of “black as a raven,” through this there will be, in the future, a revelation of the Infinite Light, blessed be He, that encompasses all worlds (sovev kol almin),

The bride’s “blackness” is her cleaving to G-d by keeping the prohibitions, the “black as a raven” side of the Torah. Precisely this will bring, in the future, the open revelation of the surrounding light (sovev), the light that encompasses all worlds.

שהוא למעלה מגדר עלמין שהוא למעלה מכדי שתוכל הנפש שאת אלא בבחינת שלילה ארץ לא זרועה⁹⁰ ובבחי' זו נאווה יותר מבנות ירושלים כו'.

which is above the bounds of the worlds, beyond what the soul can bear, except in the manner of negation, “a land not sown.” And at this level she is more comely than the daughters of Jerusalem, etc.

That light is beyond the bounds of the worlds and beyond what any soul can hold, so now it can be received only through negation, “a land not sown.” Because the descended soul reaches it, she is more beautiful than the souls above, who never descended and never kept a prohibition.

(ועמ"ש מענין שחורה אני ונאווה בד"ה קול דודי. דקאי על תשבע"פ כו' והוא ע"ד שנתבאר למעלה בענין דברי סופרים כו' וע' בפ' בראשית דמ"ט סע"א^{91,92} ובסה"מ סי' קל"ז⁹³ וסוף ח"א סי' ה' ובפ' שמות י"ד⁹⁴ אי ובפ' אחרי דנ"ט ב'י⁹⁵ בלק קצ"א א'):)

(See what is written on the subject of “I am black, yet comely” in the discourse beginning “The voice of my beloved,” that it refers to the Oral Torah, etc.; and this is along the lines of what was explained above on the words of the Scribes, etc. And see [the Zohar,] Parshas Bereishis, page 49, end of side a; and the S.H.M., section 137, and the end of Part I, section 5; and Parshas Shemos, 14a; and Parshas Acharei, page 59b; [and Parshas] Balak, 191a.)

The closing parenthesis refers to another discourse, on “The voice of my beloved,” which reads “I am black, yet comely” as the Oral Torah, in line with what was said here about the words of the Scribes. It also lists passages in the Zohar on the verse; the work abbreviated “S.H.M.” is not identified in the Kehot notes, which say only that the same wording is copied in the Tzemach Tzedek’s Biurei HaZohar.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Do not regard the rabbinic fences and the prohibitions as merely negative: holding back, even being “cruel” to oneself for G-d’s sake, joins the soul to a light higher than anything positive deeds reveal. And give tzedakah from what you earn with effort, a fifth where possible, for it lifts the whole animal soul and draws G-d’s revelation into it.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do the souls before their descent have a more complete awe of G-d than the angels, and what then does the descended soul gain?
2. How can the laws of the prohibitions, which only say “do not,” connect the soul to a higher light than the positive commandments?
3. What is the “cruelty” of the black hairs, both toward the divine spark in forbidden things and in a person’s conduct toward himself?
4. Why is tzedakah both “black” and “comely,” and how does it elevate the animal soul?
5. How can the ofanim, lower than the seraphim, rise above them, and what does this teach about the animal soul?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 שחורה אני ונאווה

The maiden tells the daughters of Jerusalem that though she is black she is comely. The whole maamar is an explanation of this verse, read as the descended soul speaking to the souls above.

Song of Songs 1:5 הי"ה: אה"ה שיר השירים

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה:

'I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, As the tents of Kedar, As the curtains of Solomon.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש א, ה.

2 טהורה היא ... אתה בראתה

The morning blessing "My G-d, the soul You placed in me is pure; You created it, You formed it." The Alter Rebbe reads "pure" as the soul's state within G-d and "You created it" as its later coming into being as something from nothing.

Berakhot 60b:4 ב"ד: ס' ברכות

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

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

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

3 חי הי' אשר עמדתי לפניו

The same verse of Eliyahu is quoted with this wording earlier in Likkutei Torah, in Parshas Chukas.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מ"א יז, א. ושם הי' "אלקי ישראל". וראה מ"ב ה, טז (באלישע). וכ"ה לעיל חוקת סד, ד. ובסידור רסג, ב.

4 Kehot's note points to I Kings 18:15 for these words.

I Kings 18:15 ט"ו: י"ח מלכים א

ויאמר אליהו חי הי' צבאות אשר עמדתי לפניו כי היום אראה אליו:

And Elijah said: 'As the L-RD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto him to-day.'

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5 חי הי' אשר עמדתי לפניו

Eliyahu swears by G-d "before whom I have stood." Here it describes every soul before its descent, standing before G-d in complete bittul.

I Kings 17:1 א"י: א' מלכים

ויאמר אליהו התשבי מתשבי גלעד אליאחזב חייה: אלקי ישראל אשר עמדתי לפניו אם יהיה השנים האלה טל ומטר כי אם לפני דברי:

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said unto Ahab: 'As the L-RD, the G-d of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.'

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6 הביא בשם הזהר פרשת ויחי ... דרמ"ב ע"א

The Zohar passage in Parshas Vayechi to which the text itself refers for the interpretation of "the daughters of Jerusalem."

ספר הזהר, ויחי ס"ה:תרס"א-66:673-65:661 Zohar, Vayechi ס"ו:תער"ג

7 מלכות כל עולמים

"Your kingship is a kingship over all worlds." The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that G-d's Kingship, the root of awe, is infinite.

Psalms 145:13 י"ה: קמ"ה תהילים

מלכותך מלכות כל-עלמים וממשלתך בכל-דור ודור:

Thy kingdom is a kingdom for all ages, And Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קמה, יג.

8 להודיע לבני האדם גבורותיו

"To make known to the sons of man His mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of His kingdom." The Alter Rebbe reads "His mighty deeds" as the contractions through which awe reaches created beings.

Psalms 145:12 י"ה: קמ"ה תהילים

להודיע לבני האדם גבורתיו וכבוד הדר מלכותו:

To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glory of the majesty of His kingdom.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים קמה, יב.

9 אלף אלפים וריבוא רבבות כו'

Daniel's vision of the thousands of thousands and myriads of angels serving before G-d. Here it illustrates the vast

hosts who accept G-d's Kingship.

דניאל ז':10 Daniel 7:10

נָהַר דִּינּוֹר נִגַּד וְנָפַק מִן־קִדְמוֹהִי אֵלֶּף אֲלָפִין יִשְׁמְשׁוּנָהּ וְרַבּוּ רַבְּבָן קִדְמוֹהִי יְקוּמוּן דִּינָא יִתְבּ וְסִפְרִין פְּתִיחוּ:

A fiery stream issued And came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, And ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; The judgment was set, And the books were opened.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דניאל ז', י.

10 ולגודיו אין מספר

The Talmud discusses the verse "Is there any number to His troops?" (Job 25:3) in connection with the numbers of the angels. It shows the endless scale of the angelic hosts.

Chagigah 13b:13 חגיגה י"ג ב:י"ג

תנא, רבי אומר משום אבא יוסי בן דוסאי: "אלף אלפין ישמשונה" — מספר גדוד אחד, "ולגודיו אין מספר". ורבי ירמיה בר אבא אמר: "אלף אלפין ישמשונה", לנהר דינור, שנאמר: "נהר דינור נגד ונפק מן קדמוהי אלף אלפין ישמשונה ורבו רבבן קדמוהי יקומו".

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KEHOT'S NOTE

חגיגה יג, ב.

11 בתולות אחרי רעותי מובאות לך

"Virgins, her companions following her, are brought to you." Here these are the souls before their descent, who accompany the bride.

Psalms 45:15 תהילים מ"ה:ט"ו

לְרַקְמוֹת תּוּבֵל לְמֶלֶךְ בְּתוּלוֹת אֶחְרִיָּה רְעוּתָהּ מוֹבָאוֹת לָךְ:

She shall be led unto the king on richly woven stuff; The virgins her companions in her train being brought unto thee.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים מה, טו. ראה גם באוה"ת פ' שמות ע' כב.

12 בוח"ב קצ"ב ב' . . רל"ה א'

Yahel Or is the Tzemach Tzedek's commentary on Psalms.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הלשון ביהל אור ע' קעו.

13 ובפי אחרי דס"ז ע"ב

The Zohar in Parshas Acharei, to which the parenthesis also refers.

Zohar, Achrei Mot 33:203–207 ר"ז ג-ר"ז ר"ז

14 עלמות אהבוך

"Therefore the maidens love You." The maidens (alamos) are another name for the souls above.

Song of Songs 1:3 שיר השירים א':ג

לְרִיחַ שְׁמֵינִיךָ טוֹבִים שְׁמֵן תּוֹרֵךְ שְׁמֶךְ עַל־כֵּן עֲלָמוֹת אֶהְבּוּךָ:

Thine ointments have a goodly fragrance; Thy name is as ointment poured forth; Therefore do the maidens love thee.

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש א, ג.

15 כי הקב"ה נקרא אצלם בשם חתן

Several places in the Tzemach Tzedek's Or HaTorah discuss G-d as the "groom" of the souls.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם אוה"ת ויצא ריד, א. תלה, א. כך ג תקמח, ב. דברים ע' לו. ספר החקירה עד, א.

16 חתן מלשון חות דרגא

The Talmud advises a man to "go down a step" in choosing a wife. The Alter Rebbe connects chasan, "groom," to this descent: G-d descends to the souls.

Yevamot 63a יבמות ס"ג א

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה יבמות סג, א.

17 The verse speaks of the king displaying "the honor of the splendor of his greatness." The phrase is borrowed to describe the glory of G-d's Kingship shown in the angels' service.

Esther 1:4 אסתר א':ד

בְּהִרְאֹתוֹ אֶת־עֶשֶׂר כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ וְאֵת־יְקָר תַּפְאֶרֶת גְּדוּלְתּוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים שְׁמוֹנִים וּמֵאֵת יוֹם:

when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty, many days, even a hundred and fourscore days.

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PARAGRAPH 2

18 במ"ת דכתיב ביום חתונתו

"On the day of his wedding and on the day of the joy of his heart." The verse speaks of King Shlomo's wedding day.

Song of Songs 3:11 שיר השירים ג':יא

צֵאנָה וּרְאִינָה בְּנוֹת צִיּוֹן בְּמֶלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בְּעֶטְרָה שְׁעֶטְרָה־לוֹ אִמּוֹ בְּיוֹם חֲתָנָתוֹ וּבְיוֹם שְׂמֻחַת לְבוֹ:

Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, And gaze upon king Solomon, Even upon the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him in the day of his espousals, And in the day of the gladness of his heart.

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Taanit 26b:6 תענית כ"ו ב:ו

וכן הוא אומר: "צאנה וראינה בנות ציון במלך שלמה בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו ביום חתנתו וביום שמחת לבו". "ביום חתנתו" — זה מן תורה, "וביום שמחת לבו" — זה בנזן בית המקדש, שצאנה במהרה בקמינו.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש ג, יא. תענית כו, ב.

19 **בנשמות ישראל ס"ר אותיות התורה**

The note gives Megaleh Amukos as the source for the correspondence between the six hundred thousand letters of the Torah and the six hundred thousand souls of Israel.

KEHOT'S NOTE

מגלה עמוקות אופן קפו. עיין הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר בספר המאמרים תש"ח ע"רמא.

20 **שמלמדין את התינוק בבטן אמו**

The Talmud teaches that the unborn child is taught the whole Torah. Here it shows that the Torah's light is meant to take hold in the soul from its very beginning.

Niddah 30b:21-22 כ"א-כ"ב

ומלמדין אותו כל התורה כולה, שנאמר: "ויוּרְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר לִי יִתְמֶךְ דְּבָרִי לְפָנֶיךָ שְׁמוֹר מִצְוֹתַי וְחַיִּיהִי", וַאֲמַר: "בְּסוֹד אֱלֹהִים עָלַי אֶהְיֶה". מֵאִי "וַאֲמַר"? וְכִי תִמָּא נִבְיָא הוּא דְקָאֵמַר, תָּא שְׁמַע "בְּסוֹד אֱלֹהִים עָלַי אֶהְיֶה".

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נדה ל, ב. ועי' [לעיל] פי ראה ספ"ב [יה, ג]. [כ]. וראה גם לעיל פי שלח מד, א.

21 **ועיין באדרא זוטא**

The passage near this place in a later maamar of Shir HaShirim discusses the Infinite Light: that the Etz Chaim's "last level of the Infinite" refers to the kav, the line drawn after the tzimtzum, from which Atzilus comes.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן ח, ג. אוה"ת בראשית כרך ז ד"ה ויתן לי מערת המכפלה.

PARAGRAPH 3

22 **קוצותיו תלתלים שחרות כעורב**

"His locks are curled, black as a raven." The black locks become an image of the details of halachah.

Song of Songs 5:11 שיר השירים ה':י"א

ראשו כתם פז קוצותיו תלתלים שחרות כעורב:

His head is as the most fine gold, His locks are curled, And black as a raven.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ש"ש ה, יא.

23 **תלתלים תלי תלים של הלכות**

The Talmud teaches that from every stroke of the Torah's letters one can derive heaps upon heaps of laws. The Alter Rebbe uses this reading to identify the black locks with the halachos.

Eruvin 21b:23-25 כ"ג-כ"ד

"[ו]אִיזוֹ וְחֶקֶר תִּימָן מְשָׁלִים הִרְבֵּה" — אָמַר עוֹלָא אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר: בְּתַחֲלִיָּה הֵיחָת תּוֹרָה דּוֹמָה לְכַפִּיפָה שְׂאִין לָהּ אֲזַנִּים, עַד שֶׁבָּא שְׁלֵמָה וַעֲשֶׂה לָּהּ אֲזַנִּים. "קוּצוֹתָיו תִּלְתְּלִים", אָמַר רַב חֲסָדָא אָמַר מֶר עוֹקְבָא: מְלֻמָּד שֶׁיֵּשׁ לְדְרוֹשׁ עַל כָּל קוּץ וְקוּץ תִּלְתִּי תִלְתִּים שֶׁל הִלְכוֹת. "שְׁחֹרוֹת כְּעוֹרֵב": בְּמִי אֵתָּה מוֹצֵאן — בְּמִי

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

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KEHOT'S NOTE

עירובין כא, ב.

PARAGRAPH 4

24 **ישער רישי כעמר נקא**

Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days, "and the hair of His head was like pure wool." It gives the image of white hair, set against the black locks of Song of Songs.

Daniel 7:9 ז':ט"ו

תָּזַה הָיִית עַד דִּי כְרִסְוֹן רִמְיו וְעִתִּיק יוֹמִין יִתֵּב לְבוּשָׁה כְּתִלְג חוֹר וְשַׁעַר רִאשָׁה כְּעֶמֶר נְקָא כְּרִסְיָה שְׁבִבִין דִּי־נֹר גְּלִגְלוּהִי נֹר דְּלִק:

I beheld Till thrones were placed, And one that was ancient of days did sit: His raiment was as white snow, And the hair of his head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

דניאל ז, ט.

25 **קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות**

The black locks of the beloved, quoted again to set up the contrast with Daniel's white hair.

Song of Songs 5:11 שיר השירים ה':י"א

ראשו כתם פז קוצותיו תלתלים שחרות כעורב:

His head is as the most fine gold, His locks are curled, And black as a raven.

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26 **ורב חסד**

"Abundant in kindness," one of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. Here it names the source of the "hairs" that reach far down.

שמות ל"ד:6 Exod 34:6

וַיַּעֲבֹר ה' עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּקְרָא ה' ה' אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת:

And the L-RD passed by before him, and proclaimed: 'The L-RD, the L-RD, G-d, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;

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27 **תלי תלים של הלכות ודקדוקי סופרים**

The Tzemach Tzedek's Or HaTorah also discusses the "heaps upon heaps of halachos" and the rabbinic details.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה אוה"ת בראשית כרך ז תתשפג, ב.

28 **"Extol her, and she will exalt you," said of wisdom. The Alter Rebbe reads it as turning the Torah over in all its details.**

משלי ד':8 Proverbs 4:8

סִלְסְלָהּ וְתִרְוַמְמֶנָּה כִּי תַחֲבֹקְנָהּ:

Extol her, and she will exalt thee; She will bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

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- 29 The Talmud learns the meaning of salsel from a maid-servant who spoke of someone turning over his hair. This links the word in Proverbs to the image of hair.

Rosh Hashanah 26b:4 כ"ד: ב'ד' אש השנה כ"ו

לא הוּו ידעי רבנו מאי: "סלסלה ותרוממה". יומא חד שמעיה לאמרתא דבי רבי דהוות אמרה לההוא גברא דהיה קא מהפך בשעריה, אמרה לקה: עד מתי אתה מסלסל בשערך.

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- 30 להיות עולה לרצון לפניו

The burnt offering is to be brought "for his acceptance before G-d." The Alter Rebbe cites the phrase for what the laws of the sacrifices achieve.

Leviticus 1:3 ויקרא א':ג

אם-עלה קרבנו מן-הבקר וזכר תמים יקריבנו אל-פתח אהל מועד ויקריב אתו לרצונו לפני ה'

If his offering be a burnt-offering of the herd, he shall offer it a male without blemish; he shall bring it to the door of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the L-RD.

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- 31 וריח ניחוח

The burnt offering is "a fire-offering of pleasing fragrance to G-d." It describes the sacrifice rising favorably when done according to its laws.

Leviticus 1:9 ויקרא א':ט

וקרבו וקריצו ירחץ במים והקטיר הכהן את-הכל המזבחה עלה אשה ירחי-ניחוח לה

but its inwards and its legs shall he wash with water; and the priest shall make the whole smoke on the altar, for a burnt-offering, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 5

- 32 שער רישיה כעמר נקא

Daniel's white hair "like pure wool," read here as the supernal whiteness of Chesed from which the positive commandments flow.

Daniel 7:9 דניאל ז':ט

תהו הוית עד די כרסון רמיו ועתיק יומין יתב לבושה כתלג חור ושער ראשה כעמר נקא כרסיה שבבין די-נור גלגלוי נור דלק:

I beheld Till thrones were placed, And one that was ancient of days did sit: His raiment was as white snow, And the hair of his head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire.

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- 33 דאקרי רב חסד

"Abundant in kindness," the name given to this supernal

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

Chesed.

Exodus 34:6 שמות ל"ד:ו

ויעבר ה' על-פניו ויקרא ה' ה' אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב-חסד ואמת:

And the L-RD passed by before him, and proclaimed: "The L-RD, the L-RD, G-d, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;

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PARAGRAPH 6

- 34 שחורות כעורב

"Black as a raven," said of the beloved's locks. The raven's reputed cruelty is read into the laws of prohibition.

Song of Songs 5:11 שיר השירים ה':יא

ראשו כתם פז קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות כעורב:

His head is as the most fine gold, His locks are curled, And black as a raven.

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- 35 קדש א"ע במותר לך

The Talmud teaches "sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you." Here it describes the rabbinic fences a person places on himself.

Yevamot 20a:15 יבמות כ"א:ט"ו

איסור קדושה — שניות מדברי סופרים, ואמאי קרי לקה איסור קדושה? אמר אביי: כל המקיים דברי חכמים נקרא קדוש. אמר לקה רבא: וכל שאינו מקיים דברי חכמים, קדוש הוא דלא מיקרי, רשע נמי לא מיקרי! אלא אמר רבא: קדש עצמה במותר לך.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

יבמות כ, א.

- 36 וצדקה תרומם גוי

"Tzedakah exalts a nation." The Alter Rebbe reads it as tzedakah lifting up the whole animal soul of the one who gives.

Proverbs 14:34 משלי י"ד:ל"ד

צדקה תרומם-גוי וחסד לאמים חטאת:

Righteousness exalteth a nation; But sin is a reproach to any people.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי יד, לד, [שם כתיב צדקה בלא וי. — כ].

- 37 בזח"ג קליב"א

The later passage quotes this Zohar in full: the black locks are in the "lower beard" and the white hair in the "upper beard," and the Torah was given as black fire on white fire.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן ט, ב הלשון.

PARAGRAPH 7

38 ונתתם חמישית לפרעה

Yosef's instruction to the Egyptians to give a fifth of their produce to Pharaoh. Here the fifth is tzedakah, and "Paroh" is revelation.

בראשית מ"ז:כ"ד Genesis 47:24

וְהָיָה בְּתִבּוּאוֹת וְנִתְּתֶם חֲמִישִׁית לְפָרְעָה וְאַרְבַּע הָיְתָה לָכֶם לְזֶרַע הַשָּׂדֶה וְלֶאֱכֹלְכֶם וְלֶאֱשֹׁר בְּבִתְיֶיכֶם וְלֶאֱכֹל לְטַפְּכֶם:

And it shall come to pass at the ingatherings, that ye shall give a fifth unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית מז, כד.

39 כי פרעה אהרן

Said of the people after the Golden Calf, "for Aharon had exposed them." The word shows that the root of Paroh means uncovering.

שמות ל"ב:כ"ה Exodus 32:25

וַיֵּרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם כִּי פָרַע הוּא כִּי־פָרְעָה אֶהְרֹן לְשִׁמְצָה בְּקִמְיָהֶם:

And when Moses saw that the people were broken loose—for Aaron had let them loose for a derision among their enemies—

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות לב, כה.

40 אשרי מי שבא לכאן ותלמודו בידו

The Talmud's saying about entering the World to Come with one's learning in hand. The Alter Rebbe reads "in hand" as the Torah truly absorbed in the soul.

פסחים נ"א:ח'-ח"א Pesachim 50a:7-8

וְשִׁמְעָתִי שֶׁהָיוּ אוֹמְרִים: אֲשֶׁרִי מִי שֶׁבָּא לְכָאן וְתַלְמוּדוֹ בְּיָדוֹ. וְשִׁמְעָתִי שֶׁהָיוּ אוֹמְרִים: הָרוּגִי מַלְכוּת אֵין אָדָם יָכוֹל לַעֲמוּד בְּמַחֲצֵתוֹ. (וימאן) נִינְהוּ? אֵילִימָא רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא וְחִבְרִי — מְשׁוּם הָרוּגִי מַלְכוּת וְתוּ לָא? אֶלָּא: הָרוּגִי לֹוד.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

פסחים נ, א. וש"נ.

41 ונתתם חמישית לפרעה

A later maamar in Likkutei Torah on Shir HaShirim also interprets the verse "you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh." The note points there and to the further places cited there.

KEHOT'S NOTE

עלי"ק (כד, ד). וש"נ. [כ].

42 שער ל"א פי"ז

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

בדפוס שקלאוו תק"ס. לפנינו הוא שי ל"ב. [כ].

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

43 עמ"ש על פסוק זה בע"ח (שער ל"א פי"ז)

The text refers to the Arizal's Etz Chaim on this verse; the Kehot note explains that the sha'ar numbered 31 in the Shklov printing is Sha'ar 32 in current editions.

Sefer Etz Chaim 32:7ז"ז: עץ חיים

... והענין (הוא) כי יד דא"א ירדה למטה ברחם יסוד אמא והנה ימין כלולה בשמאל ושמאל בימין וכמו שה' אצבעות יד שמאלי דא"א הם ה"ג כ ה' אצבעות יד ימין הם ה"ג והם סוד ה' אותיות מנצפ"ך שהם כפולות ואלו נתתו שם ברחם יסוד אמא ומהם נעשה הכלי של יסוד דאמא להעלות מ"ג שבהם אמנם ד' הידות האחרים של או"א יהיה לכם. והנה ע"ד שביארנו פסוק זה למעלה באמא יפורש ג"כ למטה בנוקבא דו"א כי הנה ה' ידות הם והם יד א' של אמא כלולה משתי ידות כאחד ונעשה כלי ...

Sefer Etz Chaim (Public Domain)

44 וארבע הידות יהי לכם

The words here quote Genesis 47:24; the passage is shown below.

בראשית מ"ז:כ"ד Genesis 47:24

וְהָיָה בְּתִבּוּאוֹת וְנִתְּתֶם חֲמִישִׁית לְפָרְעָה וְאַרְבַּע הָיְתָה לָכֶם לְזֶרַע הַשָּׂדֶה וְלֶאֱכֹלְכֶם וְלֶאֱשֹׁר בְּבִתְיֶיכֶם וְלֶאֱכֹל לְטַפְּכֶם:

And it shall come to pass at the ingatherings, that ye shall give a fifth unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.'

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית מז, כד.

45 וירא ישראל את היד הגדולה

Israel saw the great hand at the sea. Here the "great hand" is G-d's kindness reaching even into Egypt, the lowest level.

שמות י"ד:ל"א Exodus 14:31

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֵּרְאוּ הָעָם אֶת־ה' וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּיָד יְהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עָבָדוּ:

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

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שמות יד, לא.

PARAGRAPH 8

46 שלאום מלאום יאמץ

Rivkah is told that of the two nations in her womb, one will grow strong from the other. Here it describes the balance of holiness and its opposite in a person.

בראשית כ"ה:23 Genesis 25:23

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' לָהּ שְׁנֵי גֹיִם בְּבֶטְנָהּ וְשֵׁנִי לְאֻמִּים מִמֶּנִּיהֶם יִפְרְדוּ וְלֵאמֹר מְלֹאֵם יִאָּמֵץ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר:

And the L-RD said unto her: Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; And the one people shall be stronger than the other people; And the elder shall serve the younger.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כה, כג.

47 וזה לעומת זה עשה אלקים

“G-d has made one opposite the other.” It teaches that every force of holiness has its counterpart.

Ecclesiastes 7:14: וְיָדָעְתָּ

ביום טובה יהיה בטוב וביום רעה ראה גם את־זה לעִמְת־זה עֲשֵׂה הָאֱלֹקִים עַל־דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹא יִמָּצֵא הָאָדָם אַחֲרָיו מְאוֹמָה:

In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider; G-d hath made even the one as well as the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

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48 ואלמלא הקב"ה עוזרו

The Talmud teaches that a person's evil inclination would overcome him were it not for G-d's help. Here that help is the “strong hand.”

Kiddushin 30b:7: קִידוּשִׁין לִי בִּי: בִּי: בִּי:

וְאָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן לֵוִי: יֵצְרוּ שֶׁל אָדָם מִתְגַּבֵּר עָלָיו בְּכָל יוֹם וּמִבְּקֵשׁ הַמִּיתוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר: “צוּפָה רָשָׁע לְצַדִּיק וּמִבְּקֵשׁ לְהַמִּיתוֹ”, וְאֵלֶּמָּלָה הַקְּדוּשָׁה בְּרוּךְ הוּא עֲזָרוֹ אֵין זָכוֹל לוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר: “אֱלֹקִים לֹא יַעֲזֹבֵנוּ בְּיָדוֹ”.

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

קידושין ל, ב.

49 ואהבת בכל לבבך

The command to love G-d with all one's heart, which the “high hand” helps a person fulfill.

Deuteronomy 6:5: דְּבָרִים ו': הֵ

וְאַהֲבַתְתָּ 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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50 וימינו תחבקני

“And His right hand embraces me.” Here it is the outstretched arm that reaches down to embrace the soul.

Song of Songs 2:6: שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ב': הֵ

שְׁמַאלוֹ תַּחַת לְרֹאשִׁי וַיְמִינוּ תַּחֲבֹקְנִי:

Let his left hand be under my head, And his right hand embrace me.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שה"ש ב, ו.

51 לזרע השדה

The four parts are to be “seed for the field.” The Alter

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

Rebbe reads it as the sowing that takes place in exile.

בראשית מ"ז: כ"ד: Genesis 47:24:

וְהָיָה בַּתְּבוּאוֹת וּנְתַתֶּם חֲמִישִׁית לַפֶּרֶעַ וְאַרְבַּע הַיֵּדֶת יִהְיֶה לָכֶם לְזֶרַע הַשָּׂדֶה וּלְאֹכְלֵכֶם וּלְאֶשֶׁר בְּבֵתֵיכֶם וּלְאֹכֵל לְטַפְכֶּם:

And it shall come to pass at the ingatherings, that ye shall give a fifth unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

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52 אור זרוע לצדיק

“Light is sown for the righteous.” It shows that in exile the light is only sown, to sprout in the future.

Psalms 97:11: תִּהְיִים צִדִּיק וְיִשְׁרִי־לֵב שִׂמְחָה:

אור זָרַע לְצַדִּיק וְלִישְׁרִי־לֵב שִׂמְחָה:

Light is sown for the righteous, And gladness for the upright in heart.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים צו, יא.

PARAGRAPH 9

53 ערבים עלי ד"ס יותר מיינה של תורה

The Talmud cites the same teaching that the words of the Scribes are dearer than the wine of the Torah.

Avodah Zarah 35a:6: עבודה זרה ל"ה א':

הַשִּׁיאֵו לְדָבָר אַחֵר וְכו'. מֵאֵי “כִּי טוֹבִים דְּדִיק מִיֵּינִי”? כִּי אֵתָא רַב דִּימִי אָמַר: אִמְרָה כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי הַקְּדוּשָׁה בְּרוּךְ הוּא: רַבּוֹנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, עֲרִיבִים עָלֵי דְבָרֵי דְדִיק יוֹתֵר מִיֵּינָהּ שֶׁל תוֹרָה.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

שהש"ר א ע"פ כי טובים (ד). וראה ע"ז לה, א. עי' מטות (פה ריש א). וש"נ. [כ].

54 ערבים עלי ד"ס יותר מיינה של תורה

The Midrash on “for your love is better than wine” says that the words of the Scribes are dearer than the wine of the Torah. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that the rabbinic words are higher than the Written Torah.

Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:2: שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים רַבָּה א': ב':

55 בשלשה דברים ברא הקב"ה את עולמו בספר וסופר וסיפור

The second discourse on “And you shall draw water with joy” explains sefer, sofer and sippur at length; the text here also refers to it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ס"י פ"א, מ"א. עי' ד"ה ושאתם הבי' [פ, ב] פ"ב. ועי' ציין אדמו"ר מסי' ציריה. [כ].

56 בשלשה דברים ברא הקב"ה את עולמו בספר וסופר וסיפור

Sefer Yetzirah opens by saying the world was created with thirty-two paths of wisdom, through sefer, sofer and sip-

pur. Here the three terms become the Written Torah, the Oral Torah and their revelation.

Sefer Yetzirah 1:1 א:א:א

בשלישם ושתים נתיבות פליאות חכמה חקק יה 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 (ספר); Sippur (ספור); and 3) Sapher ספר which are in Him one and the same.

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

57 נר מצוה ותורה אור
“A mitzvah is a lamp, and the Torah is light.” It gives the image of the Written Torah as light.

Proverbs 6:23 ויכ:כג

כי נר מצוה ותורה אור ודרך חיים תוכחות מוסר:

For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light, And reproofs of instruction are the way of life;

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי ו, כג.

58 ישת חשך סתרו
“He made darkness His hiding place.” Here the “darkness” is a level too high to be revealed, the source of the light.

Psalms 18:12 ויח:יב

לשתחשך סתרו סביבותיו סכתו חשכתמים עבי שחקים:

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

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59 כמאזויל זכרי עם ויה רמ"ח שמי עם ייה שס"ה
One of the Zohar passages, cited in the Kehot note, that counts “My Name” with Yud-Hei as 365 and “My remembrance” with Vav-Hei as 248, the numbers of the prohibitions and the positive commandments.

Zohar I, 24a זח"א כד, א

Zohar III, 110b זח"ג קי, ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

זח"א כד, א. רנג, א. זח"ג קי, ב. רכב, ב. רכח, ב. רעג, ב. רעה, ב. הקדמת תי"ז בתחלתה. ובתי"ז י"א פעמים (ד, ב, ה, א, י, יא, א, יח, א, כו, א, סד, א. פט, א. קו, ב. קס, ב. תו"ח קג, ג. קסו, ב. שם קח, ב.). [כ].

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

60 זכרי עם ויה רמ"ח שמי עם ייה שס"ה
“This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance.” The numerical reading of “My Name” and “My remembrance” is built on this verse.

שמות ג:ט"ו Exodus 3:15

ויאמר עוד אלקים אל־משה כה־תאמר אל־בני ישראל ה' אלקי אבותיכם אלקי אברהם אלקי יצחק ואלקיי יעקב שלחני אליכם זה־שמי לעלם וזה זכרי לדר דר:

And G-d said moreover unto Moses: “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: The L-RD, the G-d of your fathers, the G-d of Abraham, the G-d of Isaac, and the G-d of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations.

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61 רמ"ח פיקודין רמ"ח איברים דמלכא
Tanya explains that the G-dly soul's 613 “limbs” are clothed in the 613 mitzvos, and that love is the root of the 248 positive commandments, which are “the 248 limbs of the King.” It supports the picture here of the positive commandments as vessels for revealed light.

Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 30 • 74a:8 תקו"ז תיקון

ועוד מצווה דא עמודא דאמצעיטא, דאיהו מצווה מסטרא דאבא דאיהו ראש, ומסטרא דאימא דאיהו אש"ר, והכי צדיק מצווה ועושה מתרנייהו, ובגין דא אתמר על תרנייהו אשר קדשנו, אמא קדשנו ואבא צוננו, על מאן על שכינתא תתאה, דאיהו פטר כל רחם, פתיחו דרחם, דאיהו רמ"ח פקודין, איהו מצות יהויה בכל אבר ואבר דמלכא, איהו מצווה, ועוד אשר קדשנו מסטרא דאבא

Tikkunei Zohar - Vocalized (Public Domain)

תניא, חלק ראשון; ליקוטי אמרים ד:ג:3 Tanya, Likkutei Amarim
כי האהבה היא שרש כל רמ"ח מצות עשה, וממנה הן נמשכות, ובלעדה אין להן קיום אמתי, כי המקומן באמת הוא האוהב את שם ה' והפז לזדקוה בו באמת, ואי אפשר לזדקוה בו באמת, כי אם בקיום רמ"ח פקודין, שהם רמ"ח אברין דמלכא כבכול, כמו שכתוב במקום אחר. והיחאה היא שרש לשס"ה לא תעשה, כי ירא למרוד במלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש־ברוך־הוא.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה תי"ז תי"ל. וראה תניא פ"ד ובליקוט פירושים ומ"מ — חסידים שם.

62 ואתה משמרה בקרבי
From the morning blessing over the soul: “You guard it within me.” Here it describes the light of the prohibitions, present in the soul only in a hidden way.

Berachot 60b:4 ברכות סי ב:ד

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

When he awakens he says : "O my G-d, the soul which Thou hast given me is pure. Thou didst create it within me, Thou

didst breathe it into me, Thou preservest it within me, and Thou wilt take it from me, but wilt restore it unto me here-after. So long as the soul is within me, I will give thanks unto Thee, O L-rd my G-d and G-d of my fathers, Sovereign of all worlds, L-rd of all souls. Blessed art Thou, O L-rd, Who restorest souls unto dead ...

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

63 בארץ לא זורעה
G-d recalls Israel following Him “in a land not sown.” The Alter Rebbe reads it as a land sown with “not,” the prohibitions.

ירמיהו ב:ב: Jeremiah 2:2

הָלֵךְ וְקִרְאתָ בְּאָזְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר ה' וְכָרְתִי לָךְ חֶסֶד נְעוּרֶיךָ אֶהְבֶּת בְּלוֹלְתֶיךָ לְכַתֵּךְ אַחֲרֵי בְּמִדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא זְרוּעָה:

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

ע"פ ירמיה ב, ב.

PARAGRAPH 10

64 יערה עליו רוח ממרום
Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיה (לב, טז).

65 יערה עליו רוח ממרום
“Until a spirit from on high is poured upon us.” Here it describes the surrounding light resting in the soul through the prohibitions.

ישעיהו ל"ב:ט"ו Isaiah 32:15

עַד־יַעֲרָה עָלֵינוּ רוּחַ מִמְרוֹם וְהָיָה מְדִבָּר לְכַרְמָל וְהַכְרָמָל לֵיעֵר יִשְׁבֹּב:

Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, And the wilderness become a fruitful field, And the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

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66 והאופנים ינשאו לעומתם
In Ezekiel's vision the wheels (ofanim) rise alongside the living creatures. The Alter Rebbe reads it as the ofanim rising even above the seraphim.

יחזקאל א:כ"ז Ezekiel 1:20

עַל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה־שָׁם הָרוּחַ לִלְכֹת יִלְכוּ שָׁמָּה הָרוּחַ לִלְכֹת וְהָאֹפָנִים יִנָּשְׂאוּ לְעִמָּתָם כִּי רוּחַ הַחַיָּה בְּאֹפָנִים:

Whithersoever the spirit was to go, as the spirit was to go thither, so they went; and the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

יחזקאל א, כ.

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

67 אות היא בצבא דילי
A maamar in Parshas Haazinu also explains the teaching “He is a sign among His host.” The note points there as a parallel.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ע' האזינו (עד ריש ד'). וש"נ. [כ].

68 הוי צבאות אות היא בצבא דילי
The Talmud interprets the Name Tzevakos as “He is a sign among His host.” Here os is also a letter, from which all the hosts receive life.

חגיגה ט"ז א:ג-ד Chagigah 16a:3-4

וְרִישׁ לְקִישׁ אָמַר: "ה' צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ" — אָדוֹן הוּא בְּצָבָא שְׁלוֹ. וְרַבִּי חֲזִיא בַר אֲבָא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: "לֹא כְרוּחַ ה' וְאַחֲרֵי הָרוּחַ רָעַשׁ לֹא כָרַעַשׁ ה'. וְאַחֲרֵי הָרַעַשׁ אֵשׁ לֹא כָאֵשׁ ה' וְאַחֲרֵי הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּמָמָה דִּקְחָה", "וְהִנֵּה ה' עוֹבֵר".

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

69 אלף אלפים ורבוא רבבן
The thousands of thousands and myriads of angels in Daniel's vision, cited here as the number of a single troop.

דניאל ז:י"ד Daniel 7:10

נָהָר דִּי־נִנּוּר נִגַּד וְנָפַק מִן־קְדְמוּהֵי אֵלָּף אֵלָּפִין וְשִׁמְשׁוּנָה וְרַבּוּ רַבְּבָן קְדְמוּהֵי יְקוּמוּן דִּינָא יִתְבּ וְסִפְרִין פְּתִיחוּ:

A fiery stream issued And came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, And ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; The judgment was set, And the books were opened.

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70 ולגודיו אין מספר
The Talmud's discussion of the countless troops of angels.

חגיגה י"ג ב:י"ג Chagigah 13b:13

תְּנִינָא, רַבִּי אוֹמַר מִשּׁוּם אֲבָא יוֹסִי בֶן דּוּסָא: "אֵלָּף אֵלָּפִין וְשִׁמְשׁוּנָה" — מִסְפֵּר גָּדוֹד אֲחָד, "וּלְגִדּוּדֵי אֵין מִסְפֵּר". וְרַבִּי יְרֵמְיָה בַר אֲבָא אָמַר: "אֵלָּף אֵלָּפִין וְשִׁמְשׁוּנָה", לְנֶהָר דִּינִינּוּר, שְׁנֶאֱמַר: "נֶהָר דִּינִינּוּר נִגַּד וְנָפַק מִן קְדְמוּהֵי אֵלָּף אֵלָּפִין וְשִׁמְשׁוּנָה וְרַבּוּ רַבְּבָן קְדְמוּהֵי יְקוּמוּן".

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71 מלא כל הארץ כבודו
The seraphim's call, “the whole earth is full of His glory.” Here “glory” is only an outer radiance of G-d.

ישעיהו ו:ג: Isaiah 6:3

וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל־זֶה וְאָמַר קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ ה' צְבָאוֹת מְלֵא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:

And one called unto another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, is the L-RD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ישעיה ו, ג.

72 אין כבוד אלא תורה
Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

אבות פ"ו, מ"ג.

73

אין כבוד אלא תורה

"There is no glory but Torah." It identifies "His glory" in Isaiah's verse with the Torah.

משנה אבות ו:ג: Pirkei Avot 6:3

... וְהָלַא דְּכָרִים קַל וְחָמֵר, וּמִה דְּוֹד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁלֹּא לִמַּד מֵאַחֲתִּיפֵל אֶלָּא שְׁנֵי דְּכָרִים בְּלִבְד קָרְאוּ רַבּוּ אֱלוֹפּוּ וּמִיָּדְעוּ, הִלּוּמִד מִחֲבֵרוּ פֶּרֶק אֶחָד אוֹ הִלְכָה אֶחָת אוֹ פֶּסוּק אֶחָד אוֹ דְּבוּר אֶחָד אוֹ אֶפְלוּ אוֹת אֶחָת, עַל אֶחָת פֶּמָּה וְכִמְה שְׁפָרִיף לְנִהוּג בּוּ כְבוֹד. וְאִין כְּבוֹד אֶלָּא תוֹרָה, שְׁנֶאֱמַר (משלי ג) כְּבוֹד חֲכָמִים יִנְחֵלוּ, (משלי כח) וְתַמִּימִים יִנְחֵלוּ טוֹב, וְאִין טוֹב אֶלָּא תוֹרָה, שְׁנֶאֱמַר (משלי ד) כִּי לֶקַח טוֹב נִתְּתִי לָכֶם תּוֹרָתִי אֵל תַּעֲזוּבוּ:

One who learns from his fellow one chapter, or one halakhah, or one verse, or one word, or even one letter, is obligated to treat him with honor; for so we find with David, king of Israel, who learned from Ahitophel no more than two things, yet called him his master, his guide and his beloved friend, as it is said, "But it was you, a man mine equal, my guide and my beloved friend" (Psalms 55:14). Is this not [an instance of the argument] "from the less to the ...

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74

ל"ב נתיבות החכמה

Sefer Yetzirah speaks of the thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom. Here they describe the Torah as "His glory."

ספר יצירה א:א:1 Sefer Yetzirah 1:1

בשלשים ושתים נתיבות פליאות חכמה חקק יי' 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 (ספר; and 3) Sapher ספר 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)

PARAGRAPH 11

75

לא ברעש הי

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

מ"א יט, יא.

76

לא ברעש הי

G-d was not in the noise that passed before Eliyahu. Here the noise is the ofanim's tumult, which leads to something higher.

I Kings 19:11 מלכים א י"ט:יא

וַיֹּאמֶר צָא וְעִמְדָתָ בְּהָר לִפְנֵי ה' וְהָנָה ה' עֹבֵר וְרוּחַ גְּדוּלָּה וְחֹזֶק מִפְּרֶק הָרִים וּמִשְׁבַּר סְלָעִים לִפְנֵי ה' לֹא כְרוּחַ ה' וְאַחֲרֵי הָרוּחַ רָעַשׁ לֹא בְּרַעַשׁ ה'

שחורה אני ונאווה בנות ירושלים כאהלי קדר כיריעות שלמה

And He said: 'Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the L-RD.' And, behold, the L-RD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the L-RD; but the L-RD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the L-RD was not in the earthquake;

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77

ואחר הרעש אש

"And after the noise, fire." The fire becomes the soul's burning thirst for G-d.

I Kings 19:12 מלכים א י"ט:יב

וְאַחֲרֵי הָרַעַשׁ אֵשׁ לֹא כָּאֵשׁ ה' וְאַחֲרֵי הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּמָמָה דְּקָה:

and after the earthquake a fire; but the L-RD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

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78

את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא

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

KEHOT'S NOTE

ירמ"י (כג, כד).

79

את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא

"Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" The Alter Rebbe stresses the word "I": G-d's very self, the surrounding light.

Jeremiah 23:24 ירמיהו כ"ג:כ"ד

אִם-יִסְתֵּר אִישׁ בְּמִסְתָּרִים וְאֲנִי לֹא-אֶרְאֶנּוּ נְאֻם-ה' הֲלוֹא אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲנִי מְלֵא נְאֻם-ה'

Can any hide himself in secret places That I shall not see him? saith the L-RD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? Saith the L-RD.

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PARAGRAPH 12

80

צמאה לך נפשי . . כן בקודש

The words here quote Psalms 63:2; the passage is shown below.

Psalms 63:2 תהילים ס"ג:ב

אֱלֹקִים אֱלִי אַתָּה אֲשַׁתְּרֶךְ צִמְאֹה לִךְ נַפְשִׁי כִּמְה לִךְ בְּשָׂרִי בְּאֶרֶץ-צָרָה וְעֵנָה בְּלִי-מַיִם:

O G-d, Thou art my G-d, earnestly will I seek Thee; My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee, In a dry and weary land, where no water is.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים סג, ב-ג.

surrounding light is received.

Jeremiah 2:2 ב'י:יחמיהו

הָלַךְ וְקָרָאתָ בְּאָזְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר ה' זָכַרְתִּי לְךָ חֶסֶד נְעוּרַיִךְ
אֶהְבֶּתָּ כְּלוּלְתִּיךָ לְכַתֵּם אַחֲרֵי בְּמִדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא זָרְעָה:

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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91 **וע' בפ' בראשית דמ"ט סע"א**

The Tzemach Tzedek's commentary on the Zohar discusses this Zohar passage, which reads the "rib" of Chavah as "I am black, yet comely." The note points there for the explanation.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בזח"א. דשם מבאר דענין הצלע זהו בחינת שחורה אני ונאווה. ראה ביאווה"צ להצ"צ כרך א ע' תקב. וראה גם ד"ה מן המיצר תר"ס ע' א.

92 **וע' בפ' בראשית דמ"ט סע"א**

According to the Kehot note, the Zohar here explains that the "rib" from which Chavah was built is the level of "I am black, yet comely."

ספר הזהר, בראשית פ':ר"ז-פ"ב:רט"ו 82:207-80:215 Zohar, Bereshit

93 **ובסה"מ סי' קלז**

The note observes that the wording of this reference ("S.H.M., section 137") is copied in the Tzemach Tzedek's Biurei HaZohar.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הלשון נעתק בביאווה"צ להצ"צ כרך א ע' תקב. סה"מ תר"ס ע' א.

94 **ובפ' שמות י"ד א'**

A passage of the Zohar in Parshas Shemos, cited in the text's closing parenthesis.

ספר הזהר, שמות כ"ד:רל"א-כ"ה:רמ"מ 240:240-231:24 Zohar, Shemot

95 **ובפ' אחרי דנ"ט ב'**

A passage of the Zohar in Parshas Acharei, cited in the closing parenthesis.

ספר הזהר, אחרי מות ט':נ"ח-ט"ז 67:58-9 Zohar, Achrei Mot



Likkutei Torah

THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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The Rebbe asked that the maamarim of the week's parsha, the "Chassidishe Parsha," be learned during that week, spread over its seven days (Sichah of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel 5725 · Toras Menachem vol. 42, pp. 306-309). Why learn it, and the Rebbe's brachos: likuteitorah.com/about/the-chassidishe-parsha/

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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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