



LIKKUTEI TORAH • PARSHAS TAZRIA • MAAMAR 1

אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר כו'

“When a Woman Emits Seed
and Gives Birth to a Male”



Every attribute contains its opposite, and union comes about through what each partner holds of the other: the father gives from the Gevurah within his Chesed, the mother from the Chesed within her Gevurah. So when the woman's seed comes first, the bestowal that leads is Chesed and the child is male, just as the verse says: “When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male.”

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

Every attribute contains its opposite, and union comes about through what each partner holds of the other: the father gives from the Gevurah within his Chesed, the mother from the Chesed within her Gevurah. So when the woman's seed comes first, the bestowal that leads is Chesed and the child is male, just as the verse says: "When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male."

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 Talmud teaches that when the woman emits seed first she gives birth to a male. The philosophers explained this mechanically: the man's seed then comes last, and "the upper one prevails." The Alter Rebbe rejects this as a strain on the words: the verse, the Talmud's proof from Leah's children and the Midrash all imply that the male comes from the woman's own seed. In truth, the male is Chesed and the female Gevurah. But how can one child be formed from both, when Chesed and Gevurah are opposites, like water and fire? Because each of the ten Sefiros contains all of them, as in the counting of the Omer. A father who disciplines his son out of love shows Gevurah within Chesed; a mother whose indulgence does her son no good shows Chesed within Gevurah. In union the father gives from his Gevurah and the mother from her Chesed, and so they can join. When her bestowal leads, it is Chesed, and she bears a male; when his leads, it is Gevurah, and she bears a female. In Kabbalistic terms, the male is from the Name Mah and the female from Ban, each containing the other.

OUTLINE

1 The rule and the philosophers

¶1

The verse and the Talmud's rule that when the woman emits seed first she bears a male; the philosophers' explanation, that the man's later seed prevails, rejected as a strain on the words; proofs from Dinah and from the Midrash that the male comes from the woman's seed; the male is Chesed ("He remembered His kindness"), the female Gevurah, as Sarah and the Sages' sayings about her show.

2 Each attribute contains the other

¶2-3

The child is formed from the father's white and the mother's red, Chesed and Gevurah, opposites like water and fire; they can combine because each of the ten Sefiros includes all of them, as in the counting of the Omer; a father's loving discipline is Gevurah within Chesed, a mother's indulgence Chesed within Gevurah.

3 Union and the child

¶4-5

In union the father gives from his Gevurah and the mother from her Chesed, which is why they can join; so when the woman's seed comes first her Chesed leads and she bears a male, and the verse reads plainly; the same in Kabbalistic terms, the Names Mah and Ban, each including the other; see the Zohar on Tazria.

KEY CONCEPTS

Chesed and Gevurah חסד וגבורה

Kindness and restraint, the expansive and the limiting attributes. Here the male is Chesed and the female Gevurah, opposites like water and fire.

Each Sefirah comprises all of them הי"ס כלולים כל א' מהן מכולן

Each of the ten Sefiros contains all ten, so there is a Gevurah within Chesed and a Chesed within Gevurah, as the seven-times-seven days of the Omer count show.

Gevurah within Chesed גבורה שבחסד

Severity that comes from love, like a father who disciplines his son so that he will return to G-d and to His Torah.

Chesed within Gevurah חסד שבגבורה

Kindness in form that is not truly good, like a mother's indulgence that does her son no good at all.

"A woman emits seed first" אשה מזרעת תחלה

The Talmud's rule that the child is male when the woman's seed comes first. The maamar explains that her bestowal is from the Chesed within her, and Chesed is male.

The Names Mah and Ban שם מ"ה ושם ב"ן

Two ways of spelling out the Name Havayah, with the numerical values 45 and 52. In Kabbalah the male is drawn from Mah and the female from Ban, and each includes the other.

SECTION 1 • 11

The rule and the philosophers

1 אשה כי תזריע^{1,2} וילדה זכר^{3,4} כו'. וארז"ל [ואמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] (בברכות ד"ס ע"א נדה דל"א א') אשה מזרעת תחלה יולדת זכר⁵ כו'

“When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male,” etc. And our Sages, of blessed memory, said (in Berachos, folio 60a; Niddah, folio 31a): “If the woman emits seed first, she gives birth to a male,” etc.

The maamar opens with the law of a mother after childbirth, “When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male” (Leviticus 12:2), and the Sages’ teaching on it (Berachos 60a; Niddah 31a): if the woman emits seed first, the child is a male. In the plain sense tazria means “conceives”; the Sages read it as “emits seed,” and the maamar sets out to explain why the woman’s seeding should bring a male. Later in this parsha, in the discourse beginning “Sos tasis” (Likkutei Torah, Tazria 20b), the Alter Rebbe applies the same rule to a person’s service of G-d.

וזה פלאי, והפלסופים נדחקו⁶ ליישב כי לפי שאשה מזרעת תחלה הרי טפת הזכר באה באחרונה ועילאה גבר. משא"כ אם האיש מזריע תחלה⁷ כו'.

This is a wonder, and the philosophers strained to resolve it: since the woman emits seed first, the drop of the male comes last, and “the upper one prevails”; whereas if the man emits seed first, etc.

The philosophers explained the rule mechanically: if the woman emits seed first, the man’s seed comes after it and lies “above,” and the upper, later seed prevails, so the child takes after the man and is male; if the man emits seed first, the woman’s seed comes last and the child is female. A Kehot note quotes the Rebbe (Likkutei Sichos, vol. 17, p. 155, note 59): this explanation too has its place, since great Torah authorities brought it, but in Tazria, a parsha that stresses man’s own service, the male child is felt to come from the woman’s side, the Community of Israel.

ואמנם באמת הוא דוחק גדול⁸ כפי' לשון אשה מזרעת תחלה דמשמע שממנה דוקא בא הזרעת הזכר ולא ע"י שהזכר מזריע לבסוף כו'.

But in truth this is a great strain in explaining the words “a woman emits seed first,” for they imply that the seeding of the male [child] comes specifically from her, and not through the male’s emitting seed last, etc.

The Alter Rebbe objects that this forces the words. “A woman emits seed first” suggests that the male comes from her own seed, not that her seeding merely comes first so that the man’s later seed can decide the matter.

ועוד דארז"ל [דאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] ספ"ג [סוף פרק ג'] דנדה גבי דינה כתיב בתו.⁹ בתו של יעקב וגבי השבטים כתיב בני לאה כי אשה מזרעת תחלה כו'

Moreover, our Sages, of blessed memory, said at the end of chapter 3 of Niddah that regarding Dinah it is written "his daughter," the daughter of Yaakov, and regarding the tribes it is written "the sons of Leah," because the woman emits seed first, etc.

A second proof comes from the Gemara at the end of the third chapter of Niddah (31a), on the verse that lists the children Leah bore (Genesis 46:15). There the sons are called "the sons of Leah," after their mother, while Dinah is called "his daughter," Yaakov's, and the Gemara explains this by the same rule: the woman emitted seed first.

א"כ משמע שמזרע האשה דוקא נולד הזכר וד"ל [ודי למבין]. (וכ"ה במדרש רבה תזריע ס"פ י"ד הזכר מן האשה¹⁰ כו' ע"ש).

If so, this implies that the male is born specifically from the woman's seed; and this suffices for one who understands. (And so it is in the Midrash Rabbah on Tazria, at the end of section 14: "The male is from the woman," etc.; see there.)

If the sons are ascribed to Leah because she emitted seed first, then the male comes from the woman's own seed, not merely from her seed coming first. The parenthesis adds the Midrash Rabbah on Tazria (Vayikra Rabbah 14:9), which says outright that the female is always from the man and the male from the woman.

והענין כי הזכר¹¹ הוא בחי' חסד כדכתיב זכר חסדו¹² ונקבה היא בחי' גבורה דינא דמלכותא דינא^{13,14} וכמארז"ל [וכמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] על שרה¹⁵ אמנו שבשעה שבשרוה המלאכים שעתידה שתלד בן זכר פירסה נדה בחי' גבורות,

The explanation is that the male is the level of Chesed (kindness), as it is written, "He remembered [zachar, which also means 'male'] His kindness"; and the female is the level of Gevurah (restraint): "the law of the kingdom is law" (dina demalchusa dina). And as our Sages, of blessed memory, said about Sarah our mother, that at the time the angels brought her the tidings that she was to bear a male son, she became a niddah: the level of Gevuros.

Now the inner explanation: the male is Chesed, giving that flows outward, as in "He remembered His kindness," where zachar, "remembered," is also the word for "male"; the Tzemach Tzedek (Derech Mitzvosecha, Shoresch Mitzvas HaTefillah, ch. 40) explains this verse as supernal Chesed drawn down to give the souls a great love for G-d, a love called "male." The female is Gevurah, measure and judgment, as in Shmuel's rule "the law of the kingdom is law," read here as saying that the kingdom, Malchus, the feminine attribute, is din, judgment. The Sages also relate that Sarah became a niddah, beginning her menstrual period, on the very day the angels came to announce her son, and the Alter Rebbe sees in this the level of Gevuros, the severities.

וגם אמרו"ל [אמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] שאברהם צוה לתת להם סלת והיא נתנה קמח מכאן שאשה עיניה צרה באורחים והיינו לפי שהיא מבחינת גבורות.

Our Sages, of blessed memory, also said that Avraham commanded that they be given fine flour, and she gave flour: "From here [we learn] that a woman is begrudging toward guests." This is because she is from the level of Gevuros.

The Talmud (Bava Metzia 87a) notes that the verse says both "flour" and "fine flour" (Genesis 18:6), and learns that a woman is more begrudging toward guests than a man (literally, "her eye is narrow"); in the Alter Rebbe's telling, Avraham asked for fine flour and Sarah gave flour. He explains this by her root in the Gevuros, the attributes of measure and restraint.

SECTION 2 • ¶2-3

Each attribute contains the other

2 והנה בולד שניהם מזריעים וכמארו"ל [וכמאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה] לוכן מן האב שממנו עצמות וגידים ומוח כו' אדם מן האם¹⁶ שממנו עור ובשר כו',

Now, in a child both of them emit seed, as our Sages, of blessed memory, said: the white is from the father, from which [come] the bones, the sinews and the brain, etc.; the red is from the mother, from which [come] the skin and the flesh, etc.

The Alter Rebbe now turns to how a child is formed from both parents. The Talmud (Niddah 31a) teaches that the father supplies the "white," from which come the bones, sinews and brain, and the mother the "red," from which come the skin and flesh.

ולכאורה יפלא איך מתאחדים ב' השפעות אלו שהרי חו"ג [חסד וגבורה] הם ב' הפכים ומים מכבים אש.

Seemingly, it is a wonder how these two influences unite, since Chesed and Gevurah are two opposites, and water extinguishes fire.

This raises a difficulty: the father's contribution is Chesed and the mother's is Gevurah, and these are opposites: Chesed is likened to water and Gevurah to fire, and water puts out fire. The question is how two such opposite influences can combine in one child.

אך הענין כנודע שהי"ס [שהיי ספירות] כלולים כל א' מהן מכולן ויש בחסד חסד שבחסד וגבורה שבחסד ות"ת [ותפארת] שבחסד כו'

But the explanation is, as is known, that each one of the ten Sefiros is comprised of all of them: in Chesed there is Chesed within Chesed, Gevurah within Chesed and Tiferes (beauty) within Chesed, etc.;

The answer rests on a known principle: each of the ten Sefiros contains all ten within it. So Chesed is not Chesed alone; it includes a Chesed within Chesed, a Gevurah within Chesed, a Tiferes within Chesed, and so on.

וכן בגבורה יש חסד שבגבורה גבורה שבגבורה כו' וכמ"ש בענין ספירת העומר שהם ז' מדות וכל א' כלול מו'.

and likewise in Gevurah there is Chesed within Gevurah, Gevurah within Gevurah, etc. As is explained on the subject of the counting of the Omer: they are seven emotive attributes (middos), and each one is comprised of seven.

Gevurah likewise contains a Chesed within Gevurah and a Gevurah within Gevurah. The familiar example is the counting of the Omer: seven emotive attributes, each including all seven, make up its forty-nine days.

3 ועד"מ האב מכה בנו ומייסרו כשבט אנשים¹⁷ הרי הוא מחמת אהבה בשביל שישב לה' ובתורתו יהגה¹⁸ ואעפ"כ [ואף על פי כן] ההכאות הם יסורים ממש וה"ז [והרי זה] גבורה שבחסד ועד"ז נאמר את אשר יאהב¹⁹ ה' יוכיח.

By way of analogy: a father strikes his son and chastises him "with the rod of men." This is out of love, so that he will return to G-d and "meditate in His Torah"; nevertheless, the blows are real suffering. This is Gevurah within Chesed. And in the same vein it is said, "Whom Havayah loves He rebukes."

An example of Gevurah within Chesed: a father who strikes and disciplines his son does so out of love, so that the son will return to G-d and study His Torah, yet the blows truly hurt. The motive is Chesed while the act is Gevurah, and so it is with G-d: "Whom Havayah loves He rebukes," as a father rebukes the son he delights in (Proverbs 3:12).

ולהיפך חסד שבגבורה היינו האם שמשפעת לבנה כל טוב ומניקתו הרבה כו' ואין זה טובתו כלל.

Conversely, Chesed within Gevurah is the mother who bestows on her son every good thing and nurses him a great deal, etc., and this is not for his good at all.

The reverse, Chesed within Gevurah, is the mother, who is of Gevurah, yet lavishes every good thing on her son and nurses him a great deal. It is kindness in form, but it is not for his good at all.

SECTION 3 • ¶4-5

Union and the child

4 והנה ביחוד וזיווג האב משפיע מבחי' הגבורה שבו והאם שהיא מגבורה משפעת מבחי' החסד שבה

Now, in union and coupling, the father bestows from the level of the Gevurah within him, and the mother, who is from Gevurah, bestows from the level of the Chesed within her;

This explains how the parents' opposite natures can combine. In their union the father, who is Chesed, gives from the Gevurah within him, and the mother, who is Gevurah, gives from the Chesed within her.

ולכן יכולים להתחבר יחד אבל אילו היה האב משפיע מחסד שבחסד והנקבה מגבורה שבגבורה באמת לא היו מתחברים כלל.

and therefore they are able to join together. But if the father were to bestow from Chesed within Chesed, and the female from Gevurah within Gevurah, they truly would not join at all.

Because each gives from the element that matches the other's nature, the two can join. Pure Chesed (Chesed within Chesed) and pure Gevurah (Gevurah within Gevurah) would have nothing in common and could not join at all.

5 ומעתה יובן ג"כ ענין הנ"ל דאשה מזרעת תחלה יולדת זכר כו'

From this we will also understand the matter mentioned above, that "if the woman emits seed first, she gives birth to a male," etc.

This resolves the Sages' rule cited at the start, that when the woman emits seed first she gives birth to a male. The explanation follows from what was just shown: each parent gives from the attribute within that is the opposite of his or her own.

שהרי השפעתה הוא מבחי' חסד דוקא לכן יולדת זכר שהוא מחסד משא"כ איש מזריע תחלה הרי השפעתו מבחי' גבורה לכן יולדת נקבה.

For her bestowal is specifically from the level of Chesed; therefore she gives birth to a male, which is from Chesed. Whereas [when] the man emits seed first, his bestowal is from the level of Gevurah; therefore she gives birth to a female.

As paragraph 4 showed, the mother gives from the Chesed within her, so when her seed comes first, the bestowal that leads is Chesed, and Chesed is the male. When the man's seed comes first, the bestowal that leads is his, from the Gevurah within him, and Gevurah is the female, so she gives birth to a female.

וא"כ יהי' [יהיה] לשון הפסוק ניהא כפשוטו שאשה כי תזריע תלד²⁰ היא עיי' ממש זכר ולא כפי' הפלסופים מחמת שזרע הזכר בא לבסוף כו' שאין זה במשמע לשון הפסוק כלל.

If so, the wording of the verse will sit well according to its plain meaning: that "when a woman emits seed," she, through this itself, will give birth to a male; and not as the philosophers explained, because the male's seed comes last, etc., which is not implied by the wording of the verse at all.

Now the verse can be read just as it is worded: "when a woman emits seed," it is through her own seeding that she gives birth to a male. The philosophers' reading, that the man's later seed decides, is not what the verse says.

וע"פ קבלה הזכר הוא נמשך משם מ"ה [שם מ"ה] והנקבה משם ב"ן [שם ב"ן] (וכמשי"ל [וכמה שכתוב לעיל] סד"ה קול דודי בענין האבות והאמהות)

According to Kabbalah, the male is drawn from the Name Mah (45), and the female from the Name Ban (52) (as is written above, at the end of the discourse beginning "The voice of my beloved," on the subject of the Patriarchs and the Matriarchs).

The same idea is restated in the terms of Kabbalah. The Names Mah (45) and Ban (52) are two ways of spelling out the letters of the Name Havayah, named for their numerical values, and the male is drawn from Mah, the female from Ban. The parenthesis refers to the end of the discourse beginning "The voice of my beloved," where this is discussed in connection with the Patriarchs and the Matriarchs.

והנה מ"ה [שם מ"ה] כלול ג"כ מב"ן [משם ב"ן] וגם שם ב"ן [שם ב"ן] כלול ממ"ה [משם מ"ה] והשפעת הדכר הוא בחי' ב"ן [שם ב"ן] דמ"ה [דשם מ"ה] ולפי שהשפעה זו הוא בחי' שם ב"ן [שם ב"ן] לכן יולדת נקבה.

Now, Mah is also comprised of Ban, and the Name Ban is likewise comprised of Mah. The bestowal of the male is the level of Ban of Mah, and since this bestowal is the level of the Name Ban, therefore she gives birth to a female.

As with Chesed and Gevurah, each Name includes the other. What the man bestows is "Ban of Mah," the Ban within his Mah, and because it is of the Name Ban, the feminine, it results in a female, just as his bestowal from Gevurah did.

ואמנם אשה שהיא שם ב"ן [שם ב"ן] מזרעת ומשפעת בחי' מ"ה [שם מ"ה] הכלול בב"ן [בשם ב"ן]

However, the woman, who is the Name Ban, emits seed and bestows the level of Mah that is comprised within Ban.

The woman, who is herself the Name Ban, bestows the Mah contained within her Ban, just as she bestows from the Chesed within her Gevurah.

ולפי שהוא בחיי מ"ה [שם מ"ה] לכן יולדת זכר (ועיין מענין אשה כי תזריע^{21,22,23} בזח"ג [בזהר חלק ג] פ' תזריע מ"ב ב' מ"ג ב' מ"ה ב'): ²⁴

And since it is the level of Mah, therefore she gives birth to a male. (And see on the subject of “When a woman emits seed” in the Zohar, Part III, Parshas Tazria, 42b, 43b, 45b.)

Since her bestowal is of the Name Mah, the masculine, it results in a male. The parenthesis refers the reader to the Zohar on Tazria (Part III, 42b, 43b and 45b), which discusses this verse; in Likkutei Torah, Sh'lach (46a), the Alter Rebbe brings the same teaching for the raising of the feminine Gevuros, through which Israel become “males,” and there too points to the Zohar on Tazria.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the Alter Rebbe reject the philosophers' explanation, and what in the verse and in the Talmud shows that the male comes from the woman's own seed?
2. How can Chesed and Gevurah, opposites like water and fire, combine in one child?
3. What makes a father's discipline “Gevurah within Chesed” and a mother's indulgence “Chesed within Gevurah”?
4. Why could pure Chesed and pure Gevurah not unite, and what does each partner give that makes their union possible?
5. How does the Kabbalistic account through the Names Mah and Ban mirror the first explanation through Chesed and Gevurah?

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 אשה כי תזריע

The note lists four places in the Tzemach Tzedek's Or HaTorah on Tazria for further discussion of this verse.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה גם אור התורה תזריע ע"ס. ע"תצא. ע"תצו. ע"תתט.

2 אשה כי תזריע

In the later discourse beginning "Sos tasis" ("May the barren one rejoice and exult"), on 20b, the same rule is explained in terms of divine service: when the Community of Israel, the "woman," arouses itself first from below, a "male" is born, the great love (ahavah rabbah); when the arousal from above, the "man," comes first, only a "female," the lesser love, is born.

KEHOT'S NOTE

תזריע כ, ב.

3 Rabbi Yitzchak said in the name of Rabbi Ami: if the woman emits seed first she bears a male, and if the man emits seed first she bears a female, as it is said, "When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male." The Gemara adds that at first the Sages stated this without explaining it, until Rabbi Tzadok explained it from "These are the sons of Leah whom she bore to Yaakov in Paddan Aram, and Dinah his daughter": the verse ascribes the males to the female and the females to the male. The Alter Rebbe takes this as proof that the male comes from the woman's own seed.

נדה ל"א:כ"ג:23a:31a:Niddah

אמר רבי יצחק, אמר רבי אמי: אשה מזורעת תחילה — יולדת זכר, איש מזורע תחילה — יולדת נקבה, שנאמר: "אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר".

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

4 G-d tells Moshe the law of a mother after birth: "When a woman conceives (tazria) and gives birth to a male, she shall be impure seven days." In the plain sense tazria is "conceives"; the Sages read it as "emits seed," and the maamar takes that reading at its word: the male is born through the woman's own seeding.

ויקרא י"ב:2:Leviticus 12:2

דבר אל־בני ישראל לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר וטמאה שבעת ימים כימי נדת דותה תטמא:

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying: If a woman be delivered, and bear a man-child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of the impurity of her sickness shall she be unclean.

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

5 Rav Yitzchak, son of Rav Ami, teaches: if the man emits seed first she bears a female, and if the woman emits seed first she bears a male, as it is said, "When a woman emits

seed and gives birth to a male." The Gemara brings it in asking whether prayer can still affect a child's gender.

ברכות ס"א:י"ד:60a:Berachot

ומי מהני רחמי? והאמר רב יצחק בריה דרב אמי: איש מזורע תחלה — יולדת נקבה, אשה מזורעת תחלה — יולדת זכר. שנאמר: "אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר"! הקא במאי עסקינן — כגון שהזריעו שניהם בבת אחת.

But is it of any avail to pray [during the first forty days that it should be a male child]? For lo, R. Isaac b. R. Ammi has said : If it is the man who first emits seed his wife bears a daughter ; but if the woman first emits seed she gives birth to a son ; as it is said, "If a woman emits seed and bare a male child" (Lev. xii. 2)! With what are we here dealing ? For instance, if they both emit seed ...

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6 והפלוסופים נדחקו

On the words "the philosophers strained," the note first sends the reader to the Rebbe's note on 19a, earlier in these Notes and References.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה הערת כ"ק אדמו"ר לעיל בהערות וציגונים יט, א. באוה"ת פ' תזריע: (א) שיש עוד פ"ע ד' חכ' הטבע (מעין פילוסופים) — הובא בבחי' כאן — וגם הוא מבואר ע"פ דא"ח. (ב) ביאור מרז"ל (נדה עא, ג. תקו"ז תכ"א) דאשה מזרעת תחלה — הוא ע"י שמששה עצמו כו, עבודתו (עד שמקבל שכר ע"י) ונאמר ע"י לעשות בניו זכרים. — ולכאורה זהו ענין חדש (שגולד זכר — בתור שחר). — לקויש ח"י"ב ע"פ 70 ע"ש בארוכה. ובד"ה אשה כי תזריע — תשכ"ה (נדפס בסה"מ מלוקט-ג ע"פ צא ואילך). ובמאמרי אדה"א דרושי חתונה כרך-א ע"פ רכא נתבאר בארוכה.

7 Kehot's note points to Niddah 31a:24 for these words.

נדה ל"א:כ"ד:24a:31a:Niddah

תנו רבנן: בראשונה היו אומרים — אשה מזורעת תחילה יולדת זכר, איש מזורע תחלה יולדת נקבה, ולא פירשו חכמים את הדבר, עד שבא רבי צדוק ופירשו: "אלה בני לאה אשר ילדה לעקב בפדן ארם ואת דינה בתו" — תלה הזכרים בנקבות ונקבות בזכרים.

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8 אשה מזרעת תחלה . . ועילאה גבר . . הוא דוחק גדול

The note quotes Likkutei Sichos: the philosophers' explanation also has its place, since great Torah authorities brought it (as vol. 12, p. 70 ff., explains at length).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקויש ח"י"ב ע"פ 155 הערה 59 — "[אף שפשוט שגם פירוש זה יש לו מקום מכיון שהובא ע"י גדולי ישראל כמשנ"ת בארוכה — לקויש ח"י"ב ע"פ 70 ואילך]. — כי בפי תוריע, שבה מודגשת מעלת העבודה (אתעדל"ת), נרגש שהענין ד"יולדת זכר" הוא (לא מצד האיש — הקב"ה (עילאה גבר) — כ"א) מצד האשה, כנסיי".

9

גבי דינה כתיב בתו

In the list of Yaakov's family who went down to Egypt, each mother's children are counted together: "These are the sons of Leah whom she bore to Yaakov in Paddan Aram, and Dinah his daughter." The sons are named after Leah, while Dinah is called Yaakov's daughter.

בראשית מ"ו:ט"ו: Genesis 46:15

אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי לֵאָה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב בְּפָדָן אֲרָם וְאֵת דִּינָה בְּתוּ כְּלִנְפֹשׁ בְּנֵי וּבָנוּתֶיהָ שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁלֹשׁ:

These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore unto Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah; all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית מו, טו.

10

הזכר מן האשה

The Midrash teaches that the female is always from the man and the male from the woman, proving the latter from verses that link sons to their mothers and concluding, "as it is written, 'When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male'"; for the female from the man it cites, among others, "and Dinah his daughter." The parenthesis brings it as further support for the plain reading.

ויקרא רבה י"ד:ט"ז: Vayikra Rabbah 14:9

11

והענין כי הזכר

The note records that a passage beginning with these words is quoted in Pelach HaRimon on Parshas Shmini.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן מובא בספר פלח הרמון לפי שמיני [מוכן לדפוס].

12

זכר חסדו

The psalmist calls for a new song to G-d, who has made His salvation known: "He remembered His kindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our G-d." Since zachar, "remembered," is also the word for "male," the Alter Rebbe reads the verse as linking the male with Chesed.

תהילים צ"ח:ג: Psalms 98:3

זָכַר חֲסִדּוֹ וְאֱמוּנָתוֹ לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל רְאוּ כָּל-אֶפְסֵי-אָרֶץ אֵת יְשׁוּעָתוֹ: אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

He hath remembered His mercy and His faithfulness toward the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our G-d.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים צח, ג. נתבאר ברשר מצות התפילה פרק מ"פ" שנמשך מלמעלה גילוי חסד עליון שיהי אהבה גדולה בנשיי שבגופים לה' ית' שבח"י אהבה עליונה זו נקי לשון זכר". וכ"ה במאמרי דרושי חתונה שם עי' שיו "שגולדה בחי" אהבה בכל נשיי עיי' בחי' המשכת אתעדל"ע שנמשך אחר אתעדל"ת אשר הוא נקי בשם זכר".

13

דינא דמלכותא דינא

Shmuel's rule "the law of the kingdom is law" is cited here too, in the discussion of customs collectors. The maamar uses its words to show that the feminine, Malchus, is din, judgment.

גיטין י"א:א Gittin 10a

בבא קמא קי"ג א:י"ד-ט"ז: Bava Kamma 113a:14-16

ומוקסין. והאמר שמואל: דינא דמלכותא דינא! אמר רבי חנינא בר קהנא אמר שמואל: במוכס שאין לו קצבה. דבי רבי ינאי אמרי: במוכס העומד מאליו. איכא דמתני לה אהא: לא ילבש אדם כלאים אפילו על גבי עשרה בגדים, להביריח בו את המכס. מתניתין דלא קרבי עקיבא. דתנא: אסור להביריח את המכס. רבי שמעון אומר משום רבי עקיבא: מותר להביריח את המכס.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

גיטין י, א. ב"ק קיג, א.

14

דינא דמלכותא דינא

The Gemara asks how a gift can be acquired through a deed drawn up in a gentile court, and answers with Shmuel's rule, "the law of the kingdom is law": the law of the government is binding. The Alter Rebbe reads the words as a hint that the feminine, Malchus, is din, judgment, the level of Gevurah. (Kehot: Gittin 10a)

גיטין י"ב:י"ב-י"ד: Gittin 10b:12-14

אֵלֶּה מִתְּנָה, בְּמֵאֵי קָא קִנִּי - לָאוּ בְּהֵא שְׁטָרָא? וְהֵא שְׁטָרָא חֲסָפָא בְּעֵלְמָא הוּא! אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: דִּינָא דְּמַלְכוּתָא - דִּינָא. וְאִיבְעִית אִימָא, תְּנִי "חוּץ מִכְּגִיטֵי נָשִׁים". רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אֹמֵר: אִף אֱלוֹ, כְּשִׁירִין וְכוּ: וְהֵא לָאוּ בְּנֵי כְּרִיתוֹת נִינְהוּ?

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15

על שרה שבשעה שברורה

The Gemara explains why Avraham served the angels no bread, though he had asked Sarah to bake cakes: he ate even ordinary food in ritual purity, and that day Sarah our mother became a niddah. On the same visit it notes that the verse says both "flour" and "fine flour," and Rabbi Yitzchak learns that a woman is more begrudging toward guests than a man. The Alter Rebbe cites both as signs that the woman is of the level of Gevuros.

בבא מציעא פ"א:י"ג: Bava Metzia 87a:13

מָה עָשָׂה אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ - הִלָּל וְזִימֵן כָּל גְּדוּלֵי הַדּוֹר, וְשָׂרָה אֲמִנוּ וְזִמְנָה אֶת נִשְׁוֹתֵיהֶם. וְכָל אַחַת וְאַחַת הִבִּיאָה בָּנָה עִמָּה, וּמִנִּיקְתָּהּ לֹא הִבִּיאָה, וְנִעְשָׂה גַם בְּשָׂרָה אֲמִנוּ וְנִפְתַּחוּ דְּדִיָּה כְּשֵׁנִי מַעֲיִנוֹת, וְהִנִּיקָה אֶת כּוֹלָן. וְעִידִין הֵיוּ מְרַנְּנִים וְאוֹמְרִים: "אִם שָׂרָה הִבִּית תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה תֵּלֵד, אַבְרָהָם כֵּן מָאָה שָׁנָה יוֹלִיד?" מִיֵּד נִהְפָּה קְלִסְתֵּר פָּנִים שֶׁל יִצְחָק וְנִדְמָה לְאַבְרָהָם, פִּתְחוּ כּוֹלָם וְאָמְרוּ: "אַבְרָהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת יִצְחָק".

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KEHOT'S NOTE

ב"מ פז, א.

PARAGRAPH 2

16 לובן מן האב . . אודם מן האם

“There are three partners in a person: the Holy One, blessed be He, his father and his mother. His father emits the white, from which come the bones, the sinews, the nails, the brain in his head and the white of the eye; his mother emits the red, from which come the skin, the flesh, the hair and the black of the eye.” The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that both parents contribute to the child.

נדה ל"א א:ט:9 Niddah 31a:

תנו רבנן: שלשה שותפין יש באדם — הקדוש ברוך הוא, ואביו, ואמו. אביו מזריע הלובן, שממנו עצמות, וגידים, וצפרנים, ומוח שבראשו, ולובן שקעין. אמו מזרעת אודם, שממנו עור, וכשר, ושערות, ושחור שקעין. והקדוש ברוך הוא נותן בו רוח, ונשמה, וקלסתר פנים, וראיית העין, ושמיצת האוזן, ודבור פה, והלוח רגלים, ובינה, והשכל.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

נדה לא, א.

PARAGRAPH 3

17 בשבט אנשים

Through His prophet, G-d promises David that He will be a father to the son who will build the Temple: “I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to Me; when he does wrong, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the afflictions of the children of men,” and the next verse adds that His kindness will not depart from him. The Alter Rebbe borrows the phrase for a father’s chastisement of his son, Gevurah that comes from love.

שמואל ב ז:י"ד:14 II Samuel 7:

אני אהיה־לו לאב והוא יהיה־לי לבן אשר בהעויותו והכחתיני בשבט אנשים ובנגעי בני אדם:

I will be to him for a father, and he shall be to Me for a son; if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men;

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18 ובתורתו יהגה

The first psalm praises the man who keeps far from the wicked: “But his desire is in the Torah of Havayah, and in His Torah he meditates day and night.” The aim of the father’s discipline is that his son return to such study.

תהילים א:ב:2 Psalms 1:

כי אם־בתורת ה' תפצו ובתורתו יהגה יומם ולילה:

But his delight is in the law of the L-RD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

תהילים א, ב.

19

את אשר יאהב ה' יוכיח

Shlomo tells his son not to spurn G-d’s discipline: “For whom Havayah loves He rebukes, as a father the son in whom he delights.” The verse itself compares G-d’s rebuke to a father’s, the model of Gevurah within Chesed.

משלי ג:י"ב:12 Proverbs 3:

כי את־אשר יאהב ה' יוכיח וכאב את־בן ירצה:

For whom the L-RD loveth He correcteth, Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

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KEHOT'S NOTE

משלי ג, יב.

PARAGRAPH 5

20 אשה כי תזריע תלד

Taken at its word, as the maamar reads it, the verse says that the woman’s own seeding brings the male: “When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male.” This is the reading the Alter Rebbe calls “its plain meaning,” against the philosophers’.

ויקרא י"ב:ב:2 Leviticus 12:

דבר אלי־בני ישראל לאמר אשה כי תזריע ולדה זכר וטמאה שבעת ימים כימי נדת דותה תטמא:

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying: If a woman be delivered, and bear a man-child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of the impurity of her sickness shall she be unclean.

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21 מענין אשה כי תזריע

The Zohar on Tazria opens the verse with the teaching “a woman who emits seed first gives birth to a male,” and asks how this fits with the Holy One, blessed be He, decreeing whether a drop will be male or female.

ספר הזהר, תזריע א:ב:י"א:11-3 Zohar, Tazria 1:

22 מענין אשה כי תזריע

Rabbi Elazar explains “and gives birth to a male”: male and female are included together from the right side, while a female is born when they are included from the left side, which then prevails over the right.

ספר הזהר, תזריע ה:כ"א:י"ז:21-7 Zohar, Tazria 5:

23 מענין אשה כי תזריע

When the Community of Israel arouses desire first, all is filled from the right side, and when the Holy One, blessed be He, arouses first, all is on the feminine side, the left; “in this manner it is written, ‘When a woman emits seed and gives birth to a male.’”

ספר הזהר, תזריע י"ד:ס"ז:י"ז:14-60 Zohar, Tazria 14:

Observe this. When the Holy One, blessed be He, is in the company of the Community of Israel, if she first makes approaches to him and draws him towards her in the strength of her love and desire, then she is replenished from the side

of the right and multitudes from the side of the right are found in all worlds. But if the Holy One, blessed be He, is the first to make advances and she only rouses herself afterwards, then all is on the side of the female ...

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

24

בזח"ג פי תזריע מ"ב כי מ"ג כי מ"ה ב'

In Sh'lach the Alter Rebbe applies "a woman who emits seed first gives birth to a male" to the raising of the five Gevuros of the feminine, "when you raise up the lamps," through which Israel become "the males," like a lower flame that kindles the one above it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן פי שלח מו, א. אוה"ת ויקרא-ג ע' תתיג.



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THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

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

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מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

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