

THE ZOHAR



VOLUME 04 – Chayei Sara

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. And Dumah rises, and receives the reckoning

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

Tosefta (Addendum)

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

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

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

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

End of Tosefta (Addendum)

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. He who is small and he who is great

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

Tosefta (Addendum)

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

End of Tosefta (Addendum)

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

22. מֵאֵן דְּפֶסֶק יִתְפַּסֵּק. מֵאֵן דְּקֶצֶר, יִתְקַצֵּר. מֵאֵן
דְּקֶצֶר, יִתְאַרְךְ. ר"ל, מֵאֵן דְּפֶסֶק מְלִין דְּאוֹרֵייתָא, עַל
מְלִין בְּטִלִין, יִתְפַּסְקוֹן חַיְוֵי מֵהַאי עֲלֵמָא, וְדִינֵיהּ
קֵיִמָּא בְּהַהוּא עֲלֵמָא. מֵאֵן דְּקֶצֶר אֲמֵן, וְלֹא מֵאֲרִיךְ
גּוֹ נִיחָא, יִתְקַצֵּר מִחַיִּין דְּהַאי עֲלֵמָא. מֵאֵן דְּאִמֵּר
אַחַד, אֶצְטְרִיךְ לְחֻטְפָּא אֶלֶף, וְלִקְצֵר קְרִיאתָא דִּילֵיהּ,
וְלֹא יַעֲבֹב בְּהַאי אוֹת כָּלֵל, וּמֵאֵן דִּיעֲבִיד דָּא
יִתְאַרְכוּן חַיִּיו.

5. "And Sarah's life"

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

6. "And the cows took the straight way"

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

36. But the days of the righteous are eternal. THEY LIVE LONGER THAN SEVENTY YEARS BECAUSE THEY RECEIVE FROM THE SUPERNAL MAZAL, WHICH ADDS LIFE OVER SEVENTY YEARS, AS MUCH AS THEY WANT. This is as written: "And Sarah's life was..." and "these are the days of the years of Avraham's life which he lived" (Beresheet 25:7). If you say it is also written of Yishmael: "And these are the years of the life of Yishmael" (Zecharyah 13:17),

ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT RIGHTEOUS this is only because he repented. Therefore, it is written "these are" of his days AS OF AVRAHAM.

8. "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh"

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

Midrash Hane'elam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

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

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

39. Rabbi Yitzchak said that a man does not transgress; only he who is a shapeless matter and is not a man transgresses. This is a man who cares not for THE NEEDS OF the holy soul. He behaves like a beast, which does not care or know. Rabbi Bo asked RABBI YITZCHAK, Was David called a shapeless matter, NAMELY HE WHO CARES NOT FOR THE SOUL, BECAUSE it was he who wrote the verse? Rabbi Yitzchak replied that Adam said, "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh," FOR "UNSHAPED FLESH" MEANS MATTER WHOSE SHAPE IS NOT YET FINISHED. He said that before You gave me my soul, WHEN I WAS STILL UNSHAPED FLESH, Your eyes sought to create men in my image. "For in Your book all things

are written," FOR IT WILL BE WRITTEN DOWN who they are IN NAME. "The days also in which they are to be fashioned" (Tehilim 139:16) means that they will be created in his image. The phrase: "And not one of them" means that none survived.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10. Dumah brings them into and out of reckoning

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

End of Midrash Hane'elam (homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

11. "And Sarah died in Kirvat Arba"

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

help achieve this effect, strengthening our resolve whenever the temptation to satisfy our own desires arises.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

70. Come and behold: When man's days are maintained by the supernal grades, NAMELY THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT-man thrives in the world. If he is not sustained by the supernal grades, MEANING HE HAS LIVED SEVENTY YEARS DRAWN FROM THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT-his days come out OF THE SFIROT and beneath THE SFIROT until they approach the level where death dwells. NAMELY, THE ANGEL OF DEATH UNDERNEATH MALCHUT, OF WHICH IT IS SAID, "SIN CROUCHES AT THE DOOR" (BERESHEET 4:7). Then the Angel of Death receives permission to take out the

man's soul. He flies through the world in one flight, takes the soul and defiles the body, which remains defiled. Happy are the righteous who were not defiled by him, for no defilement remained in their bodies.

12. The serpent of the firmament

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

84. He said to him, You spoke well. Nevertheless, come and behold: Torah was given to males only, as it is written: "And this is the Torah which Moshe set before the children (lit. 'sons') of Yisrael" (Devarim: 4:44). As women were exempt from the commandments of

Torah, NAMELY FROM THE COMMANDMENTS VALID AT A FIXED TIME THEREFORE THEY REMAINED IMPURE AT THE GIVING OF TORAH. FOR THAT REASON, WITCHCRAFT, WHICH DERIVES FROM THE IMPURITY OF THE SERPENT, ABIDES MAINLY IN WOMEN.

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

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

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

14. The cave of Machpelah (Part One)

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

15. "Four hundred shekels"

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

Tosefta (Addendum)

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

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

Dumah makes it a custodian of the body. The soul then shows Dumah that the body is worthy to receive 400 worlds as a reward.

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

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

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

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

End of Tosefta (Addendum)

16. The cave of Machpelah (Part Two)

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

100. Rabbi Elazar asks, How did Avraham enter the cave? WHY DID HE ENTER? HE RESPONDED, He was running after a calf, about which it is written: "And Avraham ran to the

herd..." (Beresheet 18:7). This calf ran to the cave. Avraham ran after it and saw what he saw.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

110. Adam returned to his place, but Chavah did not, AS SHE HAD MADE ADAM SIN, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "THE WOMAN WHOM YOU DID GIVE TO BE WITH ME" (BERESHEET 3:12). SHE WAS AFRAID THAT ADAM WOULD NOT RECEIVE HER. Then Avraham approached and put her with Adam, who received her for Avraham's sake. This is the meaning of: "And after this, Avraham buried Sarah his wife." The particle Et before "Sarah" is meant to add Chavah, WHOM AVRAHAM RETURNED TO THE GRAVE, AS WAS SAID. Then ADAM AND CHAVAH were properly settled in their places, as it is written: "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created (Heb. behibar'am)" (Beresheet 2:4). We learned that

behibar'am HAS THE SAME LETTERS AS beAvraham (lit. 'by Avraham'), WHICH INDICATES THAT THEY WERE CREATED FOR HIM. The generations of the heaven and the earth are Adam and Chavah. It is not written 'the heaven and the earth,' but "the generations of the heaven and of the earth", WHICH REFERS TO ADAM AND CHAVAH, who were not begotten by man. OF THESE THE VERSE SAYS they lived for the sake of Avraham. How do we know that they existed for Avraham? Because it is written: "And the field, and the cave that is in it, were made over (also: 'maintained') to Avraham." Until Avraham came, Adam and Chavah did not exist in the world. "THE FIELD AND THE CAVE IN IT" ALLUDE TO ADAM AND CHAVAH, WHO DWELT THERE. THE WORDS "BY AVRAHAM" MEAN FOR AVRAHAM. IT IS SHOWN THAT ADAM AND CHAVAH WERE SUSTAINED FOR AVRAHAM'S SAKE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Using Avraham and David as examples, Rabbi Yehuda explains the difference between the righteousness and contrition. While the soul of a contrite person immediately enters the supernal realm, where it cleaves to the Holy One, merely righteous souls may take many years to acquire such a blessing. Even Avraham and David were unable to enter the world where the truly contrite are made welcome. Rabbi Yosi further adds that a contrite soul is

closer to the Creator than all others, drawing down more Light from above, in proportion to its yearning and penitence.

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

18. There are many places for the righteous

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

The Relevance of this Passage

In simplest terms, reality includes two basic realms--the upper world, and our existence in the physical dimension. The upper world is the source of our intuition and the force behind moments of mystical insight. When a dream comes true, for example, contact has been made with the upper worlds. When instinct impelled you to make an illogical decision that brought good fortune, this is another form of connection to the upper world. Unfortunately, these acute moments of insight and clarity are rare. We seem to have no control over how or when we make contact with the supernal realms. When we must make decisions and choices

based on the evidence of our physical existence, the result is often turmoil and turbulence. The author of the Zohar understood this difficulty, and prescribed this portion as a remedy. A reading of this passage helps us utilize our sleep as a tool for spiritual enlightenment. The 'energy of Avraham' is summoned forth through these verses, strengthening our powers of judgment in matters that help or hinder the entrance of the Light into our world.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

19. Eden drips upon the garden

The rabbis display their profound and comprehensive knowledge of the scriptures and writings, in a complex discussion of an image in Yechezkel, "Behold one wheel upon the earth..." While replete with the arcane wisdom of gematria (numerology) and Kabbalah, and the profound mystical beauty of Solomon's great 'Song', this debate has a surprisingly straightforward resolution--one that echoes previous sections of the Zohar in its emphasis on the importance of a pure heart and good deeds in this world for bringing mercy and peace in the next. Rabbi Yitzchak concludes with a simple exposition of the reason for mentions of Avraham's age. Avraham, literally, "came into the days"; his soul had reached its high-allotted place, where its great longevity was assured.

The Relevance of this Passage

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

Midrash Hane'lam (Homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20. About the resurrection of the dead

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

168. He responded, I see that primordial light, THAT WAS IN USE AT THE TIME OF THE CREATION AND WAS THEN STORED FOR THE RIGHTEOUS IN THE FUTURE, travels by ten and conducts everything according to the secret of ten. We learned that there are ten

writings, ten keys to the hospital in its hands. It takes these and ten notes in the Garden of Eden to mend the earth for the bodies of the righteous.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

195. Similarly, the heart and the brain, THE HAND TFILIN AND THE HEAD TFILIN, the heart is on one side and the brain on the other side. Upon them is the King's Shechinah in four

sections. Rabbi Elazar said, From now on, the secrets of the crowns of the letters, the sections in their bodies, NAMELY THEIR COMPARTMENTS, and the straps are an ancient tradition that Moshe received in Sinai. They were already explained by allusion, NAMELY BY THE EXPLANATION BEFORE US, and the sense of all this is in the secret of the thirteen divine attributes OF MERCY.

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

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

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

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

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

End of Midrash Hane'elam (homiletical interpretations on the obscure)

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

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

203. Come and behold: When man is called to account for his deeds before leaving this world, there will be a day of reckoning, a day when both the soul and body give reckoning. The soul then LEAVES THE BODY AND is separated from it, while the body, WHICH WAS CREATED FROM DUST, returns to dust, and all returns to the place from which it was taken.

It has already been explained that everything will be stored before the Holy One, blessed be He, until the time when He resurrects the dead.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

211. Come and behold: We have learned that all the dead in the land of Yisrael will be resurrected first, because the Holy One, blessed be He, will arouse them WITH A SPIRIT and

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

22. In Torah is the whole life

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

220. You may say that there were those who were persecuted, NAMELY THE MARTYRS WHO WERE EXECUTED FOR STUDYING TORAH WHEN SUCH STUDY WAS FORBIDDEN. HE ANSWERS THAT this is a decree from above, such as the one for Rabbi Akiva and his companions, WHO WERE KILLED FOR STUDYING TORAH, and so it came to THE SUPREME

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

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

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

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

23. "Behold, Rivkah came out"

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

EYES (HEB. EYNAYIM), WHICH IS A NAME OF CHOCHMAH. And the water rose toward Rivkah.

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

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

24. Prayer, cry, tears

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

230. THE JEW opened with the verse, "Hear my prayer, Hashem, and give ear to my cry; keep not silence at my tears" (Tehilim 39:13). HE ASKS, Why is it written "hear" (Heb. shim'ah) and not 'sh'ma'? AND WHY is it written in one place: "Hear (Heb. sh'ma), Hashem, and be gracious to me" (Tehilim 30:11), and in another place, 'shim'ah'? The reason is that it

is written now Shma referring to the male, NAMELY TO ZEIR ANPIN, and now Shim'ah referring to the female, NAMELY TO THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. For example, shim'ah is used in "Hear the right, Hashem" (Tehilim 17:1), WHERE THE RIGHT (HEB. TZEDEK) IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Sh'ma is used in "Hear (Heb. sh'ma) Hashem, and be gracious to me," AS HASHEM IS THE NAME OF ZEIR ANPIN. The masculine is also used in "Hear, Hashem" AS HASHEM IS THE NAME OF ZEIR ANPIN, "my son, hear (Heb. sh'ma) the instructions" (Mishlei 1:8) and "Take heed, and hearken (Heb. sh'ma)" (Devarim 27:9).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

238. Come and behold: Yitzchak composed the afternoon prayer, as Avraham composed the morning prayer in relation to the grade to which he cleaved, NAMELY THE GRADE OF CHESED AND THE RIGHT COLUMN. So Yitzchak composed the afternoon prayer in relation to

the grade to which he cleaved, THE GRADE OF GVURAH AND THE LEFT COLUMN. Therefore, THE TIME OF the afternoon prayer service is when the sun sets down with its grades to the west; NAMELY, IMMEDIATELY AFTER MIDDAY.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE CENTRAL COLUMN CALLED YA'AKOV, and the Nukva whisper, so as not to mention THE ASPECT OF JUDGMENT IN HER.

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26. "Then again Avraham took a wife"

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

This seemingly simple section of Zohar sheds light on the origins of spiritual disciplines found in the Far East. The Zohar tells us that Avraham gave everything he had to his son Yitzchak. Thereafter, the patriarch gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them to live "in the east." Clearly, the Zohar is not referring to material items, for if Avraham gave away all his physical possessions to his son Yitzchak, there would be nothing left to give to the sons of his concubines. A candle flame provides an analogy: One candle can share its flame and

light with countless others, without ever diminishing itself. The Zohar is referring to the light of wisdom when speaking of Abraham's possessions and gifts. The term "all that he had" pertains to the complete wisdom of Kabbalah, also known as the Three Column System. These Three Columns are the pillars of all spiritual wisdom. The "gifts" given to the sons of the concubines refer to other spiritual teachings that offered their own unique pathway to the Light of the Creator, described accordingly as One and Two Column spiritual systems. The sons of the concubines, we're told, were sent by Avraham to live "in the east" where, to this day, there exist spiritual doctrines that exemplify the Two Column system--such as the Ying/Yang principle of Taoist cosmology. A connection can be made between the name Avraham--or Abraham--and the Eastern religious concept of Brahman, which refers to the absolute reality or Self, as explained in the Hindu Upanishads. The words of wisdom portrayed in this passage strengthen our bond to the original seed of spiritual wisdom--Kabbalah--and its Three Column System of desire to share, desire to receive, and free will to choose and balance between the two. The wisdom to use our free will in a spiritually correct manner is instilled within us.

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

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

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

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

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

The Relevance of this Passage

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

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

THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE GIVEN TO THE LOWER WORLDS WAS WITHHELD, FOR THERE WAS NO ONE TO GIVE TO.

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

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

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

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

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

Blessed is Hashem for ever. Amen, amen.

VOLUME 04 – Toldot

1. "And these are the generations of Yitzchak"

Rabbi Chiya leads us to an understanding of the relationship between The Creator and the Torah. We learn how the world is maintained by Torah study, and why it is man's supreme duty to continue this study. Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yehuda explain the significance of the forms of blessing from Avraham to Yitzchak to Ya'akov, in whom all that has come before is manifested. We learn that true servants of The Creator are not only those from Yisrael, but anyone anywhere who studies the Torah.

The Relevance of this Passage

"The study of Torah" does not refer to a cerebral, academic approach to thousands of words on parchment. Through the eyes of the Kabbalists, the Torah is understood as the medium through which the energy of The Creator is expressed in our physical dimension of existence. The sinewy parchment, the coal black ink, and the primordial letters are all intricate components of a divine communication instrument serving one express purpose: to help willing students uproot all their character flaws, in order to attain similarity of nature and thus, closeness to the Light of The Creator. That said, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov signify the Right, Left, and Central Column forces--that is, the desire to share, the desire to receive, and the free will to choose between and balance the two.

Ya'akov also corresponds to the Sfirah of Yesod, the gateway through which all the Light of the supernal realms enters our world. Essentially, the purpose of this passage is to ignite the primordial Light of the Torah. As we meditate upon the words, the emitted Light refines our imperfections. The strength of the patriarchs, and especially The Central Column Force of Ya'akov, enhances our ability to resist and triumph over our reactive, self-indulgent drives. Finally, the Light accumulated through our interaction with the Zohar shines universally, helping to awaken the world to the internal truths of the Torah and all that the Light of The Creator can offer us.

1. "And these are the generations of Yitzchak..." (Beresheet 25:19). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "Who can utter the mighty acts of Hashem? Who can declare all His praise?" (Tehilim 106:2). Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to create the world, He did so according to the Torah. And every act that the Holy One, blessed be He, used to create the world was done according to the Torah. This is the meaning of: "then I was by him, as a nursling: and I was daily his delight" (Mishlei 8:30). Do not pronounce it as "a nursling," (Heb. amon) but rather 'a craftsman' (Heb. oman), BECAUSE IT WAS A TOOL FOR HIS CRAFT.

2. When He wanted to create man, the Torah said to him: 'If man is created, he will sin, and you will punish him. Would not Your handwork then be in vain? After all, he will not be able to endure the punishment.' The Holy One, blessed be He, replied: 'I created repentance before I created the world. IF HE WILL SIN, HE WILL BE ABLE TO REPENT AND BE FORGIVEN.' When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world and created Adam, He said to it: 'World, world, you and your nature are based solely upon the Torah, and for that reason I created man in you, to be occupied with the study of the Torah. And if he does not STUDY THE TORAH, I will return you to chaos. Everything is for man.' This is the meaning of the verse: "I have made the earth, and created man upon it" (Yeshayah 45:12). The Torah proclaims to men to be occupied with and endeavor in the study of the Torah, but no one lends an ear.

3. Come and behold: whoever studies the Torah sustains the world and properly sustains every act in the world. There is no part within man that does not have a counterpart creature in the world. Just as the body of man is composed of levels of parts that act together to form a unified body, so is the world. All the creatures in the world are hierarchical parts that act on and react with each other, so they will actually be as one body. Everything, WHETHER IT BE MAN OR THE WORLD, resembles the Torah, because the Torah is made of different parts and sections that support each other. When they are all correct, they will become as one body. When David looked at this work, he said: "Hashem, how manifold are your works! In wisdom You have made them all: the earth is full of Your creatures" (Tehilim 104:24).

4. The Torah contains supernal, sealed mysteries, that man cannot grasp; it contains all supernal matters--those revealed and those not revealed. BECAUSE OF THEIR DEPTH, THEY ARE REVEALED TO THE SCHOLAR, BUT DISAPPEAR IMMEDIATELY ONLY TO BE REVEALED IN THE NEXT INSTANT AND DISAPPEAR AGAIN. AND SO IT CONTINUES FOR THOSE WHO STUDY THEM. The Torah contains all the matters above IN THE SUPERNAL WORLDS and below. Everything in this world and everything in the world to come is in the Torah, but there is no one to observe and understand them. Thus, it is written, "Who can utter the mighty acts of Hashem? Who can declare all His praise?" (Tehilim 106:2).

5. Come and behold: when Solomon unsuccessfully tried to understand the words and subtleties of the Torah, he said: "I said, 'I will be wise'; but it was far from me" (Kohelet 7:23). David said: "Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Torah" (Tehilim 119:18). Come and behold: it is written of Solomon that he "spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his poems were a 1,005" (I Melachim 5:12). This is because there were 5,000 interpretations of each proverb he told. If this is true of the words of Solomon, who was flesh and blood, how many proverbs, chants, praises, mysteries, and wise thoughts are contained in the words of the Torah, as spoken by the Holy One, blessed be He? Therefore, it is written: "Who can utter the mighty acts of Hashem."

6. Come and behold: it is written, "Now these are the generations of Yishmael" (Beresheet 25:12), and they are twelve princes. Then it is written: "And these are the generations of Yitzchak" (Ibid. 19). Is it possible that because it is written that Yishmael sired twelve princes and Yitzchak sired two, he (Yishmael) is more RIGHTEOUS THAN YITZCHAK? It is therefore written: "Who can utter the mighty (Heb. gvurot) acts of Hashem." This refers to Yitzchak--AS YITZCHAK IS GVURAH OF ZEIR ANPIN--for Yitzchak sired Ya'akov, who alone is more important than all of them, for he fathered the twelve tribes, and sustained the upper and the lower, while Yitzchak supported the higher in supernal holiness and Yishmael only below. Therefore the verse, "Who can utter the mighty acts of Hashem," REFERS TO YITZCHAK, AS EXPLAINED ABOVE. The words, "declare all His praises," refers to Ya'akov, BECAUSE YA'AKOV, REPRESENTING EXISTENCE BOTH ABOVE AND BELOW, CONTAINS ALL HIS PRAISES. When the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, connects with the moon, NUKVA, many stars shine from them. THEY ARE THE TWELVE TRIBES OF YAH, LIKENED TO THE STARS IN YOSEF'S DREAM.

7. "And these are the generations of Yitzchak, Avraham's son." Rabbi Yosi asks: What has changed? It did not say, "Avraham's son" previously. For although it is written, "Elohim blessed his son Yitzchak," (Beresheet 25:11) Avraham is now dead; THAT IS, HE BLESSED AND RAISED THE LEVEL OF YITZCHAK, WHICH IS GVURAH, AFTER THE DEATH OF AVRAHAM. THUS, the image of Avraham was upon Yitzchak and stayed with him--WHICH MEANS THAT THE QUALITY OF AVRAHAM, WHICH IS CHESED, REMAINED WITHIN YITZCHAK--so that whoever saw Yitzchak said: "...this is surely Avraham," and pronounced that Avraham begat Yitzchak--WHO WAS INCLUDED IN AND CLOTHED WITH THE QUALITY OF AVRAHAM, WHICH IS CHESED. THEREFORE, THE SCRIPTURE HERE SPECIFICALLY READS, "AVRAHAM'S SON," AS WELL AS, "AVRAHAM BEGOT YITZCHAK."

8. Rabbi Yitzchak rose one night to study Torah, while Rabbi Yehuda, who was in the city of Caesarea, also rose at the same hour TO STUDY TORAH. Rabbi Yehuda said: I will walk to Rabbi Yitzchak and study Torah together with him. He went with his son, Chizkiyah, who was then a boy. When he approached the door, he heard Rabbi Yitzchak say, "And it came to pass after the death of Avraham, that Elohim blessed his son Yitzchak; and Yitzchak dwelt by Be'er Lachai Ro'i" (Beresheet 25:11). HE THEN ASKS A DIFFICULT QUESTION: In this verse, the beginning does not fit the end and the end does not fit the beginning; IT BEGINS WITH THE DEATH OF AVRAHAM AND ENDS WITH THE BLESSING OF YITZCHAK, AND THERE IS NO CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE EVENTS. HE THEN POSED ANOTHER DIFFICULT QUESTION: Why this change? Why should the Holy One, blessed be He, bless Yitzchak AND NOT AVRAHAM? HE ANSWERS: Since Avraham did not bless Yitzchak, HASHEM BLESSED HIM AFTER HE DIED. THIS IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE VERSE: "AND IT CAME TO PASS..." HE ASKS: Why did Avraham not bless him? AND HE REPLIED: So that Esav, HIS SON, would not be blessed with him--THAT IS, SO THAT ESAV WOULD NOT DRAW DOWN THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT AS IS HIS UNHOLY WONT. Therefore these blessings passed to the Holy One, blessed be He, AND THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BLESSED YITZCHAK. Of the verse, "and Yitzchak dwelt at Be'er Lachai Ro'i," HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "Lachai Ro'I," AND ANSWERS that he was united with the Shechinah, as the Aramaic translation reads, "the well where the angel of the

covenant was seen." THIS IS THE WELL, NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH, UPON WHICH THE ANGEL OF THE COVENANT, YESOD, WAS SEEN. Therefore He blessed him. BY THIS WE MAY UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTION OF THE THREE PARTS OF THIS VERSE: "AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THE DEATH OF AVRAHAM," WHO DID NOT BLESS YITZCHAK, "THAT ELOHIM BLESSED HIS SON YITZCHAK." WHY DID HE BLESS HIM? BECAUSE "YITZCHAK DWELT AT BE'ER LACHAI RO'I," FOR HE JOINED THE SHECHINAH.

9. In the meantime, Rabbi Yehuda knocked on the door, entered, and joined him. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Now the Shechinah is with us. Rabbi Yehuda said that this explanation concerning "Be'er Lachai Ro'i" is good, but there is more to be understood from the words. ONE SHOULD UNDERSTAND YOUR INTERPRETATION FROM THE WORDS THEMSELVES. He began with the verse: "a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Levanon" (Shir Hashirim 4:15). This verse was already explained: "a fountain of gardens" is Avraham; "a well of living waters" is Yitzchak; and "streams from the Levanon" is Ya'akov. HE EXPLAINED THAT "a well of living waters" is Yitzchak, as it is written: "and Yitzchak dwelt at Be'er Lachai Ro'i" (lit. 'a well of living and seeing'). What is 'a well'? It is the Shechinah, while 'living' is he who is the Life of the Worlds, namely, the Righteous--YESOD who is the Life of the Worlds--and they are not to be separated. He lives in both worlds--he lives above, in the higher world, NAMELY BINAH, and he lives in the lower world, WHICH IS MALCHUT. The lower world lives and shines from his strength.

10. Come and behold: the moon, NUKVA, shines only when she sees the sun, ZEIR ANPIN. When she sees him, she shines. Therefore this is called 'Be'er Lachai Ro'i,' for assuredly then she shines and stands filled with living water, "Lachai Ro'i," 'living and seeing', so as to be filled and illuminated by that which lives, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, AS MENTIONED.

11. Come and behold: it is written, "And Bnayahu the son of Yehoyada, the son of a valiant (lit. 'living') man" (II Shmuel 23:20). This means that he was righteous and illuminated his generation as the living one above, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, illuminates the world, NUKVA. Thus, the well, WHICH IS NUKVA, constantly looks to the living one, WHO IS YESOD, in order to be illuminated.

"And Yitzchak dwelt by Be'er Lachai Ro'i." It is written, "When he took Rivkah," FOR THE WELL IS THE SECRET OF RIVKAH, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, and as he united with her, IT REPRESENTED the joining of darkness and night, as it is written: "his left hand is under my head" (Shir Hashirim 2:6) Come and behold: Yitzchak was in Kiryat Arba after Avraham died. HE ASKS: What about the verse that reads, "And Yitzchak dwelt by Be'er Lachai Ro'i?" THE RESPONSE IS THAT THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY INDICATE HIS ABODE, BUT RATHER THE NAME OF THE NUKVA with which he joined and was united in that well, to stir up love, as we said.

12. Rabbi Yitzchak began the discussion with the verse: "The sun also rises and the sun goes down and hastens to its place where it rises again" (Kohelet 1:5). "The sun also rises," refers to the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, which shines on the moon, THE NUKVA. For when the sun is seen by her, she shines, AND THE SUN illuminates and shines from the supreme place that is above it, WHICH IS BINAH, from where IT RECEIVES HIS ILLUMINATION, AND it always rises. "And the sun goes down," means that when it comes to mate with the moon, NUKVA, it "goes towards the south," (Ibid. 6) which is the Right COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, and there reposes its strength. THIS MEANS THAT ITS MAIN ILLUMINATION IS IN THE RIGHT, WHICH IS CHASSADIM, because its strength is in the right. As a result, all the strength of a man's body is in the right side, from which stems the strength of the body. Later IT READS, "and veers to the north," and shines upon this side, NAMELY, THE SOUTH, and shines upon that side, NAMELY, THE NORTH. "Round and round goes the wind" (Ibid.). HE ASKS: Why is it first written, "sun," and now IT IS CALLED "wind." HE RESPONDED THAT all is one secret, BECAUSE ZEIR ANPIN IS THE INNER MEANING OF THE LIGHT OF THE WIND, AND IS CALLED 'SUN'. And all this happens--"ROUND AND ROUND GOES THE WIND"--so that the moon will illuminate by its light and the two will join.

13. Come and behold: when Avraham came into the world, he embraced the moon and brought her near. When Yitzchak came, he took her and held her and drew her lovingly, as it is written: "his left hand is under my head" (Shir Hashirim 2:6). When Ya'akov came, he united the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, with the moon, THE NUKVA, and THE NUKVA shone. So Ya'akov became whole in every aspect, and the moon shone, and was perfected by the twelve tribes.

14. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse: "Behold, bless Hashem, all you servants of Hashem..." (Tehilim 134:1). This verse was explained, yet come and behold: it is written, "Behold, bless Hashem." Who are those worthy of blessing the Holy One, blessed be He? THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "all you servants of Hashem." Although anyone from Yisrael is worthy of blessing the Holy One, blessed be He, NEVERTHELESS, who gives the blessings for the sake of the supernal and lower beings? THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "all you servants of Hashem," yet not everyone. Whose blessing is considered a blessing? THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, THOSE "who stand by night in the house of Hashem" (Ibid.); those who wake up at midnight to study Torah. These are those "who stand by night in the house of Hashem." ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURE, THEY MUST BE BOTH THE SERVANTS OF HASHEM AND ALSO RISE AT MIDNIGHT. For then the Holy One, blessed be He, comes to delight with the righteous in the Garden of Eden. And we are here awakened by the words of the Torah. Let us discuss Yitzchak, for we are on his level.

2. "And Yitzchak was forty years old"

We learn that Rivkah, because she was "like the lily among thorns", countervails the harsh judgments of Avraham and Yitzchak. Next, Rabbi Yitzchak teaches the inner meaning of the marriage of Yitzchak to Rivkah: how she represents his opposite, and how their union provides the balance that sweetens the world.

The Relevance of this Passage

"Thorns" signify the severe judgments that appear in our world. The "lily" represents the tenderness and beauty of life. Yitzchak [thorns] and Rivkah [the lily] are the vessels through which these spiritual forces are established. The key to any fulfilling relationship lies in a delicate balance between both qualities. A husband and wife bring their own particular attributes to a marriage. By harnessing the forces of Yitzchak and Rivkah, we create greater balance in all our human interactions, and particularly in our marital ties.

15. THE SCRIPTURE READS: "and Yitzchak was forty years old when he took Rivkah for a wife" (Beresheet 25:20). Why is Yitzchak's age given here? Why does it say he was forty years old when he married Rivkah? HE BEGAN HIS ANSWER BY SAYING THAT Yitzchak was included within north and south, which are fire and water, and was then forty years old when he took Rivkah. Further, the text, "As the appearance of the bow," (Yechezkel 1:28) means THAT RIVKAH HAD "THE APPEARANCE OF THE RAINBOW," WHICH IS green, white, and red, WHICH ARE CHESED, GVURAH AND TIFERET OF NUKVA. She (the Nukva) was three years old when he seized it, when he took Rivkah, THAT IS, MARRIED HER. And he sired a son when he was sixty, WHICH WAS AFTER ATTAINING THE SIX SFIROT--CHESED TO YESOD--so that he would properly sire Ya'akov who, as the issue of a man of sixty years, held on to all THE SIX SFIROT and became a whole man.

16. Why are we told: "The daughter of Betu'el the Arammian of Paddan-aram, the sister to Lavan the Arammian?" Why should we care to know all this--it had already been written, "And Betu'el sired Rivkah," (Beresheet 22:23) and now she is described as "of Paddan-aram, the sister to Lavan the Arammian." HE ANSWERS THAT IT IS to teach us that ALTHOUGH she was born among the misled, she did not follow their ways. Therefore it is written that she was the daughter of Betu'el, of Paddan-aram, and the sister of Lavan, who were all wicked and evil doers; but she did good deeds and did not behave as they did.

17. Now we should study this further. If Rivkah was twenty years old, or at least thirteen, it would be considered praiseworthy that she did not do as they did. But since she was only three years old, how can she be praised for her actions? Rabbi Yehuda replied that although she was only three years old, she can be judged by how she behaved toward the servant. THIS MUST MEAN THAT SHE HAD THE WISDOM OF A TWENTY YEAR OLD, AND THEREFORE SHE MAY BE PRAISED FOR NOT LEARNING FROM WHAT THEY DID.

18. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Though she acted WISELY TOWARD THE SERVANT, I do not yet know if her behavior was right or not. Come and behold: it is written, "Like the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters" (Shir Hashirim 2:2). The lily is the congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, which is among the legions as a lily among the thorns. The hidden meaning is that Yitzchak came from the side of Avraham, supernal Chesed, who is kind to all creatures. And although he represented Severe Judgment, HE NEVERTHELESS DRAWS CHESED FROM AVRAHAM. Rivkah also came from the side of Harsh

Judgment OF BETU'EL AND LAVAN. Although she was herself of Weak Judgment, IN THE SECRET OF THE REDNESS OF THE LILY, and a thread of Chesed was attached to her, IN THE SECRET OF THE WHITENESS OF THE LILY, nevertheless she came from Severe Judgment. Thus, because Yitzchak was severe in his judgment and Rivkah was softer in her Judgment, she was as a lily among the thorns. AND IF THE NUKVA were not of Weak Judgment, the world would not have been able to bear the Harsh Judgment of Yitzchak. In this manner, the Holy One, blessed be He, joins couples in the world--the severe with the weak. THUS YITZCHAK WAS OF SEVERE JUDGMENT AND RIVKAH OF SOFT JUDGMENT, so as to balance everything. THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, and the world would be sweetened.

3. "And Yitzchak entreated..."

We are instructed in the prayer and spiritual actions practiced by Yitzchak in order for the child Ya'akov to be born. We see also how The Creator responded to Yitzchak's entreaties. This discussion enlightens us about the structure of prayer, and of how the prayers of the righteous allow the prayers of less good men to be heard. Next, the puzzling fact that Yitzchak loved Esav more than Ya'akov is explained in terms of its spiritual significance: the son of Avraham represents Left Column Energy, which expresses judgment. Esav, we're told, denotes this same negative force, which is an indication that Yitzchak has not yet learned to modify and balance the severity of his own judgment.

The Relevance of this Passage

This powerful passage influences many areas of life, including the miracle of childbirth.

Though our own prayers might not have wings to ascend to the highest worlds, we can still contact the Upper Realms through the updraft created by the prayers of the righteous. Finally, the text points out that our tendency is to welcome and embrace people into our lives whose nature is similar to our own. In contrast, we're quick to pass judgment and distance ourselves from those who differ from us. This negative predisposition is weakened and abated so that we can live according to the principle, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

19. Rabbi Yehuda continued with the verse: "And Yitzchak entreated Hashem for his wife" (Beresheet 25:21). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "entreated?" AND HE REPLIED that he offered a sacrifice and prayed for her. What offering did he sacrifice? A burnt offering. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT "ENTREATED" INDICATES THAT HE SACRIFICED by studying the verses "and Hashem was entreated of him" (Ibid.), and "So Hashem was entreated for the land" (II Shmuel 24:25). There it means that a sacrifice has been offered, SO here too it means, a sacrifice has been offered.

It is written: "And Yitzchak entreated," "and Hashem was entreated." IF "ENTREATED" INDICATE A SACRIFICE, WHAT IS THE MEANING OF, "AND HASHEM WAS ENTREATED"? HE REPLIED THAT THIS TOO REFERS TO AN OFFERING, a celestial fire that came to meet the lower fire. FOR TWO FIRES ARE NEEDED TO CONSUME THE OFFERING, THE FIRE OF A HOLY MAN AND THE FIRE OF A LAYMAN. THEREFORE "YITZCHAK ENTREATED," WHICH REFERS TO THE LOWER FIRE, AND "HASHEM WAS ENTREATED," WHICH CORRESPONDS TO THE UPPER FIRE.

20. Another explanation for, "And Yitzchak entreated," is that by his prayer he hollowed out a passage that reached above to Mazal that bestows children. It is upon that place--IN MAZAL, WHICH IS THE DIKNA OF ARICH ANPIN--that giving birth to children depends, as it is written, "and she prayed to (lit. 'above') Hashem," (I Shmuel 1:10) WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. "...ABOVE HASHEM..." REFERS TO DIKNA OF ARICH ANPIN, WHICH ENCIRCLES ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'MAZAL'. Then, "Hashem was entreated of him." Do not pronounce it "entreated," (Heb. vaye'ater) but "hollowed out" (Heb. vaye'ater). For the Holy One, blessed be He, cleared the way and accepted the prayer. Then, "Rivkah his wife conceived."

21. Come and behold: Yitzchak was with his wife for twenty years, but she did not give birth until he had said his prayer This is because the Holy One, blessed be He, desires the prayer of the righteous, when they ask Him in prayer for their needs. Why? Because the anointing oil will be increased by the prayer of the righteous for all those in need of it. FOR THE RIGHTEOUS IN THEIR PRAYER OPEN THE SUPERNAL CHANNEL, AND THEN EVEN THE PRAYERS OF THE UNWORTHY ARE ANSWERED.

22. Come and behold: Avraham did not pray before the Holy One, blessed be He, so that He would give him sons, even though Sarah was barren. And although it may be said that he prayed, saying, "Behold, to me You gave no seed," (Beresheet 15:3) it is not a prayer, but simply a statement to his Master. But Yitzchak prayed for his wife because he knew that his wife, and not he, was sterile. And although Yitzchak knew by the inner meaning of wisdom that Ya'akov was bound to come from him and produce the twelve tribes, he did not know whether this would be from this wife or from another. Therefore the scripture reads, "for his wife" (Beresheet 25:21), and not specifically "for Rivkah."

23. Rabbi Yehuda's son asks: Why then did not Yitzchak love Ya'akov as he loved Esav, if he knew that he would sire the twelve tribes? He replied: Well said. HE LOVED ESAV BETTER BECAUSE everyone loves and is attracted to his own kind.

24. Come and behold: Esav was born all red, as it is written, "And the first came out red all over" (Beresheet 25:25). Thus, he is the same as Yitzchak, who is of Harsh Judgment above, IN HOLINESS, and Esav, who issued from him, is the Harsh Judgment below. ESAV'S HEAD WAS IN THE HOLY SYSTEM, BUT HIS BODY WAS NOT. THEREFORE, he resembled Yitzchak. And because each is drawn to his own kind, Yitzchak loved Esav more than Ya'akov, as it is written, "And Yitzchak loved Esav, he relished his venison" (Ibid. 28), WHICH MEANS THAT HIS HEAD IS IN THE HOLY SYSTEM. Here it is written, "For he relished his venison," which is similar to, "wherefore it is said, 'like Nimrod the mighty hunter before Hashem'" (Beresheet 10:9). IN BOTH PLACES, HUNTING REFERS TO HARSH JUDGMENT, AND THE SCRIPTURES TELL US THAT HE LOVED HIM BECAUSE THEY WERE BOTH OF SEVERE JUDGMENT.

4. "And the children struggled together within her" (A)

Here we explore the relationship of Ya'akov to Esav. We are shown Esau's identification with the serpent, and the necessity of Ya'akov to deal with this evil in order transform Holy Yisrael into the chosen part and portion of The Creator. Ya'akov's battles with Esav are a metaphor denoting the establishment of a spiritual system that expresses the paradigm of good versus evil in human existence. We see more clearly how the naming of Ya'akov signifies his special role, and his difference from Avraham and Yitzchak. The importance of the struggle of Ya'akov with Esav for the future is also explained, along with the methods used in this ongoing battle with evil.

The Relevance of this Passage

Ya'akov and Esav were born together in the womb of Rivkah. On a macrocosmic level, Ya'akov represents the forces of good, Esav, the forces of evil, and the womb of Rivkah symbolizes our physical world. On the micro-level, this dynamic represents the positive and negative aspects of our own nature. This portion of Zohar gives us power over our dark side, so that we can overcome our internal demons.

25. Rabbi Yitzchak said: It is written, "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, 'if it be so, why am I thus?' And she went to inquire of Hashem" (Beresheet 25:22). Where did she go? To the academy of Shem and Ever. "...the children struggled together within her," because the wicked Esav was warring against Ya'akov there. The term 'struggle' (Heb. vayitrotzatzu) is similar to the expression 'to break' (Heb. ratzatz) one's head, for they struggled and were divided. Come and behold: ESAV was of the side of he who rides the serpent, SAMAEL, while YA'AKOV was of the side who rides the perfect Holy Throne, of the side of the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, that is united with the moon, THE NUKVA.

26. Come and behold: since Esav followed on the serpent, Ya'akov dealt with him slyly, as the serpent was cunning and had crooked ways. As it is written, "the serpent was craftier" (Beresheet 3:1), which means that he was cunning AND SLY. What Ya'akov did with Esav was serpent-like. This was as it ought to have been; by making Esav go after that serpent, so that he would be separated from Ya'akov, and thus share nothing with him in this world or in the world to come. Thus we learn, "he who comes to kill you, hasten to kill him first." It is written: "in the womb he took his brother by the (Hoshea 12:4), which means that he lowered him down by the heel, THAT IS, SEPARATED HIM FROM HOLINESS AND LOWERED HIM INTO THE SIDE OF DEFILEMENT CALLED 'HEEL', WHICH WAS AT THE END OF HOLINESS. This is the meaning of, "and his hand took hold of Esav's heel" (Beresheet 25:26), for he put his hands on the heel to subjugate him TO HOLINESS.

27. Another explanation of the verse, "and his hand took hold..." is that Ya'akov could not be separated from him entirely, so his hand held the heel of Esav. His hand is the moon, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, CALLED THE 'HAND OF TIFERET', WHICH IS YA'AKOV, whose light was darkened because he held Esav's heel. Therefore, Ya'akov needed to be clever with him, to push him down, so he would cleave to his place IN THE OTHER SIDE AND BE COMPLETELY SEVERED FROM HOLINESS.

28. "And he called his name Ya'akov," MEANS THAT the Holy One, blessed be He, assuredly called him 'Ya'akov'. Come and behold: it is written, "and he called his name 'Ya'akov'" (Beresheet 27:36), and not, 'and his name was called Ya'akov'. But "Did he not rightly call him 'Ya'akov?' for he has supplanted me (Heb. ya'akveni)?" (Ibid.) THIS REFERS TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO CALLED HIM 'YA'AKOV'. Surely the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the primordial serpent was wise in an evil way. When Ya'akov came, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, said that he must be wiser than the serpent. Therefore He called him 'Ya'akov', WHO BECAME KNOWN FOR HIS WISDOM. HE KNEW HOW TO DECEIVE THE SERPENT AND TO SEPARATE HIM FROM ALL THINGS HOLY.

29. We have already explained that wherever it is written, "He called," WITHOUT ALLUDING TO WHO CALLED, it is the lower grade, THE NUKVA, as it is written: "And ...called Moshe" (Vayikra 1:1). IT IS THE NUKVA, WHO CALLED TO MOSHE. And here it is written, "and he called his name 'Ya'akov'" (Beresheet 25:26). HERE, TOO, IT IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN WHO CALLED HIS NAME 'YA'AKOV'. For no man even named Ya'akov, as it is written elsewhere, "And called it (lit. 'him') El the Elohim Yisrael" (Beresheet 33:20). This is the Holy One, blessed be He, who called Ya'akov 'El'. He said to him: 'I am El among the upper, and you are El among the lower.' THIS IS TO SHOW THAT HE WAS NOT NAMED BY FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT BY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE.

30. Come and behold: Ya'akov knew that Esav had to cleave to the tortuous serpent. As a result, in all that Esav did, he acted as slyly and crookedly, just like another tortuous serpent. This is as it ought to be. This agrees with the words of Rabbi Shimon, "And Elohim created the great crocodiles," which refer to Ya'akov and Esav, "and every living creature that moves" (Beresheet 1:21), refers to the levels between them. FOR YA'AKOV AND ESAV ARE CALLED 'CROCODILES', THAT IS, 'SERPENTS', AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED. ESAV WAS THE TORTUOUS SERPENT, AND YA'AKOV DREW AGAINST HIMSELF A KIND OF TORTUOUS SERPENT. By necessity, Ya'akov needed to behave wisely TO STAND against the other serpent. This is as it must be.

31. For that reason, one he goat is sacrificed monthly, to draw the serpent to his place so that he will be separated from the moon, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHOSE LIGHT WAS COVERED BY ESAV'S HEEL. In addition, a he goat should be sacrificed on Yom Kippur. This is done with wisdom, so as to control the serpent, so that he can not do evil. This is the meaning of the verse: "and the goat (Heb. sa'ir) shall bear upon it all their iniquities..." (Vayikra 16:22). This refers to Esav, who is hairy (Heb. sa'ir). All of this was done wisely and cleverly. Why? Because it is written: "and with the perverse you will show yourself subtle" (Tehilim 18:27). This is the evil serpent, the tortuous spirit, wise in wickedness, who accuses above and incites below.

32. For this reason, the children of Yisrael hasten to treat him with sly wisdom, so he will not be able to cause evil and rule. Therefore Ya'akov, who is imbued with the true Faith, treated Esav in all that he did so that there would be no place for that serpent to defile the Temple, or approach it and thereby rule the world. Thus, Avraham did not need to behave slyly, and neither did Yitzchak. For Esav, who was on the side of the serpent, had not yet come into the world. But Ya'akov, the landlord, THE HUSBAND OF THE SHECHINAH, had to stand against that serpent to prevent him from ruling and defiling the Temple of Ya'akov, THE NUKVA. Therefore, Ya'akov had to FIGHT HIM more CLEVERLY than the rest of the people in the world. Hence, BECAUSE YA'AKOV FOUGHT WITH HIM SLYLY AND BOUGHT HIS BIRTHRIGHT AND BLESSINGS FROM HIM, Holy Yisrael were chosen to be the part and portion of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written, "For Hashem's portion is His people; Ya'akov is the lot of His inheritance" (Devarim 32:9).

5. The feast of the righteous in the future to come

Here the Rabbis discuss the shape of things to come--the time when The Creator will raise the dead. The discussion first centers on the physical nature of this event, then explores the question of the soul's place in heaven, along with its movement into a new body no longer made of dust. The feast that The Creator will prepare for His people is described in all its many levels of meaning, from mundane food and drink, to the meal of supernal splendor. This meal, we're told, includes no physical food or drink, and is the kind of meal that was eaten by Moses during his forty days and forty nights with The Creator. We learn, too, about who will partake of each kind of meal and what comprises the meals. The passage concludes with an inspiring vision of the future, which is described as begetting laughter and joy in the world.

The Relevance of this Passage

As usual, the wisdom of the Zohar pertains to both cosmic and personal realms. The supernal feast of joy that awaits us in the future can be tasted today through a reflective reading of this passage. Moreover, our interaction with these holy verses helps hasten the universal redemption.

Midrash Hane'elam (The Obscure Commentary)

33. "And these are the generations of Yitzchak, Avraham's son: Avraham begot Yitzchak" (Beresheet 25:19). Rabbi Yitzchak began the discussion with the verse: "The mandrakes give a fragrance..." (Shir Hashirim 7:14). The sages taught that in the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise the dead and shake the dust off them. As a result, they will no longer be made of dust, as they were when first created from dust, which does not endure, as it is written, "And Hashem Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground" (Beresheet 2:7).

34. The instant they shake the dust from their bodily frames, they will have enduring frames, as it is written: "Shake yourself from the dust; arise, and sit down, Jerusalem" (Yeshayah 52:2). They will endure and rise from beneath the ground to receive their souls in the land of Yisrael. At that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, will pour upon them all the kinds of fragrances that are in the Garden of Eden, as it is written, "The mandrakes give a fragrance."

35. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Do not pronounce it dudaim ('mandrakes'), but rather dodim ('lovers'). They are the body and the soul, who are lovers and friends to each other. Rav Nachman said: They are real mandrakes. As the mandrakes bring love into the world, so they create love in the world. And they give off a fragrance, which is how they know and recognize their Creator.

36. The verse: "And at our gates..." (Shir Hashirim 7:14) refers to the gates of heaven, which are open to bring down souls for cadavers. "...all manner of choice fruits..." refers to the souls; "new and old" refers to those whose souls left them years ago and those whose souls left them only a few days ago. They merited, by their skillful deeds, to enter the world to come. All of them are destined to descend simultaneously to enter the bodies that are prepared for them.

37. Rabbi Acha bar Ya'akov, said that a divine voice resounded, saying: "new and old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved" (Shir Hashirim 7:14). "I have laid up for you"--in these same worlds. "...for you..." means because of you, because you are a holy and clean body. Another explanation is that these mandrakes are the Angels of Peace. "...give a fragrance..." refers to souls, the fragrance of the world; "give" means to allow, as it is written: "and Sichon would not allow Yisrael" (Bemidbar 21:23).

38. Rabbi Yehuda said that three classes of ministering angels appear at the beginning of every month and on every Shabbat to escort the soul to its place of ascension. What does the verse, "And at our gates are all manner of choice fruits," refer to? Rabbi Yehuda said: These are bodies standing at the openings of the graves to receive their souls. And Dumah offers a note of reckoning, and proclaims: Master of the Universe, "old and new," those who were buried long ago, and those buried not so long ago, all these "I have laid up for you," to take them into account.

39. In the name of the Rav, Rabbi Yehuda said that in the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will rejoice with the righteous, and will let His Shechinah dwell among them. Everybody will rejoice in that joy, as it is written: "let Hashem rejoice in His works" (Tehilim 104:31). Rabbi Yehuda said that at that time the righteous will create worlds and raise the dead. Rabbi Yosi said to him: We have learned that "there is nothing new under the sun" (Kohelet 1:9). Rabbi Yehuda responded: Come and hearken. While the wicked are in the world and multiply, the whole world does not endure, but when the Righteous are in the world, it does endure. And in the future they will raise the dead, as it is written: "Old men and old women shall yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age" (Zecharyah 8:4).

40. At that time, the Righteous will attain complete knowledge, for as Rabbi Yosi said: When "Hashem rejoices in His works," then the Righteous are destined to grasp the Holy One, blessed be He, in their hearts. And wisdom will abound in their hearts, as if they are seeing Him with their eyes. This is the meaning of the verse: "And it shall be said on that day, this is our Elohim" (Yeshayah 25:9). And for their existence together, the soul shall delight in the body more than anything, and that they shall have knowledge and perception of their Master, and shall have the enjoyment of the splendor of the Shechinah. This is the goodness hidden for the Righteous in the future to come. Thus, "And these are the generations of Yitzchak, Avraham's son," refers to the generations of gladness and laughter that will exist at that time. Avraham's son is the soul worthy of it and is perfect in its ascent; "Avraham begot Yitzchak," means that the soul sires joy and laughter in the world.

41. Rabbi Yehuda said to Rabbi Chiya: We have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, will prepare a feast for the righteous in the future. What is this feast? He replied: Before you went before these holy angels, the sages of the Mishnah, I heard what Rabbi Elazar said. It set my heart at peace. For Rabbi Elazar said that the feast of the Righteous in the future is as it is written: "and they beheld the Elohim, and did eat and drink" (Shemot 24:11). Here it is written, "eat," but Rabbi Elazar noted that in one place it is explained as, "enjoy" and in another, "eat." What is the difference? He responded: Woe to the Righteous who do not have as much merit; they enjoy the splendor, though they do not understand everything. However, the Righteous who merit the divine splendor eat until they grasp it fully. Food and drink refers to this feast and eating alone. From whom do we know this? From Moshe, as it is written: "he did neither eat bread, nor drink water" (Shemot 34:28). Why so? Because he ate another meal, which is the supernal splendor. The meal of the Righteous in the future will be in that manner.

42. Rabbi Yehuda said that the feast of the Righteous in the future is to partake of His joy, according to the verse: "the humble shall hear of it, and be glad" (Tehilim 34:3). Rav Huna said that it is understood from the verse: "But let all those that put their trust in You rejoice: let them ever shout for joy" (Tehilim 5:12). Rabbi Yitzchak said: Both will occur in the future. We were taught by Rabbi Yosi that cellared wine with its grapes, from the six days of Creation, contains the ancient matters that were not revealed to man from the day the world was created. These are destined to be revealed to the Righteous in the future; this is assuredly their food and drink.

43. In the name of Rabbi Shalom, Rabbi Yehuda said that if that is true, what about the Livyatan and the bull, as it is written: "Surely the mountains bring him forth food" (Iyov 40:20). Rabbi Yosi said that it is also written: "On that day, Hashem with His sore and great and strong sword will punish Livyatan the flying serpent, and the Livyatan that crooked serpent; and He will slay the crocodile that is in the sea" (Yeshayah 27:1). This was said thrice, to hint at the kingdom. Rabbi Tanchum added that there is nothing to reveal in addition to what the wise men said. This is assuredly so.

44. Rabbi Yitzchak said: I was present before Rabbi Yehoshua and asked him about this. I said that this feast of the Righteous that will be held in the future WAS SAID TO CONSIST OF THE LIVYATAN AND THE WILD BULL. If this is so, there is a contradiction, because Rabbi Elazar said that the feast of the Righteous in the future will be as it is written in the verse: "and they beheld the Elohim, and did eat and drink." Rabbi Yehoshua said that Rabbi Elazar was correct.

45. Rabbi Yehoshua further stated the belief that the sages communicated to most of the people: that they are invited to this meal of the Livyatan and the wild bull, where they will drink of the good CELLARED wine preserved from the time of the Creation. They came upon

this verse: "and you shall eat your bread to the full" (Vayikra 26:5), and interpreted it thus. Rabbi Zira said: The Holy One, blessed be He, used all kinds of enticements to encourage the children of Yisrael to return to the good path. The greatest of them all was when He said to them, "and you shall eat your bread to the full," or among the curses, the worst is: "and you shall eat, and not be satisfied" (Ibid. 26). Why so? Because it is written: "Would we had died by the hand of Hashem in the land of Egypt" (Shemot 16:3). Rabbi Zira said: This teaches us that for the sake of eating, sacrificed their lives to die by their hands. When the Holy One, blessed be He, noticed their lust, He said to them: "If you will hearken to keep the commandments, you shall eat your bread to the full", in order to appease their minds. In this manner, the wise men saw that the exile would continue. They relied on the verses in the Torah, and said that they would eat and be merry at the great feast that the Holy One, blessed be He, will hold for them. Therefore, most of the people in the world suffer this exile for the sake of that feast.

46. Rabbi Yochanan said that we should not contradict this belief, but support the idea THAT THE FEAST CONSISTS OF EATING AND DRINKING, because the Torah bears witness to it IN THE VERSE: "AND YOU SHALL EAT YOUR BREAD TO THE FULL" (VAYIKRA 26:5). We already know the Faith of the Righteous and their desire from the verses: "we will be glad and rejoice in You" (Shir Hashirim 1:4), and not in eating, and "we will praise you love more than wine" (Vayikra 26:5), WHICH ALLUDES TO THE WINE OF THE TORAH. That feast, that they-- MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD--are destined for, FOR EATING AND DRINKING, we will partake of it too. This is the part of joy and laughter. "And these are the generations of Yitzchak (lit. 'will laugh')," for the righteous will laugh in the future. "Avraham begot Yitzchak," as it is the virtue of the soul that begets that laughter and joy in the world.

6. The combining of the attribute of Mercy with Judgment

The discussion continues to explore the uniting of Ya'akov and Rivkah. It evolves toward a more complete understanding, explaining the more subtle meanings that arise from this combination of Malchut (an aspect of judgment) and Binah (an aspect of mercy). The Rabbis also discuss the role of the Evil Inclination, explaining how this, too, derives from The Creator. They describe how evil is placed in the human heart, discuss its formidably enduring nature, and explain its role in reproduction. The creation of the Evil Inclination actually denotes the Creation of the Desire to Receive.

This Desire to Receive is a vital and necessary component in man, for without it, The Creator cannot share His infinite beneficence. There must be a willing recipient in order for sharing to take place. The angel Satan, however, manipulates this vital desire to receive into a desire to receive for the self alone. This additional aspect of receiving in a selfish manner is the "root of all evil." Man's spiritual work is to negate the Satan's influence and to express our desire to receive through sharing.

The Relevance of this Passage

A story is told of an arrogant tycoon who tosses a few gold coins to a poverty-stricken man in the streets. The poor man is of high principles and refuses the condescending handout. The tycoon is taken aback and insists that the pauper accept his gift. The poor man refuses. Initially, the tycoon was indifferent to the plight of the poor man. His charity was more an act of haughty self-regard, but now the tycoon is overcome with guilt and embarrassment. He pleads with the poor man to accept the gift. Seeing how much distress and anxiety his refusal is causing the wealthy man, the poor man decides to accept the gold coins so that his benefactor will feel better about himself. Kabbalistically, the poor man's receiving has taken the form of sharing.

A reading of this section helps us transform our selfish desires into actions that embody the principle of receiving for the sake of sharing.

47. "And Yitzchak was forty years old." Rabbi Bo began in the name of Rabbi Yosi with the verse: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth..." (Shir Hashirim 1:2). With how many GOOD qualities was the world created? We have learned that Rabbi Acha bar Ya'akov said that everything the Holy One, blessed be He, created in His worlds, outside of Himself, was in collaboration--THAT IS, THE COMBINING OF MALCHUT, AN ASPECT OF JUDGMENT, WITH BINAH, AN ASPECT OF MERCY. IT IS FROM THESE PARTNERSHIPS THAT MANY QUALITIES ARE FOUND IN THE WORLD. ONE THOUGHT THIS PARTNERSHIP OF GOOD AND EVIL

APPLIES TO CREATURES, SO HE RAISED A QUESTION. Rabbi Acha asks: Is that so? Heaven forbid, for this will add dissension in the world, FOR EVERYBODY WHO HEARS HIM WILL DISAGREE. For if you say that it means that the angels, created as the Holy Spirit itself, have a blend OF GOOD AND EVIL in them, then their faces and ours are the same--THAT IS, ANGELS AND MEN ARE EQUAL.

48. Rabbi Aba said THAT IT IS TRUE, and through this, dissension will increase in the world. For we learned in the Mishnah that all that the Holy One, blessed be He, did, He made as body and soul. THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, JOINED TOGETHER THE BODY FROM MALCHUT AND THE SOUL FROM BINAH. THIS IS THE SECRET OF JOINING JUDGMENT WITH MERCY. One may argue that the angels have no bodies and cannot perform actions until the Holy Soul, THE LIGHT OF BINAH, joins them which is help from above.

49. Rabbi Yosi said that the instant the Holy One blessed be He, resurrects the dead, all troubles will end, on the fortieth year FOLLOWING THE GATHERING OF THE EXILES. It has been resolved by law "Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed" (Devarim 25:3). The journey of Yisrael in the desert WAS COMPLETED in the fortieth year. Forty years before the body is resurrected, the soul awaits it in the land of Yisrael. IT APPEARS THEN that in the fortieth year OF THE WAITING OF THE SOUL IN THE LAND OF YISRAEL, the bodies will rise from the dust. After forty days the rain stopped, this is the meaning of the verses "And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights" (Beresheet 7:12), and "it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noach opened" (Beresheet 8:6). Also, the time of the Redemption of Yisrael is during the fortieth year. During the fiftieth year the world, which is Yovel (Jubilee), will be populated. The return of the soul to the body occurs after forty years of waiting in the land of Yisrael. This is the meaning of, "and Yitzchak was forty years old." That is, he was waiting for the body. "When he took Rivkah," who was put in the body prepared for him. Their passion and longing at that moment was for the splendor of the Shechinah only and to nourish of Her splendor. This is the meaning of the verse, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." Rabbi Aba said: "Let him kiss me" means let him nourish me. Their sole nourishment is the enjoyment and sustenance of the supernal splendor. Rabbi Yosi said that this is proven by the end of the verse, which reads: "for your love is better than wine" (Shir Hashirim 1:2).

50. "The daughter of Betu'el" means the daughter (Heb. bat) of El. Rav Huna disagreed with this. He said that BETU'EL is not ONE OF MALCHUT'S NAMES. I have been to distant lands, and heard there that this is the name of the bone of the spine. Of all the bones this one remains in the grave, AND DOES NOT ROT. It is called 'Betu'el the deceitful', THAT IS, THE 'SCOUNDREL'. I asked about it, ABOUT ITS NATURE, and they said that its shape resembles a head of a serpent, which is deceitful. And that more than any other bone in the body, this bone is deceitful.

51. For we have learned that Rabbi Shimon asks: Why does this bone endure longer than the other bones? This is because it is deceitful and does not bear the taste of human food like the other bones. For that reason, it is stronger than all the other bones. And at the resurrection of the dead, the body will be built on this root. This is the meaning of the verse, "the daughter of Betu'el the Arammian."

52. We learned that Rabbi Shimon said: It, THE BONE OF THE SPINE, is deceitful, and IT CAME from a deceitful world, NAMELY, FROM PADDAN-ARAM. Also, deceitful is the Evil Inclination, WHICH IS THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT, WHICH IS THE EVIL INCLINATION, THE ANGEL OF DEATH. This is the meaning of the verse: "the daughter of Betu'el the Arammian," who is the deceitful bone of the spine. The words, "of Paddan-Aram," WHICH MEANS THAT HE CAME FROM A DECEITFUL (HEB. RAMAI) WORLD, represent two deceivers, as we have learned that Paddana means a 'couple'. The two deceivers are "the sister of Lavan," NAMELY, the sister of the deceitful Evil Inclination. At first, when it was corrupted by sins in this world, it was called 'Lot'. In the future, when it will no longer be as corrupted, IT WILL BE as someone who has washed and was cleansed of his impurities, and it will be called 'Lavan' (lit. 'white'). Nevertheless, the Evil Inclination is not eliminated from the world.

53. Come and hearken: we learned from the Mishnah that the two daughters of Lot symbolize the two forces of the body that arouse the Evil Inclination. Because it has bathed and is no longer so impure, it is called 'Lavan'. And the two daughters are not completely negated, as it is written, "And Lavan had two daughters" (Beresheet 29:16). Rabbi Yosi asks:

Why are they there referred to as the firstborn and the younger, and here the elder and the younger?

54. Rabbi Yosi said that they no longer have the power to do evil or arouse the Evil Inclination. This is understood from the verse, "the name of the elder (lit. 'bigger') was Leah," (Beresheet 29:16) for she was weary (Heb. leah) from her wickedness and evil, while Rachel, "the younger (lit. 'smaller')," did not have the power to incite. As it is written, "and as a sheep (lit. 'Rachel') before her shearers is dumb" (Yeshayah 53:7). Rav Huna said: This is the Evil Inclination. Its two daughters are different than they were at first. First it was Lot, cursed and corrupted; now it is Lavan (lit. 'white'), who has been cleansed, not as cursed and corrupted as it was before. First its two daughters were strong; each had her individual strength. Now the name of the elder was Leah--weary ('Leah') without power; weary without strength; Leah, fatigued from her former deeds. And the name of the younger was Rachel, as we have said, not as they were at first.

55. Rabbi Acha bar Ya'akov, said: Come and behold. It is written, "And Yitzchak entreated Hashem for his wife, because she was barren" (Beresheet 25:21). Rabbi Acha asks: Why is she barren? Because the Evil Inclination does not have its full strength in the world, the only fruition and multiplying comes through prayer. It is then written: "and Hashem was entreated by him, and Rivkah his wife conceived." Once the Evil Inclination is aroused, there is procreation!

56. Rabbi Yosi asks: What then is the difference between this world and the world at that time; WILL THERE BE EVIL INCLINATION TOO? The scripture also says, "AND HASHEM WAS ENTREATED BY HIM, AND RIVKAH HIS WIFE CONCEIVED," WHICH MEANS that the Holy One, blessed be He, does it Himself, AND AWAKENS THE EVIL INCLINATION AT THAT TIME, WHICH IS ALSO PUZZLING. Rabbi Acha said: It is so. The Holy One, blessed be He, arouses THE EVIL INCLINATION for the specific purpose of mating, but not all the time, so that the Evil Inclination may be with men always, and they sin because of it. But it is aroused only for mating, and the arousal OF THE EVIL INCLINATION AT THE TIME OF UNION will be caused by the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the meaning of the verse: "and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Yechezkel 36:26). What is a heart of flesh? Rabbi Yehuda replied: It is a heart that would issue flesh and nothing else, AS, FOR EXAMPLE, A HEART THAT WOULD ONLY BEGET CHILDREN. THEREFORE IT IS WRITTEN, "AND I WILL GIVE YOU," FOR THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WILL HIMSELF AROUSE THE EVIL INCLINATION AT THE TIME OF MATING.

57. Rabbi Yitzchak, the son of Rabbi Yosi, traveled from Cappadocia to Lod, where he met Rabbi Yehuda. Rabbi Yitzchak asks him: Why are the companions, the sages of the Mishnah, not aroused in this matter of removing the Evil Inclination from the world, except at the time of mating? He replied: Upon your life! The world needs the Evil Inclination as much as it needs rain, because without the Evil Inclination there would not be the joy of study in the world. But it also would not be as corrupted as it was before, which caused sinning. This is the meaning of the verse: "They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain" (Yeshayah 11:9). Rabbi Shimon said: "MY HOLY MOUNTAIN" is the heart," the dwelling place of the Evil Inclination. Rabbi Eliezer said: A good heart is the foundation of the body and soul. For that reason, it is written: "And you shall love Hashem your Elohim with all your heart," (Devarim 6:5) for the heart is the essence of all!

7. "And the children struggled together within her" (B)

The story of Esav and Ya'akov is illuminated using an analogy with man's body and internal organs. The "children struggling together within her" refers to the brain and heart. Their struggle for primacy between these two is metaphorically expressed in Esav's selling his birthright to Ya'akov in exchange for porridge, which signifies the world. We also learn that the heart and liver are the most important organs. Next, the Rabbis more deeply explore the nature of life after the Resurrection, identifying the elements of our prior existence that will still be present after the Final Redemption

The Relevance of this Passage

Man is inclined to sacrifice long-term fulfillment and well-being for immediate ego gratification. This is the true significance of Esav selling his birthright to his brother. We settle for bowls of porridge every day, blinded by the moment, carrying only for our self-

interest at the expense of our loved ones. Moreover, we delude ourselves with the belief that our selfish actions are really for the sake of our families. This delusion is fabricated by the dark side of our nature. This passage removes the veils of illusion, giving us the strength and foresight not to sell our souls when temptation for self-indulgence arises.

58. *When Rav Kahana arrived, he said that this was said in the name of those versed in the Mishnah. The body is built upon the liver and the heart. As Rabbi Yehuda said, the heart and the liver are the leaders of the various organs of the body. The leaders of the head is the brain, but there are two leaders in the body. The first is the liver and the second is the heart. This is the meaning of the verse: "And the children struggled together within her." These are the two foundations of the body: THE BRAIN AND THE HEART.*

59. HE ASKS: Why did THE HEART AND THE LIVER struggle? AND HE REPLIED: Because the Evil Inclination was abolished from the heart. HE THEN WONDERED WHY, IF THE EVIL INCLINATION WAS ABOLISHED, IT IS WRITTEN, "struggled." It should have been written, 'And they were at peace'. Rav Huna explained that "struggled" means that the strength and vigor OF THE HEART AND LIVER, THE LEADERS OF THE BODY, were broken, BECAUSE THE EVIL INCLINATION WAS REMOVED. Rabbi Yehuda asks: What does the body say then? The body asks: 'If it be so, why am I thus?' and 'Why was I created?' Immediately, "she went to inquire of Hashem" (Beresheet 25:22).

60. "And Hashem said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples...'" (Beresheet 25:23). These are the two proud ones, the liver and the heart. Rabbi Yosi said that these are the brain and the heart, but Rabbi Yehuda said: The brain is not included in this, for it is written, "in your womb (lit. 'belly')," and the brain is not in the belly, but in the head. "And two peoples...from your bowels...and the elder (lit. 'great') shall serve the younger." This is the liver, which is great and big, and which serves the heart, as Rabbi Yehuda said: The liver receives the blood, and serves it to the heart!

61. "And the first came out red" (Beresheet 25:21). Rav Kahana explained that the liver is the first and is red. Why is it red? Because it is first to swallow the blood. Rabbi Eliezer asks: Why is it called 'first'? Because it is the first to swallow the blood from all the food; the first in blood but not in creation. And why is it that "the great shall serve the younger?" Because despite its being greater and bigger in size than the heart, it serves the heart. Rabbi Aba then asks: What is the purpose of this text if not to teach the people in the world that though there will be perfection upon earth, the path and nature of the world will not change? Rabbi Yisa said: Come and behold. The liver hunts and has venison in its mouth, while the heart contemplates and is "dwelling in tents" (Ibid. 27). As it is written, "And Ya'akov cooked pottage," (Ibid. 29) while thinking deep thoughts and occupying himself with the Torah.

62. "And Ya'akov cooked pottage." In the name of Rabbi Acha, Rabbi Bo said that the nature of the world never changes. Come and behold: it is written, "And Ya'akov cooked pottage (Heb. nazid)," as in the verse "they dealt (Heb. zadu)," (Shemot 18.11) which was translated into Aramaic as "they thought." It means that the heart thinks of and contemplates Torah, which represents the knowledge of its Creator. Thus, it is written: "and Esav came from the field, and he was faint" (Beresheet 25:29). It is the nature of the liver to go out hunting and swallow with its mouth. If it does not find any prey, it becomes tired and says to the heart: 'Before you think of the words of Torah, think of eating and drinking to nourish your body.' This is the meaning of the verse, "and Esav said to Ya'akov 'Give me to swallow, I pray you, of that red pottage,'" for it is my way to swallow the blood and transmit it to the other parts; "for I am faint," without food and drink. And the heart replies: 'Give me the first and choicest of whatever you swallow, give me your birthright,' this is the meaning of "Sell me this day your birthright" (Ibid. 31). That is, swear by your desire. As the heart contemplates food, the liver swallows. If it were not for the heart, longing and thinking about food, the liver and other organs would not be able to swallow. As Rabbi Yosi said: This is the way of slaves, who do not eat before their master.

63. Rabbi Yosi said: It is later written, "Then Ya'akov gave Esav bread and pottage of lentils" (Beresheet 25:34). What are these lentils? HE ANSWERS: They are round as a circle, and as the circle which revolves around the world does not deviate from its path, so man in that time will never deviate from his. Although there will yet be all that is good and precious and perfect, with all that, the worldly habit of eating and drinking will not change.

64. We learned in the Mishnah that four winds blow in the world, and the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise one spirit to establish the body to include four spirits, as it is written: "Come from the four winds, O breath" (or: spirit) (Yechezkel 37:9). It is not written, 'in the four,' but, "from the four winds," for it will be composed of the four of them. We learned that this spirit (or: wind) is the wind that procreates, the wind that eats and drinks. And there is no difference between this world and the days of Mashiach's coming, save the delivery from servitude to the empires alone, and there is no difference between this world and the resurrection of the dead, save cleanliness and the attainment of knowledge. Rav Nachman added longevity.

8. The gathering of the exiles and the resurrection of the dead

The Rabbis, here, discuss the timing of the Resurrection after the coming of Mashiach. Using Torah verses, they demonstrate that it is possible to tell the difference between the timing of the Resurrection of the righteous from that of the good. We're told that the evil people of our world will not experience Resurrection. Rabbi Elazar expresses his sorrow at the thought that the vast majority of mankind will have to wait longer than the righteous--although those who repent during their lives help advance the time of their own Resurrection.

The Relevance of this Passage

Evolving a consciousness of repentance is the first step in hastening our own redemption and eventual Resurrection after the arrival of the Mashiach. The Light of this passage stimulates feelings of repentance and helps hasten the arrival of the Mashiach, and thus, Resurrection for the entire world.

65. Rav Yosef asks if the days of Mashiach's coming and the resurrection of the dead are the same. He responded: No, as we have learned that the building of the Temple precedes the gathering of the exiles, which precedes the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection of the dead is the last act of all. We know this from the verse, "Hashem builds Jerusalem: He gathers together the outcasts of Yisrael. He heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their wounds" (Tehilim 147:2-3). This refers to the resurrection of the dead, which is the healing of the brokenhearted and their dead. First He builds Jerusalem; then He gathers the outcasts of Yisrael; last of all, He heals the brokenhearted.

66. We have learned that the gathering of the exiles preceded the raising of the dead by forty years, as it is written: "And Yitzchak was forty years old." What is to be made of these forty years? According to Rav Kahana, Rabbi Broka said: How many troubles, how many wars waged against the children of Yisrael will there be from the gathering of the exiles until the resurrection of the dead. He who escapes them is happy, as it is written, "and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). Rabbi Yehuda said that this teaches us, "Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be tried" (Ibid. 10). Rabbi Yitzchak added, "and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried" (Zecharyah. 13:9). During these very days, there will be days when people will say, "I have no pleasure in them" (Kohelet 12:1). And from the time the troubles disappear until the resurrection of the dead there will be forty years.

67. Rav Huna said: Come and behold. "For the children of Yisrael walked forty years in the wilderness...because they obeyed not the voice of Hashem" (Yehoshua 5:6). In this verse, it is the same. Rabbi Yosef said: Everything that was said is the same, but for one thing. At the end of forty years, when the troubles pass away and the wicked are exterminated, the dead, the dwellers of the dust, shall live. Why? Because it is written: "affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nechemyah 1:9). They had their fill with what they had. After the resurrection of the dead, the world will be settled, as it is written, "on that day Hashem shall be One and His Name One" (Zecharyah 14:9).

68. Rabbi Elazar was sitting and was exceedingly sad. Rabbi Yehoshua came before him and asks why the appearance of the candlelight of the world had become dark. He said: Great fear entered me, for I see how the companions versed in the Mishnah have responded on whom the spirit of saints dwells. They said that redemption will be in the sixth millennium. This was well said, but I see a longer time for the dwellers of the dust, who shall wait until the four hundred and eighth year of the sixth millennium, when they will rise. For this reason, the companions were stimulated by the verse that referred to THE DWELLERS OF

DUST as the children of Chet, for Chet alludes to their rising after four hundred and eight (Heb. Chet Tav) years. As it is written, "In the year of this Yovel ('Jubilee') you shall return every man to his possession," (Vayikra 25:13) when this (Heb. hazot) shall be finished. The numerical value of Hazot is 5,408, AS THE HEI OF HAZOT ALLUDES TO THE HEI (FIVE) THOUSANDS; AND ZOT IS 408 IN NUMERICAL VALUE. Then, "you shall return every man to his possession," means that THE BODY will return to its soul, which is its possession and lot.

69. Rabbi Yehoshua said: This LENGTH OF TIME should not be difficult for you, as we have learned that there are three classes: the Completely Righteous, the Completely Wicked, and the Average. The completely righteous will rise with the resurrection of the dead of the land of Yisrael a few years earlier THAN THE FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTH YEAR, namely, at the fortieth year after the gathering of the exiles. In the end, everybody will rise at the four hundred and eighth year of the sixth millennium. Who will merit this length of time? He who will keep the precepts at that time. For that reason, I am sad.

70. He said to him: Rabbi, we have studied the verse, "Let there be light," (Beresheet 1:2) which means let there be secret, BECAUSE LIGHT IS THE SECRET OF REDEMPTION. AND THE NUMERICAL VALUE OF OR ('LIGHT') IS RAZ ('SECRET'). THUS, THE VERSE, "LET THERE BE LIGHT," HINTS THAT THE TIME OF REDEMPTION WILL BE A SECRET UNKNOWN TO ALL MEN. RABBI ELAZAR BEN ARACH HINTED THAT HE DISAGREED WITH THIS LONG PERIOD. Again, he said that through repentance everyone will RISE FROM THE DEAD early. Rabbi Yehoshua said: Unless you said so, we would not have left an opening for those waiting daily for redemption, as it is written, "a store of salvation" (Yeshayah 33:6). What is this "salvation"? It alludes to those who seek salvation daily. IF REDEMPTION IS TIED TO A SPECIFIC TIME, HOW CAN IT BE EXPECTED DAILY? THIS ASSUREDLY DEPENDS UPON REPENTANCE. WHEN THEY REPENT, THEY WILL BE REDEEMED. AND FORTY YEARS AFTER REDEMPTION THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD WILL COME, AS WAS SAID.

71. HE ASKS HIM: What is the opinion of Rabbi Elazar, WHO SAID THAT IT DEPENDED ON REPENTANCE? HOW DID HE KNOW THIS? HE ANSWERS: From the verse, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Daniel 12:2). It is understood by, "those who sleep," THAT ONLY SOME WILL RISE; these are the Righteous WHO REPENTED while they were alive, who will rise early. FOR THROUGH REPENTANCE, THEY SHALL RISE A FEW YEARS EARLY. HE ASKS: By how many years do they precede other people? Rabbi Yehuda replied: By two hundred and ten years. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Resh Dalet Yud ('210') years, as it is written, "Out of Ya'akov shall come (Heb. Yerd, Yud Resh Dalet) a ruler" (Bemidbar 24:19). This indicates that the Righteous precede other men by two hundred and ten years. Rav Nachman said: Precedence depends on how much the body is worn in the dust, THAT IS, THE SOONER THE BODY WEARS OUT IN THE DUST, THE SOONER IT RISES. Rabbi Yosi said to him: If this be true, then there are many resurrections, FOR EACH BODY HAS ITS OWN RESURRECTION ACCORDING TO ITS WEARING OUT IN THE DUST. HE ANSWERS: All revivals will occur at the same time, as was said in the vision: "and the word was true, and for a long period ahead" (Daniel 10:1).

72. "And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Avraham" (Beresheet 26:1). Rabbi Abahu opened the discussion with the verse: "While the king was reclining at his board, my spike nard sent forth its fragrance" (Shir Hashirim 1:12). We learned that the righteous will pass through four eras and four times, each different from the other. During the first, knowledge will increase in the world, and the righteous will conceive what they have not conceived in this world. As we have learned from Rabbi Pinchas, in the future, the perception of the righteous will be greater than that of the ministering angels, as it is written, "as the waters cover the sea" (Yeshayah 11:9). During the second time, you shall be occupied.

(End of Midrash Hane'elam)

9. "And the boys grew...for he relished his venison"

The discussion moves to a more profound understanding of the metaphor of Esav as a hunter. Even in the womb, Ya'akov was drawn to The Creator, while Esav was drawn to idolatry. As a cunning hunter, Esav stole the minds of men and led them astray so that they would rebel against The Creator. As the Rabbis probe the issue of why Yitzchak did not know these things about his son, we discover that the Shechinah wanted only Ya'akov to be

blessed with the spirit of The Creator, which is precisely what transpired.

The Relevance of this Passage

The verses pertaining to Esav's coercing men into idolatry, function as a kind of spiritual homeopathy. Just as the cure for a deadly snake bite resides within the venom of the snake, the remedy for strengthening our consciousness against temptations of the material world resides within the verses that speak these matters. We also draw the Light of the Shechinah into our lives through the merit of Ya'akov.

73. "And the boys grew..." (Beresheet 25:27). This refers to the side of Avraham, THE RIGHT SIDE, WHICH IS CHASSADIM AND which caused them to grow. His merit supported them, for he was teaching them the precepts, as it is written: "For I know him, that he will command (Et) his children" (Beresheet 18:19). THE PARTICLE ET means that Ya'akov and Esav are included AMONG HIS SONS. Therefore, the explanation of, "And the boys grew," IS THAT THEY GREW IN HOLINESS, ONLY AFTERWARDS ESAV BECAME CORRUPTED. Rabbi Elazar disagreed. HE BELIEVES THAT each went his own way --one toward s faith, and the other towards idolatry.

74. So it was. While still in Rivkah's womb, each went toward his own side. When she was performing good deeds or passing near a place that is favorable to the precepts of Torah, Ya'akov was glad and struggled to come out. And when she walked past a place of idolatry, the wicked one struggled to come out. This has already been explained. For that reason, when they were born into the world, each was drawn to the place he deserved. Therefore it is written, "And the boys grew: and Esav was a cunning hunter..." WHICH MEANS THAT HE LED PEOPLE ASTRAY TO REBEL AGAINST HASHEM.

75. "And Yitzchak loved Esav, for he relished his venison" (Beresheet 24:28). This verse has been explained. Here, it is written: "a cunning hunter, a man of the field," while elsewhere it is written, "he was a mighty hunter" (Beresheet 10:9). THERE IT MEANS THAT HE DELUDED MEN AND LED THEM ASTRAY TO REBEL AGAINST HASHEM; HERE, IT MEANS THE SAME. THUS, "a man of the field" is one who robbed and murdered people. And ESAV said HE WENT TO THE FIELD to pray, AS IT IS WRITTEN OF YITZCHAK: "AND YITZCHAK WENT OUT TO MEDITATE IN THE FIELD" (BERESHEET 24:63). He hunted AND CHEATED YITZCHAK through his mouth, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "HE RELISHED HIS VENISON (LIT. THERE WAS VENISON IN HIS MOUTH)." HE WAS CALLED "a man of the field," because his lot was not in a populated place, but in a desolate place, in the open wilderness, in the field. Thus, he was called "a man of the field."

76. You may ask why Yitzchak did not know of all the wicked deeds of Esav, as the Shechinah was with him AND HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. For without the Shechinah, how could he have blessed Ya'akov when he did? Assuredly, the Shechinah dwelt in his house and was with him always. But the Shechinah did not inform him of that, because Ya'akov was to be blessed only with the knowledge of the Holy One, blessed be He. And so it had to be. For when Ya'akov came before his father, the Shechinah came with him, and then Yitzchak saw in his mind that Ya'akov was worthy of being blessed and that he would be blessed by the approval of the Shechinah.

10. "And Ya'akov cooked a pottage..."

Rabbi Shimon discourses on the character of Ya'akov, and the fact that Esav despised his birthright. The Torah tells us that Yitzchak bestowed numerous blessings upon his son Ya'akov, all the while thinking it was Esav. Although Yitzchak did not know Esav's evil side, this was in order to preserve the purity of his blessing of Ya'akov. However, Ya'akov did know about Esav, and he dealt with his brother in a manner that enabled him to avoid defilement. The discussion also describes the exact manner in which Ya'akov embodied judgment, mercy, and subtlety.

The Relevance of this Passage

Despite his highly spiritual nature, Ya'akov was cunning enough to receive his father's blessing--for he was fully aware of the enemy he confronted in his brother Esav. The dark side of our nature is cunning and sly, endlessly deceiving us into making wrong choices. We must be as cunning and clever as our Evil Inclination. If we remain passive and complacent,

our negative traits will control us. Summoning the shrewdness of Ya'akov through the spiritual influences of this passage, imbues us with artful and deft intellectual power to outwit the Other Side.

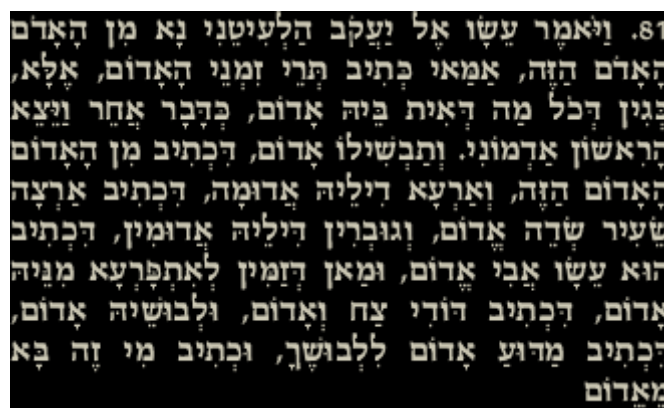
77. Come and behold: Rabbi Shimon was sitting with the other friends, when his son, Rabbi Elazar, appeared. The friend said to Rabbi Shimon: We have an important question to ask you concerning Ya'akov and Esav. Why was Ya'akov unwilling to give Esav a pottage of lentils unless he sold him his birthright? In addition, Esav said to Yitzchak, his father, "for he has supplanted me these two times" (Beresheet 27:36). HOW CAN YA'AKOV DECEIVE ESAV?

78. He responded: Now you deserve a whipping, because you believed Esav and lied about Ya'akov's words. The scripture bears witness that "Ya'akov was a plain man" (Beresheet 25:27), WHICH MEANS THAT HE CAN NOT CHEAT. Also, it is written: "You will show truth to Ya'akov" (Michah 7:20). This was the situation concerning Ya'akov and Esav. Even before, Esav detested his birthright, and he asked Ya'akov to take the birthright without payment! Thus, it is as written: "and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esav despised the birthright" (Beresheet 25:34).

79. Of the verse, "And Ya'akov cooked a pottage: and Esav came from the field, and he was faint," Rabbi Elazar explained that, "And Ya'akov cooked," refers to the mourning for Avraham, WHO HAD DIED ON THAT DAY. AND YA'AKOV COOKED ROUND LENTILS, WHICH HAVE NO MOUTH. THIS ALLUDES TO THE MOURNERS, WHO ARE WITHOUT A MOUTH. HE ASKS: But should not it have been written, 'And Yitzchak cooked a pottage,' SINCE HE, AND NOT YA'AKOV, WAS THE MOURNER? HE ANSWERS: "Ya'akov cooked a pottage," because Ya'akov knew the origin of Esav and the side he cleaved to. Therefore, he cooked red dishes, namely, red lentils, for this dish breaks the power and might of the red blood, AND CAN BREAK THE POWER AND MIGHT OF ESAV, WHO IS THE SECRET OF THE RED BLOOD, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND THE FIRST CAME OUT RED" (BERESHEET 25:25).

80. For that dish, by selling Ya'akov his birthright, Esav became a slave. Instantly, Ya'akov knew that for the one goat that the children of Yisrael sacrificed on Yom Kippur to his level--NAMESLY, "TO AZAZEL INTO THE WILDERNESS," (VAYIKRA 16:10) THE SECRET OF THE SAMAEAL, THE MINISTER OF ESAV--he becomes a slave to his descendants and will not accuse them. And because of the level of wisdom of Esav, Ya'akov dealt wisely with Esav everywhere, so that Esav was unable to rule and was submissive. Ya'akov was not defiled by him, but ruled over him.

81. We do not accept this paragraph, for it does not belong in the discussion.



82. Rabbi Yehuda said that this should have been true of Lavan as well, because he was also a sorcerer, as it is written: "I have learned by signs that Hashem has blessed me for your sake" (Beresheet 30:27). THEREFORE YA'AKOV WAS DECEITFUL TOWARD HIM. And although Ya'akov was a plain and whole man, he was merciful with whomever he had to be merciful with. He was strict in judgment and deceitful when necessary. For he consisted of two parts, CHESED AND JUDGMENT, FOR YA'AKOV IS THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH COMPRISES THE TWO COLUMNS, CHESED AND GVURAH. It is written of him: "With the merciful you will show yourself merciful; ...and with the perverse you will show yourself subtle" (Tehilim 18:26), which means that with the merciful HE DEALT on the side of Chesed, and with the perverse on the side of Strict Judgment, all as it ought to be.

11. "And there was a famine in the land..."

The Rabbis discuss The Creator's testing of the righteous, and His treatment of the wicked. There is a delay in executing judgment against the wicked in order to give them time to repent. The Creator, we're told, tests the righteous in order to help them lift up their heads. The discussion shows how this applies to Adam, Avraham, Noach, and Yitzchak; then Rabbi Shimon expounds on the need for an understanding of the relationship between soul, body, and the Shechinah. We learn that it is only when the soul is reunited with Shechinah that is truly worthy.

The Relevance of this Passage

A child learns to walk by falling down and standing up again. Measured against a lifetime of walking, this period of continual stumbling is relatively short. Similarly, the hardships and afflictions in our lives are learning opportunities. They are sent to us to help us learn to walk in the ways of The Creator. When we understand our afflictions in this way, their duration is brief compared to a lifetime of spiritual fulfillment. Conversely, when life appears strangely calm and placid, The Creator may be delaying judgments against us for self-centered behavior. We should be wary of our connection to the Light during these moments and begin to reflect with humility and repentance.

83. "And there was a famine in the land..." (Beresheet 26:1). Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse: "Hashem tries the righteous: but the wicked and him who loves violence His soul hates" (Tehilim 11:5). How orderly and right are the deeds of the Holy One, blessed be He, and all He does is according to justice and truth, as it is written, "He is the Rock, His work is perfect..." (Devarim 32:4).

84. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, did not judge Adam before He commanded him for his own good not to let his heart and will stray in another direction-- THAT IS, NOT TO EAT FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE--so that he would not be defiled. But he was not careful, and transgressed the precepts of his Master BY EATING FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, judged him.

85. Even then, the Holy One, blessed be He, did not judge him as harshly as he deserved, THAT IS, ACCORDING TO THE VERSE: "FOR ON THE DAY THAT YOU EAT OF IT YOU SHALL SURELY DIE" (BERESHEET 2:17). He refrained from wrath and let him be among the living for one day, THAT IS, THE DAY OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, which is one thousand years, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "FOR A THOUSAND YEARS IN YOUR SIGHT ARE BUT LIKE YESTERDAY WHEN IT IS PAST" (TEHILIM 90:4), minus the seventy years that he gave to king David, who had no life of his own. THEREFORE HE LIVED 930 YEARS, NAMELY, ONE THOUSAND YEARS MINUS SEVENTY.

86. Similarly, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, does not judge man according to his evil deeds, which he continually does, for if He did so, the world would not have survived. But the Holy One, blessed be He, refrains from wrath with the Righteous and the wicked. With the wicked, HE IS EVEN more FORBEARING than with the righteous, so that they may repent completely and exist in this world and in the world to come. As it is written: "'As I live,' says Adonai Elohim. 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live,'" (Yechezkel 33:11) WHICH MEANS to live in this world and in the world to come. For that reason, He is always forbearing. Another reason is that good stock may issue from them, as Avraham was begotten of Terach, who issued good stock and good origin and portion in the world.

87. But the Holy One, blessed be He, is always strict with the Righteous in every deed they do. Because He knows they will not turn away, neither to the right nor the left, He constantly tests them. Not for His own sake DOES THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, TEST THEM, as He knows their desire and the firmness of their faith and has no need of trying them. He tries them only to lift up their heads, to give them confidence as they earn their merits through these EXPERIENCES.

88. THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, behaved similarly toward Avraham, as it is written: "that the Elohim did test Avraham" (Beresheet 22:1). What is meant by "test (Heb. nisah)?" It means the raising of the banner (Heb. nes), as it is written: "lift up a standard," (Yeshayah

62:10) and "set up the standard" (Yirmeyah 4:6). He raised his standard over the whole world. And for this, FOR THE TEST AT THE SACRIFICE, the Holy One, blessed be He, raised the banner of Avraham before everybody's eyes, as it is written: "did test Avraham." Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, in order to lift the standard of the righteous, tries them, so they will lift up their heads throughout the world.

89. "...tries the Righteous..." (Tehilim 11:5): What is the reason thereof? According to Rabbi Shimon, it is because the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes for the Righteous. As it is written, "But it pleased Hashem to crush him by disease" (Yeshayah 53:10). This has already been explained. The Holy One, blessed be He, wishes for the soul and not the body, because the soul resembles the supernal soul, NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH, and the body is not worthy of being united WITH THE SHECHINAH above. Thus, although the shape of the body is in the image of the supernal secret, THAT IS, ALTHOUGH THE BODY IS DRAWN FROM THE SHECHINAH, NAMELY MALCHUT, NEVERTHELESS IT IS NOT WORTHY OF BEING UNITED WITH HER.

90. Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to illuminate the soul of a man, He crushes the body so that the soul will govern. As long as the soul is with the body, THEY ARE EQUAL, AND the soul can not rule. After the body is crushed, the soul becomes powerful. What is the meaning of the verse: "...tries the righteous..." (Tehilim 11:5)? It is as it is written: "...a tried stone..." (Yeshayah 28:16); in the same way He "tries the righteous," which means that He strengthens him by this "tried stone," which is a precious cornerstone. So does He try the righteous!

91. "but the wicked and him who loves violence his soul hates" (Tehilim 11:5). What is the meaning of "his soul (lit. Nefesh) hates"? COULD IT POSSIBLY BE THAT IT ALLUDES TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHOSE NEFESH HATES THE WICKED? FOR THE WORD NEFESH IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. The explanation is that the very level upon which all souls depend, MALCHUT, hates the Nefesh of that wicked man. For it does not want it [this soul] TO CLEAVE TO IT in this world or in the world to come. For that reason, it is written, "but the wicked and him who loves violence his soul hates." Another explanation of, "His soul hates," is as it is written: "Adonai Elohim has sworn by His Nefesh," (Amos 6:8) WHICH MEANS THAT THE WORD NEFESH IS USED IN RELATION TO HASHEM. IF SO, THEN THE EXPLANATION IS SIMPLY THAT THE SOUL OF HASHEM HATES THE WICKED AND HIM WHO LOVES VIOLENCE. For that reason He "tries the Righteous," for He loves him.

92. Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He commanded him NOT TO EAT OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, in order to benefit him. He gave him wisdom, so he would ascend through the grades TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. When he descended, he saw the desires of the Evil Inclination and clung to it, thereby forgetting all that he beheld of the Supernal Glory of his Master.

93. Of Noach, it is first written: "Noach was a just man and perfect" (Beresheet 6:9). Then he descended and saw strong wine that was one day old and not clear, AS IT WAS FULL OF DREGS. He drank from it, became drunk, and was uncovered, as it is written: "and he drank of the wine, and was drunk; and he was uncovered within his tent" (Beresheet 9:21).

94. Then Avraham was elevated with wisdom and beheld the glory of his Master. Subsequently, it is written, "And there was famine in the land: and Avram went down to Egypt" (Beresheet 12:10), and "And Avram went up out of Egypt..." (Beresheet 13:1) and was elevated to the grade he had at the beginning. He came in peace and went in peace.

95. And then Yitzchak, of whom it is written: "And there was a famine in the land..." (Beresheet 26:1). And Yitzchak went TO GERAR. From there, he later ascended peacefully. And so all the Righteous are tested by the Holy One, blessed be He, to raise their heads in this world and in the world to come.

12. "And he said, 'She is my sister'"

Here the discussion explains why Avraham and Yitzchak replied as above when they were asked about their wives. This episode is linked to the Shechinah, the Divine Presence of Creator in the physical realm. The dual meaning of the word sister is revealed as an allusion to the patriarchs own connection to the Shechinah, which is the source of human happiness

and protection. The Rabbis further discuss the nature and whereabouts of the dwelling place of the Shechinah, which resides both in their wives and in the Holy Land.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Shechinah can only dwell within us, offering protection and fulfillment, when we are in an appreciative and joyful state of mind. The moment a person feels depressed, negative, or victimized, the Shechinah departs. A positive state of mind and appreciation is summoned forth in this passage, thus drawing the Shechinah into our lives. This Light also serves to enrich our marital relationships.

96. "And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, 'She is my sister' (Beresheet 26:7), that is, just like Avraham said, "SHE IS MY SISTER," REFERRING TO THE SHECHINAH. For the Shechinah was with Yitzchak and his wife, and he said of the Shechinah, "SHE IS MY SISTER," as it is written, "Say to wisdom: 'you are my sister'" (Mishlei 7:4). Thus, he was strengthened BY THE SHECHINAH and said, "She is my sister." Avraham and Yitzchak deserved TO SAY OF THE SHECHINAH, "SHE IS MY SISTER." This is assuredly so because of the verse IN WHICH ZEIR ANPIN SAID TO THE SHECHINAH, "My sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled" (Shir Hashirim 5:2). AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK WERE A CHARIOT TO ZEIR ANPIN and were therefore worthy, LIKE ZEIR ANPIN, of saying ABOUT THE SHECHINAH, "She is my sister." Thus, the Righteous were strengthened by the Holy One, blessed be He, THAT IS, THEY BECAME A CHARIOT TO HIM.

97. "And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time...with Rivkah his wife" (Beresheet 26:8): IT IS SAID "with (Heb. et) Rivkah his wife," precisely, which alludes to the Shechinah that was with Rivkah, BECAUSE ET ('WITH'), AS WE KNOW, IS THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH. Another explanation asks if we could possibly conceive of Yitzchak performing his marital duties during the daytime. We have learned that the children of Yisrael are holy and abstain from cohabitation in the daytime. Therefore, how could Yitzchak, who was holy, cohabit during the day?

98. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly Avimelech was wise and looked at the wisdom of the stars, that is called a 'window', as it is written here, "out at a window" (Beresheet 26:8), and elsewhere, "The mother of Sisra looked out at a window" (Shoftim 5:28). As THE WINDOW there REFERS TO astrology, so THE WINDOW here REFERS to astrology. And he saw there that it was not as Yitzchak said, but that he surely was sporting with her, and she was his wife. Then, "Avimelech called Yitzchak..." (Beresheet 26:9) Rabbi Yosi said that it would have befitted Avimelech to do this to Yitzchak AND TAKE HIS WIFE, as he did to Avraham, were it not for the Holy One, blessed be He, who reprovved him earlier FOR WHAT HE DID TO AVRAHAM, SAYING "BEHOLD, YOU ARE A DEAD MAN, BECAUSE OF THE WOMAN..." (BERESHEET 20:3).

99. Come and behold: it is written, "Because I thought, 'Surely the fear of Elohim is not in this place'" (Beresheet 20:11). According to Rabbi Aba, this is the reason why he said, "She is my sister." He wanted to cleave to the Shechinah, as it is written, "Say to wisdom: [NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH] you are my sister." Why? Because they had no faith in them, for if they had faith, he would not have needed that. But because they had no faith, he said, 'SHE IS MY SISTER'. He therefore said, "Because I thought, 'Surely the fear of Elohim is not in this place.'" The fear of Elohim is Faith.

100. Rabbi Elazar said that this is because the Shechinah does not live outside the Holy Land. Therefore, there is no fear of Elohim in this place, AS FEAR MEANS THE SHECHINAH. This is not Her place, and She does not dwell here. And Yitzchak was strengthened by the faith, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, when he saw the Shechinah dwelling in his wife.

13. "And Avimelech charged"

We learn how the actions and conduct of the righteous people, such as the patriarch Yitzchak, help to build and strengthen our physical dimension of Malchut. These acts of the righteous are mirrored in our own spiritually significant actions, as in the laying of Tfilin and the donning of Tzitzit.

The Relevance of this Passage

By drawing on the metaphysical power of righteous personages such as Yitzchak, and also on the spiritual forces released by laying Tfilin and wearing Tzitzit, we build and strengthen our souls. In this way, we ensure that our sojourn in this physical existence will be filled with spiritual growth and enlightenment.

101. "And Avimelech charged all his people, saying, 'He that touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death'" (Beresheet 26:11). Come and behold: how long had the Holy One, blessed be He, refrained from avenging the wicked, for as a result of the good Avimelech did with the first patriarchs, the children of Yisrael did not rule over the Philistines until generations later. Avimelech did well to act properly toward Yitzchak, as he said TO AVRAHAM, "Behold, my land is before you: dwell where it pleases you" (Beresheet 20:15). THIS SAYING ALSO ENCOMPASSES THE DESCENDANTS OF AVRAHAM. THIS IS WHY HE KEPT HIS WORD WITH YITZCHAK AS WELL, AND RABBI ELAZAR PRAISES HIM FOR KEEPING HIS PROMISE.

102. Rabbi Yehuda said: Woe to the wicked, whose generosity is not complete. Come and behold: Efron first said, "my lord, hear me: the field I give you, and the cave that is in it" (Beresheet 23:11). Later he said, "four hundred shekels" (Ibid. 14), and then, "and Avraham weighed to Efron...current money with the merchant" (Ibid. 16). Here too, it is written at first WHAT HE SAID TO AVRAHAM, "Behold, my land is before you," WHICH INCLUDES YITZCHAK. Then he said TO YITZCHAK, "Go from us; for you are much mightier than we" (Beresheet 26:16). Rabbi Elazar said to him: This is the benevolence Avimelech had for Yitzchak. He took nothing from him and sent him away with his money and possessions. Then, he went after him to make a covenant with him.

103. And Rabbi Elazar said that Yitzchak did well because he knew the secret of wisdom. He strove and dug a well of water, THAT IS, HE FIXED THE NUKVA CALLED A 'WELL OF WATER', so as to be properly invigorated by Faith, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. Avraham also strove and dug a well of water. Ya'akov found it completed and settled by it. Everybody went after it and strove by it, so as to be strengthened by the true Faith, as is proper.

104. Presently, the children of Yisrael are strengthened by THE WELL OF WATER, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, according to the secret of keeping the commandments of the Torah; NAMELY, every day a man is strengthened and enveloped by the commandment of the Tzitzit ('fringes'), as he also is by the Tefilin he puts on his head and arm. This is as it should be, for they are the supernal mystery. For the Holy One, blessed be He, dwells with the man who is crowned by Tefilin and clothed with the fringes. All is in the secret of high Faith, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, MEANING THAT SHE IS AMENDED BY THE PRECEPTS A MAN FOLLOWS.

105. Therefore, whoever does not wear the fringes and is not invigorated by the Tefilin daily, appears as if faith does not dwell with him. The fear of his Master is removed from him, and his prayer is no proper prayer. For this reason, the fathers were strengthened by the supreme faith, since within the supernal well dwells whole faith, NAMELY, THE CORRECTED NUKVA.

14. "And he called the name of it Rechovot"

Here, the Rabbis expound meaning of the Sfirot through a discussion of the World To Come. It is said that the Torah's more mundane verses possess hidden meanings pertaining to the spiritual processes that the patriarchs endured in Upper Worlds. With this insight, we see that the deeds of the righteous are performed in order to preserve our world. This is why they are able to draw down the Shechinah into our lower realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

If we are unaware of the meaning and metaphysical power concealed in the Torah's seemingly uninteresting verses, we are prevented from deriving immense Light and strength from Torah study. This passage offers us the opportunity to ignite sparks of Light by connecting to these veiled meanings. In so doing, we tilt our own actions towards the side of righteousness, thus helping to sustain this world by our very existence.

106. "And he removed from there, and dug another well..." (Beresheet 26:22). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse, "and Hashem shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and make strong your bones" (Yeshayah 58:11). This verse had already been explained, but by this verse the faithful were strengthened, for it promises them the world to come. "And Hashem shall guide you continually" in this world and the world to come.

"And Hashem shall guide you." HE ASKS: Because he said, "And Hashem shall guide you," why add the word "continually (Heb. tamid)?" For this hints at the daily offering (lit. 'continue') made at dusk that receives its strength from underneath Yitzchak's arm, AS IT CORRESPONDS TO THE SERVICE OF MINCHAH, THAT YITZCHAK COMPOSED, WHO IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT.

It is the portion of the world to come, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, THAT RECEIVES THE PORTION OF CHOCHMAH FROM YISRAEL-SABA AND TEVUNAH, CALLED 'THE WORLD TO COME'. How do we know that "HASHEM SHALL GUIDE YOU CONTINUALLY" REFERS TO THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT? From David, as it is written, "He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake" (Tehilim 23:3). JUST AS THE WORD "LEADS," SPOKEN BY DAVID, MEANS THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS," WHICH IS A NAME OF THE NUKVA WHEN SHE SHINES FROM THE LEFT, HERE TOO WHEN IT SAYS "GUIDE," IT ALLUDES TO THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT.

107. "And satisfy your soul in drought (also: brightness)" (Yeshayah 58:11) refers to the shining lamp, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT, THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM, that all the souls delight in and take pleasure in beholding. The verse ends, "and make strong your bones" (Ibid.). The end does not suit the beginning, for if the soul of the righteous IS SATISFIED, AS SAID BEFORE "AND SATISFY YOUR SOUL IN BRIGHTNESS," WHICH SPEAKS ABOUT THE NEFESH AND NESHAMA OF THE RIGHTEOUS, why does it now say "and make strong your bones," WHICH TALKS ABOUT THE BONES OF THE BODY? BUT HE ANSWERS that this has already been explained. It refers to the resurrection of the dead, the fact that the Holy One blessed be He, will revive the dead and fix man's bones as they were at first, in a whole body. And Light will be added from the shining lamp so the soul will be illuminated together with the body in a complete whole. THIS WAY, IT REFERS TO THE SOUL OF THE RIGHTEOUS, TO WHICH THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WILL GIVE A WHOLE BODY IN WHICH TO BE CLOTHED FOR ETERNITY.

108. For this reason, it is written, "you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water" (Yeshayah 58:11). HE ASKS: What is this watered garden? AND HE ANSWERS: Its supernal water, THAT IS, THE ABUNDANT YIELD OF BINAH, never ceases its eternal flow. This garden, MALCHUT, always slakes its thirst from it. "a spring of water" refers to that river, which emerges and flows out of Eden, which waters never cease flowing.

109. HE THEN EXPLAINED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WATERED GARDEN AND THE SPRING OF WATER. Come and behold: A well of living water is the supreme secret, WHICH IS BINAH, within the faith, WHICH IS MALCHUT. THEN SHE IS a cistern, from where the spring of water, and a cistern that is filled by that spring of water. These two grades are one, namely, male and female properly as one.

110. Come and behold: This spring of water and the cistern are one. Together they are called 'a well'. FOR THE SPRING IS DERIVES FROM ALEPH, AND MALCHUT IS A CISTERN (HEB. BOR). TOGETHER THEY FORM THE WELL (HEB. BE'ER). For this spring flows INTO MALCHUT and never ceases, so the cistern is always filled. And whoever looks at the well, NAMELY, AT MALCHUT, looks on the supernal mystery of faith, NAMELY, BINAH. And this is the reasoning behind THE LABOR OF the patriarchs, who strove to dig a well of water in the supernal secret, BINAH. There must be no division between the source, WHICH IS THE SPRING OF WATER, and the cistern itself, for all is one.

111. THEN, "and he called the name of it Rechovot" (Beresheet 26:22). For this reason, its springs will spread on all sides, THAT IS, TO THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT, WHICH ARE CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM, as it is written, "So will your spring be dispersed abroad, and streams of water will flow in the broad places (Heb. rechovot)" (Mishlei 5:16). For this reason, "he called the name of it Rechovot."

112. Rabbi Shimon began with the verse, "Wisdoms cry aloud in the streets; she utters her voice in the squares (Heb. rehovot)" (Mishlei 1:20). This verse contains a deep mystery. Why IS IT WRITTEN IN THE PLURAL, THAT IS, "wisdoms," AND NOT WISDOM? HE SAID: They are the upper wisdom, CHOCHMAH OF ARICH ANPIN, and the lower wisdom that is included and dwells within the upper one, THE LOWER CHOCHMAH, NAMELY, THE NUKVA

113. "Cry aloud in the streets": Come and behold: The upper Chochmah OF ARICH ANPIN is the most concealed of all. It is not to be known or revealed, as it is written, "Man cannot know its price" (Iyov 28:13), for when it was diffused in order to illuminate, it shone on the secret of the world to come. This world to come was created from it, ARICH ANPIN, as we learned, that the world to come was created by the Yud, in which Chochmah was covered. And they became one WITH THE HEAD OF ARICH ANPIN, when everything was adorned with the secret of the world to come. Everything then is joyfully luminous, everything is silent, never heard outside.

114. It wanted to illuminate further. Thus, from this place came fire, water, and wind, as we have learned. And they became one voice that went out and was heard. From then on, it assumed the aspect of "out." For inside it is silent, SOUNDLESS, never to be heard. Now that the secret is heard, it is called "out." From here on, it behooves a man to improve his deeds and ask, NAMELY TO PRAY AND ELEVATE FEMALE WATER AND DRAW CHOCHMAH. THIS IS LIKE ASKING FOR RAIN.

115. "In the squares (Heb. rehovot)." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of squares? HE REPLIED, this is the firmament where all the stars are shining, YESOD OF BINAH IN WHICH ARE SUSPENDED THE ENTIRE MOCHIN OF MALE AND FEMALE, AND THE SOULS, WHICH ARE CALLED 'STARS'. It is a spring "whose waters fail not" (Yeshayah 58:11), as it is written, "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden" (Beresheet 2:10). It is called 'Rehovot'. There "she utters her voice," the upper, BINAH, and the lower, MALCHUT. And all is one.

116. For that reason Solomon said, "Prepare your work outside, and make it fit for yourself in the field" (Mishlei 24: 27). "Prepare...outside" MEANS, as it is written, "cry aloud in the streets," FOR CHOCHMAH IS NOT REVEALED UNTIL IT IS REMOVED FROM INSIDE OUT. For here, IN ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'OUTSIDE', work, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, can be corrected. And this may be sought, as it is written, "For ask now of the days that are past...and from the one side of heaven to the other" (Devarim 4:32).

117. "And make it fit for yourself in the field." This is THE NUKVA CALLED "a field which Hashem has blessed" (Beresheet 27: 27). After learning the mystery of wisdom and perfecting himself therein, it is then written, "and afterwards build your house" (Mishlei 24: 27). A HOUSE IS a man's soul, that he will then fix within his body, to become a whole man.

Therefore, when Yitzchak dug and formed the well peacefully, he called that "peace" Rechovot. And all was properly done. Happy are the Righteous, whose deeds before the Holy One, blessed be He, are to preserve the world, THAT IS, TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN THE NUKVA CALLED 'WORLD', as it is written, "For the upright shall dwell in the land" (Mishlei 2:21), which should be read as, 'cause to dwell' WHICH MEANS THAT THEY WILL DRAW THE SHECHINAH CALLED 'LAND', UPON THE LOWER BEINGS, as was already explained.

15. "his eyes were dim, so that he could not see"

Rabbi Shimon and his son Rabbi Elazar discuss differences in the eyesight of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov as they grow older, and the significance of this for our realm of Malchut and the supernal mysteries. The patriarchs were connected to Left Column, which denotes judgement and darkness. This is the secret meaning behind the concept of blindness in the Torah. Yitzchak embodied a complete connection to the Left Column; therefore, were are told that he is totally blind. Ya'akov's connection to both the Right and Left Columns is indicated by his only partial blindness.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our physical bodies are directly affected by our connection to the Light during our lives. These effects can be both positive and negative. Illness and health are merely expressions of how we balance the Right and Left Columns--sharing and receiving-- throughout our lives.

We are often judgmental [Left Column] during moments when we should be merciful [Right Column] and vice-versa. The wisdom to balance these two Columns is awakened within us.

118. "And it came to pass, that when Yitzchak was old" (Beresheet 27:1). Rabbi Shimon said: It is written, "And Elohim called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night" (Beresheet 1:5). This verse had already been explained; nevertheless come and behold: All the actions that the Holy One, blessed be He, performs, are true, and in the secret of the upper world. And all the words of the Torah are words of faith, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and supernal mysteries, WHICH ILLUMINATE IT as they should.

119. Come and behold: Yitzchak did not have the merit of Avraham, whose eyes were not blinded or dimmed. Here, however, is a supernal secret, the secret of faith. For we have learned that "And Elohim called the light Day" refers to Avraham, the light of day, THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, whose light grows stronger as the day advances, THE SECRET OF THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM.

120. Thus, it is written, "And Avraham was old, advanced in age" (Beresheet 24:1), that is, in the shining lights OF CHASSADIM. And he is old, as it is written, "that shines ever more brightly until the height of noonday" (Mishlei 4:18). Therefore IT IS WRITTEN OF HIM, "And Elohim called the light Day." "And the darkness he called Night." This is Yitzchak, who is dark, and gets DARKER to receive the night within him. Therefore, when he grew older, it is written, "And it came to pass, that when Yitzchak was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see" (Beresheet 27:1). FOR HE BECAME COMPLETELY DARK. Assuredly he had to be COMPLETELY dark, to cleave well to his grade.

121. Rabbi Elazar, his son, kissed his hands and said: This is well. Avraham shines on the side of his grade, and Yitzchak is darkened on the side of his grade. But why did Ya'akov GROW DARKER, as it is written, "Now the eyes of Yisrael were dim (lit. 'heavy') from age" (Beresheet 48:10). He answers: Assuredly it is AS I SAID, for it is written, "heavy", and not dim, AS WAS WRITTEN OF YITZCHAK; It is written "from age", not 'his age'. "from age" is to be interpreted as the age of Yitzchak, FOR HE INCLUDED BOTH AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. THEREFORE on the side OF YITZCHAK his eyes "were heavy...so that he could not see" (Ibid.), not properly, but he was not absolutely blind. But Yitzchak's eyes were completely dim, and it became darkness, for night, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, clove to him and it was fulfilled, "and the darkness he called Night."

16. "And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death"

The events leading to Yitzchak's 'mistaken-identity' blessing of Ya'akov are discussed by Rabbi Elazar, as he expounds upon the significance of trust in the story of the fiery furnace. In the story, three righteous people are tossed into a fire. The men possess unshakable trust in The Creator, and have no regard for their survival or destruction. For this reason, these righteous men miraculously avoid injury.

Through this story, Rabbi Elazar shows, in great depth, that only complete trust in the Light of The Creator can bring forth Divine assistance. There must be no expectation or desire for a specific result--as is written, "according to his need." We're told of the importance of being prepared, and of dwelling on the Name of The Creator, and of how these qualities are intricately related to Torah study. Such study, we learn, requires a profound intention to extol The Creator. Our efforts must be for the sake of the whole world, not for ourselves, so the earth shall be full of the Knowledge of The Creator. The Rabbis then return to the story of the blessing, its significance for future generations, and its relation to both the Shechinah and this mundane realm of Malchut.

The Relevance of this Passage

People may unknowingly embark on a spiritual path for selfish reasons. They have hidden expectations of self-serving gain. Though this is not always their conscious intention, it's the reality. We can know if our desires and efforts are pure when we ask the Light for what we need and not just what we want. We then trust in the spiritual path, regardless of any tests and obstacles we encounter. These verses increase our level of trust in The Creator. They invoke certainty in times of distress, strength during times of strife. We can embrace whatever life brings, certain of the spiritual purpose behind it.

122. "He called Esav his eldest son..." This means that he was included within strict Judgment, WHICH IS THE ASPECT OF ESAV. THEREFORE HE CALLED ESAV. "And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death." Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse, "Happy is the man, whose strength is in You..." (Tehilim 84:6), happy is the man who is strengthened by the Holy One, blessed be He, and puts his trust in Him.

123. This trust could be interpreted as the trust that Chananyah, Mishael, and Azaryah put in Him when they said, "Behold, our Elohim whom we serve is able to deliver us; He can deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and out of your hand, king..." (Daniel 3:17), MEANING, THAT THEY TRUSTED THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WOULD SURELY SAVE THEM FROM THE FIERY FURNACE. HE SAYS THAT THIS IS NOT SO, ONLY come and see, if He would not save them and be with them, it would come to pass that the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, would not be sanctified before the eyes of everyone, as they said. But when they realized they did not speak properly, they spoke again, saying "But if He does not, be it known to you, king..." (Ibid. 18), THAT IS, whether He will save them or not, let it be known to you that we will not worship an image.

It was made known to them by Yechezkel, whom they heard and believed, that the Holy One, blessed be He, would not be with them, TO SAVE THEM. AND HE TOLD THEM THAT, so that they would SURRENDER THEIR SOULS AND be rewarded. Then they spoke again, saying, "be it known to you, King..."

124. A man should not assume and think, the Holy One, blessed be He, will save us, or, that the Holy One, blessed be He, will do such and such for me. However, it behooves man to place his trust in the Holy One, blessed be He, to help him ACCORDING TO HIS NEED, as long as he strives to keep the precepts of Torah and to walk the path of truth. When a man wishes to be purified, he is surely helped, and he should trust the Holy One, blessed be He, to help him in this. And he should put his trust in Him, and not in another. Therefore, it is written, "whose strength is in you." "In whose heart are your highways" (Tehilim 84:6) MEANS that it behooves him to prepare his heart as fit, so that no strange thoughts will come into it, but to be as a mended way to pass through, where ever one needs to, EITHER RIGHT OR LEFT. THUS WHETHER THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, DOES GOOD FOR HIM OR NOT, HIS HEART SHOULD BE READY AND PREPARED, AND NOT HARBOR STRANGE THOUGHTS IN ANY CASE WHATSOEVER.

125. Another explanation for, "Happy is the man, whose strength is in You." Strength as in "Hashem gives strength to His people" (Tehilim 29:11), MEANS THE TORAH. AND "WHOSE STRENGTH IS IN YOU" MEANS that it is incumbent on a man to be occupied in studying Torah for the name (sake) of the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH, THAT IS CALLED 'NAME'. For whoever is occupied in the Torah, but does not care for its name, would have been better never born. What is meant by the verse, "in whose heart are Your highways (Heb. mesilot)?" It is as in the verse, "extol (Heb. solu) Him who rides upon the clouds; Yah is His name" (Tehilim 68:5), WHICH REFERS BOTH TO EXTOLLING THE RIDER ON THE CLOUDS AND THE HIGHWAYS IN THEIR HEARTS. THIS MEANS that when he studies the Torah, HE SHOULD BE INTENT UPON extolling the Holy One, blessed be He, and glorifying and extolling Him throughout the world. THUS STUDYING TORAH FOR ITS OWN SAKE (NAME) IS FOR THOSE "IN WHOSE HEART ARE YOUR HIGHWAYS." THIS MEANS THAT ONE MUST BE INTENT WHEN STUDYING TORAH TO DRAW THE BOUNTY OF KNOWLEDGE FOR ONE AND FOR THE WHOLE WORLD, SO THAT THE NAME OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WILL GROW IN THE WORLD, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "FOR THE EARTH SHALL BE FULL OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF HASHEM" (YESHAYAH 11:9) AND "HASHEM SHALL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH" (ZECHARYAH 14:9).

126. Come and behold: Ya'akov, all that he did was for the sake of the Holy One, blessed be He, and for that reason the Holy One, blessed be He, was with him always, by that the Shechinah never moved from him. For when Yitzchak called for Esav, his son, Ya'akov was not there. The Shechinah told this to Rivkah, who informed Ya'akov.

127. Rabbi Yosi said, come and behold: If, heaven forbid, Esav would have been blessed at that time, Ya'akov would not have ruled over the world, BUT STAYED, HEAVEN FORBID, IN EXILE ALWAYS. But it was decreed by the Holy One, blessed be He, THAT YA'AKOV WILL BE BLESSED, and everything happened as it should. Come and behold: It is written, "but Rivkah loved Ya'akov" (Bereshheet 25:28), as has been explained. Therefore, she sent for Ya'akov and said to him "Behold, I heard your father speak to Esav your brother" (Bereshheet 27:6).

128. "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice..." (Beresheet 27:8): It was then Pesach (Passover) eve, and the Evil Inclination had to be exterminated from the world, and the moon, the secret of faith, NUKVA, had to govern. Therefore, Rivkah cooked two dishes.

129. Rabbi Yehuda said that this alludes to the descendants of Ya'akov, who in the future offered two goats on Yom Kippur, one for Hashem and one to Azazel. For this reason, Rivkah offered "two kids of the goats," one for the supernal grade and one to subjugate the grade of Esav, so he would not rule over Ya'akov. Thus, there were two kids of the goats. From both, Yitzchak tasted and ate.

130. It is written, "and he brought him wine, and he drank" (Beresheet 27: 25), AND NOT, "AND HE SERVED HIM WINE." By this he hints that he served him wine from afar. According to Rabbi Elazar, this means that he brought him wine in which there is complete joy, THAT IS, THE WINE "WHICH CHEERS ELOHIM AND MAN" (SHOFTIM 9:13), to gladden Yitzchak, for he needed cheering, as the side of the Levites needs cheering, TO WIT, THE LEFT SIDE. FOR SINCE JUDGMENTS TAKE HOLD OF THE LEFT SIDE, THEREFORE, SADNESS DWELLS IN IT, AND THERE IS NEED OF HEARTENING ALL THOSE WHO ARE DRAWN FROM IT: THE LEVITES AND YITZCHAK AS WELL. Therefore, "he brought him wine, and he drank."

17. "The best clothes of her eldest son Esav"

In this section the Rabbis continue their analysis of events leading to Yitzchak's "mistaken" blessing of Ya'akov. They explain the origin of Esav's clothing, which was given by Rivkah to Ya'akov. In truth, Yitzchak was not deceived into believing Ya'akov was actually Esav. Ya'akov's clothing radiated a scent direct from the Garden of Eden. Yitzchak blessed Ya'akov because the garments emitted this holy aroma--not because he was deceived. Yitzchak realized that this fragrance could only accompany someone worthy of the blessing. Thus, we learn that Ya'akov embodied the power and soul of Adam. Rabbi Elazar describes the relationship of Ya'akov to Adam in terms of Ya'akov's beauty. This also illuminates his relationship to the realm of Binah.

The Relevance of this Passage

Adam originally wore the garments mentioned above in the Garden of Eden, thus, the garments' Divine scent when Ya'akov wore them. Ya'akov, we are told, is the embodiment of Adam, and his original clothes are returned to him by Rivkah. The Zohar is evolving a lesson concerning a natural law: all things eventually return to their rightful owners. Nothing that truly belongs to us can ever really leave us. Whatever we lose, we never really had. This enlightened view of life is awakened within us. The scent of the Garden of Eden is infused within us, so that we emit this fragrance [Light] in our lives, wherever we go. People around us will sense this Light.

131. "And Rivkah took the best clothes of her eldest son Esav" (Beresheet 27:15). These are the garments Esav took from Nimrod. They are the precious garments from Adam, which came to the hands of Nimrod, who used them when he hunted, as it is written, "He was a mighty hunter before Hashem" (Beresheet 10:9). And Esav went into the field, where he fought with and killed Nimrod, removing the garments from him. This is the meaning of "and Esav came the field, and he was faint" (Beresheet 25:29). It has already been explained why it is here written, "and he was faint," and elsewhere, "for my soul faints before the slayers" (Yirmeyah 4:31). THESE ARE ANALOGOUS. THERE IT IS WRITTEN "FAINT" TO REFER TO KILLING. HERE TOO, THERE IS KILLING, BECAUSE ESAV MURDERED NIMROD.

132. Esav hid these garments with Rivkah and wore them when he went hunting. On the day, WHEN YITZCHAK SENT FOR HIM TO RECEIVE THE BLESSINGS, he did not take them to the field and was therefore late. When Esav wore them, they put forth no scent at all, but when Ya'akov wore them, the lost object was restored AS THEY RETURNED TO THE ASPECT OF ADAM. For the beauty of Ya'akov was the beauty of Adam. They therefore returned to their place and emitted fragrance.

133. Rabbi Yosi said: YOU SAY THAT Ya'akov's beauty was the beauty of Adam. How could this be? We learned that the apple of Adam's heel eclipsed the orb of the sun. Could you say that for Ya'akov? Rabbi Elazar replied, assuredly before Adam sinned no creature could behold his beauty. But after he sinned, his beauty changed, his stature diminished, and he

was a hundred cubits high. BUT BEFORE THE SIN, HIS HEIGHT WAS FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN. THE BEAUTY OF YA'AKOV WAS LIKE THE BEAUTY OF ADAM AFTER HE SINNED. Come and behold: Adam's beauty is a mystery on which supernal faith, BINAH, stems. THAT IS, HE ACHIEVED THE LIGHT OF BINAH AND THERE ATTAINED THIS BEAUTY. Of this, the scripture says "And let the beauty of Adonai our Elohim be upon us" (Tehilim 90:17), AS THE LIGHT OF BINAH IS CALLED 'BEAUTY'. It is also written, "to behold the beauty of Hashem" (Tehilim 27:4). This is, assuredly, the beauty of Ya'akov, THAT IS, HE ACHIEVED THE LIGHT OF BINAH, AS DID ADAM. And all is in the supernal mystery.

134. "And he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him" (Beresheet 27:27). Come and behold: It is not written, "and he smelled the smell of the garments" but "the smell of his garments." This is according to the verse, "Who covers Himself with light as with a garment: who stretches out the heavens like a curtain" (Tehilim 104:2). Another explanation is that once Ya'akov wore them, they emitted an aroma. As long as Yitzchak did not smell the aroma of the garments, he did not bless him. But then, WHEN THEY EMITTED AN AROMA, he knew that the wearer was worthy of being blessed. For if he did not deserve to be blessed, no holy aroma would be put forth. This is the meaning of the verse "and he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him."

135. "And said, See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which Hashem has blessed" (Beresheet 27:27). The meaning of "and said" is not clear, FOR IT IS NOT KNOWN WHO SAID IT. Some say it is the Shechinah; some say it was Yitzchak who said "like the smell of a field which Hashem has blessed." HE ASKS: What is this field? AND HE ANSWERS: This is a field of apple trees, NAMELY, THE NUKVA CALLED 'THE FIELD OF HOLY APPLES', which the supernal patriarchs, CHESED, GVURAH AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN support and cultivate.

18. "In my distress I cried to Hashem, and He heard me"

We learn why Ya'akov's cunning in receiving Yitzchak's blessing was actually necessary to save the world from the same serpent that had earlier caused the fall of Adam. The Rabbis next give counsel on the meaning for all Yisrael of the multiple blessings given to Ya'akov and those given to Esav, both for the present and for the time of the coming of Mashiach. The blessings given to Ya'akov are explained with respect to their meaning throughout history. These blessings act as portals through which particular blends of energy flow to mankind at the appropriate periods.

We also learn the central meaning of Ya'akov for Yisrael in a spiritual, historical context. Ya'akov, as the embodiment of Adam, encompasses the entire story of man. Ya'akov represents the complete drama of human existence, represented by the Sfirah of Tiferet. Specifically, this refers to the bringing together, in one place, of all that has happened and that will happen from the time of Adam, to the final coming of the Mashiach.

The section concludes with an apportioning of the blessings, each one in its appropriate time, in relation to the history of Yisrael and the coming of the end of the Correction of the souls of man.

The Relevance of this Passage

Through the story of the children of Yisrael, we learn that the threads of the Torah are spiritually woven into the history of the world. We secure a powerful connection to Ya'akov, and in turn, to the ancient and timeless blessings that we presently need in order to hasten the final redemption. We awaken our awareness of the role and significance our lives play in the overall spiritual plan.

136. "Therefore the Elohim give you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine" (Beresheet 27:28). Rabbi Aba said: This verse has already been explained. Nevertheless, come and look at the verse, "A song of ascent. In my distress I cried to Hashem, and He heard me" (Tehilim 120:1). How many songs and praises did David say before the Holy One, blessed be He, all in order to fix his grade, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and to make himself a name, NAMELY, TO DRAW MOCHIN UPON IT, as it is written, "And David got him a name" (II Shmuel 8:13). This song he said when he saw what Ya'akov accomplished, THAT HE WAS ANSWERED AND RECEIVED THE BLESSINGS. HE SAID: "IN MY DISTRESS I CRIED TO HASHEM, AND HE HEARD ME." IF IT WERE NOT FOR YA'AKOV, WHO

RECEIVED THE BLESSINGS, THE SECRET OF THE WHOLE MOCHIN TO CONSTRUCT THE NUKVA, DAVID COULD NOT HAVE MADE HER A NAME.

137. Rabbi Elazar said: It was Ya'akov who sang this song, when his father said to him, "Come near, I pray you, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esav or not" (Beresheet 27:21). Then was Ya'akov in great distress, for he feared that his father will recognize and know him. Then it is written, "and he recognized him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esav's hands: so he blessed him" (Beresheet 27: 23). So he said: "In my distress I cried to Hashem, and He heard me."

138. "Deliver my soul, Hashem, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue" (Tehilim 120:2). This is the portion where Esav is, NAMELY, THE SERPENT, who has lying lips. What are the lying lips OF HIS GRADE? When the serpent brought curses upon the world, BY INCITING ADAM TO EAT OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, he brought them deceitfully and crookedly.

19. The Blessings

The Zohar expounds upon the blessings that were originally intended for Esav but deceitfully appropriated by Ya'akov.

Like all stories in scripture, this one is imbued with deeper meaning. In truth, the episode of "The Blessings" concerns the establishment of the universal spiritual system that mankind would utilize in its quest for transformation. The patriarchs represent the various spiritual components that comprise the system. At this particular point in its development, a critical moment is at hand. The battle for dominion over the dimension of physicality is being determined. Thus, we learn that Ya'akov's "stealing" of the blessing away from his brother Esav, signifies the victory of the Light over the forces of darkness.

The Zohar then explicates upon the secret behind the blessing: Some blessings are to be utilized in the age before the End of Days, while other blessings are designated for the Final Redemption.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power to triumph over dark forces within us, and those in our midst, is given to us through the Light of the Blessings that shine in the verses, revealing deeper, mystical truths.

139. Come and behold: When Yitzchak said to Esav "and go out to the field, and catch me some venison (Heb. tzeidah)" (Beresheet 27:3), with a Hei, INSTEAD OF USING TZAYID, WITHOUT A HEI. This has already been explained. And Esav went HUNTING to be blessed by Yitzchak, who said to him "and bless you before Hashem" (Ibid. 7). It would have been well to say just "and I will bless you," but since he added "before Hashem," the throne of glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, then trembled and said: Could it be, that the serpent is freed from these curses, and Ya'akov remains subject to them?

140. At that time Michael came before Ya'akov with the Shechinah. Yitzchak knew that and saw that the Garden of Eden is with Ya'akov, so he blessed him. When Esav entered, Gehenom entered with him. Therefore: "And Yitzchak trembled very much" (Beresheet 27:33), because he had previously thought that Esav was not of that side. Therefore he said "AND HAVE BLESSED HIM? Moreover, he shall be blessed."

141. For that reason Ya'akov behaved with cunning and guile, and brought blessings on Ya'akov, who resembled Adam, that were taken from the serpent of the lying lips, who talked and acted deceitfully, in order to incite ADAM TO EAT FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE and bring curses upon the world. For that reason, Ya'akov behaved with cunning and misled his father, so as to bring blessings upon the world and snatch from the serpent what he withheld from the world, THAT IS, THE BLESSINGS HE WITHHELD FROM THE WORLD. This was measure for measure, of which it is written, "For he loved cursing, and it came to him: and he delighted not in blessings, and it was far from him" (Tehilim 109:17). About him, the verse reads, "you are cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field" (Beresheet 3:14). He stayed accursed forever more, and Ya'akov came and took the blessings from him.

142. From the time of Adam, Ya'akov was destined to take from the serpent all these blessings, and the serpent was to remain accursed, NEVER to be released from them. And David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, asked, "What shall be given to you? Or what shall be done to you, you false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty" (Tehilim 120:3-4). What causes this evil serpent to bring curses upon the world, when he is, as they said, a serpent that bites and kills, but draws no pleasure from it?

143. "...False tongue." For the serpent deceived Adam and his wife and brought evil on him and the world. Then came Ya'akov, who took the blessings that were his own. "Sharp arrows of the mighty" refers to Esav, who harbored hatred toward Ya'akov on account of the blessings, as it is written, "and Esav hated Ya'akov because of the blessing" (Beresheet 27:41).

144. "Therefore the Elohim gives you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth" (Beresheet 27:28), NAMELY, from above and below, ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, joined together, AS HEAVEN IS ZEIR ANPIN AND THE EARTH IS THE NUKVA. "...and plenty of corn and wine" (Ibid.) has already been explained. It is similar to the verse, "yet I have not seen a just man forsaken, and his seed begging bread" (Tehilim 37:25). Come and behold: "I have been young, and now am old" (Ibid.). This verse was said by the minister of the world, NAMELY, MATATRON. And therefore he said "and plenty of corn and wine."

145. "Let peoples serve you" (Beresheet 27:29). THIS WAS when king Solomon reigned in Jerusalem, as it is written, "And all the kings of the earth...brought every man his present" (II Divrei Hayamim 9:23-24). "...and nations bow down to you" at the advent of Mashiach, according to the verse, "And may all Kings fall down before him." Rabbi Yehuda said: all this will occur with the coming of the King Mashiach, as written: "And may all kings fall down before him; all nations serve him" (Tehilim 72:11).

146. "Be lord over your brethren" (Beresheet 27:29). HE ASKS: WHY DOES SCRIPTURE USE Heveh (be), instead of the more accepted Heyeh or Tih'yeh? HE ANSWERS: This is a supernal mystery of faith, for these letters, HEI-VAV-HEI are mysteries of faith. The upper Hei above IS BINAH, Vav in the middle IS TIFERET, and the last Hei IS MALCHUT. Therefore he said "Heveh (be) a lord over your brethren," rule over them, and govern them BY THE POWER OF THESE LETTERS, when king David will appear. Rabbi Yosi said that all that will happen when Mashiach will come, THAT IS, ALL THESE BLESSINGS ALLUDE TO THE TIME OF THE END OF CORRECTION AND AFTER THE ADVENT OF MASHIACH, AND NOT BEFORE. For AS LONG AS Yisrael transgress the words of the Torah, then, IT IS WRITTEN, "you shall break his yoke from off your neck" (Ibid. 40). THEREFORE, BLESSINGS WILL PREVAIL ONLY AFTER THE ADVENT OF MASHIACH, WHEN THEY WILL REPENT AND SIN NO MORE.

147. "Therefore the Elohim give you" (Beresheet 27:28). Rabbi Yosi said that all these blessings on the side of Ya'akov's portion were his, and he took his own. And Yitzchak wanted to bestow the blessings THAT BELONGED TO YA'AKOV upon Esav. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, caused them to revert to Ya'akov, that he may take that which is his own.

148. Come and behold: Of the time when the serpent brought curses upon the world, and the land was accursed, it is written, "And to the man he said: Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife...cursed is the ground for your sake" (Beresheet 3:17), for it will not produce fruit nor vegetation in a proper measure.

Correspondingly YA'AKOV WAS GIVEN BLESSINGS FOR THE TIME AFTER THE ADVENT OF MASHIACH, WHEN THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE WILL HAVE BEEN ATONED FOR: "...and the fatness of the earth" MEANS THAT THE EARTH WILL BE WHOLE AGAIN; AGAINST THE CURSE "in sorrow shall you eat of it" (Ibid.), HE WAS BLESSED "of the dew of heaven"; CORRESPONDING TO THE CURSE "thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to you," HE WAS BLESSED accordingly with "plenty of corn and wine." In opposition to THE CURSE "in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread," HE WAS BLESSED, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you," as they will cultivate the land and till the field, as it is written, "and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers" (Yeshayah 61:5). Ya'akov took it all measure for measure, EACH BLESSING CORRESPONDING TO ONE CURSE OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, and of his own he took. The Holy One, blessed be He, caused Ya'akov to receive these blessings and cleave to his place and portion, while Esav cleaved to his own place and portion. RABBI YOSI SUPPORTS

WHAT WAS SAID, THAT THE BLESSINGS WERE VALID FOR THE END OF CORRECTION, BY SAYING THAT THEN WILL THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE BE ATONED FOR, AND IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MERIT A BLESSING INSTEAD OF A CURSE, WHICH WAS NOT TRUE BEFORE ATONING FOR THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.

149. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: We see that the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven were the blessing Esav later received, as it is written, "of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above" (Beresheet 27:39). CAN YOU SAY THAT THESE CORRESPOND TO THE CURSES OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE AFTER THE PENITENCE AT THE ADVENT OF MASHIACH?

150. Rabbi Shimon said: The one is not like the other; ESAV IS NOT LIKE YA'AKOV, and this does not resemble that. THE BLESSING OF ESAV DOES NOT RESEMBLE THE BLESSING OF YA'AKOV. How different are the grades! of Ya'akov, it is written, "Therefore the Elohim give you." And of Esav, it is written, "YOUR DWELLING shall be." ELOHIM IS NOT MENTIONED IN THIS BLESSING, SO IT WILL NOT COMPRISE HOLINESS. It is written of Ya'akov, "of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth," and of Esav, "of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven," WITH THE EARTH PRECEDING HEAVEN, for there is no resemblance between them.

151. Their grades differ considerably from each other. It is written of Ya'akov, "Therefore the Elohim give you of the dew of heaven" (Beresheet 27:28). This is the supernal dew drawn from Atik Yomin, which is called 'the dew of heaven', THAT IS, THE DEW FROM ABOVE, drawn from the grade called 'heaven', ZEIR ANPIN, from which it flows into the field of holy apple trees, MALCHUT, ABOUT WHICH IT IS THEN WRITTEN, "of the fatness of the earth." The earth refers to the land of the living above, THAT IS, MALCHUT, WHILE ATTIRING THE SFIRAH BINAH CALLED 'LIVING ELOHIM', IS THEN CALLED 'THE LAND OF THE LIVING'.

And Ya'akov inherited THE BLESSING in the upper earth, MALCHUT, and upper heaven. THE BLESSING OF Esav was in the lower land here and in the lower heaven here IN THIS WORLD. Ya'akov WAS BLESSED high above, IN THE HEAVEN AND EARTH OF ATZILUT, and Esav down below, IN THE HEAVEN AND EARTH OF THIS WORLD.

152. Also, Ya'akov WAS BLESSED above and below IN THE UPPER HEAVEN AND EARTH, AND IN THIS WORLD AT THE ADVENT OF MASHIACH. And Esav only below IN HEAVEN AND EARTH OF THIS WORLD. And though it is written, "and it shall come to pass when you shall have the dominion, that you shall break his yoke from off your neck" (Beresheet 27:40), WHICH MEANS THAT IF YISRAEL WILL SIN, THE BLESSINGS WILL BE ANNULLED, this was SAID CONCERNING HEAVEN AND EARTH here IN THIS WORLD, but up above, nothing IS CANCELED, as it is written, "For Hashem's portion is his people: Ya'akov is the lot of His inheritance" (Devarim 32:9). Come and behold: When Ya'akov and Esav started to avail themselves of the blessings, Ya'akov received his share from above, and Esav took his share below.

153. Rabbi Yosi, the son of Rabbi Shimon, son of Lakunia, asked Rabbi Elazar, has your father explained why the blessings with which Yitzchak blessed Ya'akov did not prevail, while the blessings Yitzchak bestowed on Esav all did?

154. He replied that all these blessings prevailed, along with other blessings that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave to Ya'akov. But at first, Ya'akov received ALL HIS BLESSINGS above only, FROM THE UPPER HEAVEN AND EARTH. THEY WERE THEREFORE INCOMPLETE, UNTIL HE ALSO RECEIVED THE BLESSINGS FROM BELOW. And Esav received below. After King Mashiach will arise, Ya'akov will receive above and below, THAT IS, FROM THE LOWER HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WELL, and Esav will lose everything. He will have no portion and inheritance or remembrance in the world. This is the meaning of the verse, "And the house of Ya'akov shall be fire, and the house of Yosef flame, and the house of Esav for stubble" (Ovadyah 1:8), for Esav will lose everything, and Ya'akov will inherit both worlds, this world, NAMELY, THE LOWER HEAVEN AND EARTH, and the world to come, NAMELY, THE UPPER HEAVEN AND EARTH. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT EVEN BEFORE THE ADVENT OF MASHIACH, YA'AKOV RECEIVES BLESSINGS FROM THE LOWER HEAVEN AND EARTH, THAT IS, WHEN THE TEMPLE EXISTED, ON SHABBATOT AND HOLIDAYS AND ALSO THROUGH PRAYERS. BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT CONSTANT, IT IS NOT CONSIDERED RECEIVING. BUT IN THE FUTURE IT SHALL BE PERMANENT.

155. At that point, it is written, "And liberators shall ascend upon mount Tzion to judge the mountain of Esav; and the kingdom shall be Hashem's" (Ibid.). The kingdom that Esav received in this world shall be for the Holy One, blessed be He, alone. HE ASKS IF this kingdom did not already belong to the Holy One, blessed be He? AND HE ANSWERS: Although the Holy One, blessed be He, rules above and below, He lets other peoples rule, giving each a part and inheritance in this world for their use. At that time He will take the kingdom from them all, and it will be solely His, as it is written, "And Hashem shall be king over all the earth: on that day Hashem shall be one, and His name One" (Zechariah 14:9).

156. "And Ya'akov was scarce gone out (lit. 'went out going')" (Beresheet 27:30): Rabbi Shimon said: "...went out, going" refers to two goings out. Why? Because one is of the Shechinah and one of Ya'akov. For when Ya'akov entered, the Shechinah came in with him, and he was blessed before the Shechinah. Yitzchak said the blessings and the Shechinah approved. Therefore, when Ya'akov went out, the Shechinah went out with him. This is the hidden meaning of the phrase "and Ya'akov went out going," which mentions two goings out together.

157. "Esav his brother came in from his hunting" (Ibid.): HE ASKS: Why is it written "his hunting", and not "the hunting." HE SAYS THAT THIS INDICATES THAT it is Esav's hunting that contains no blessing. And the holy spirit cried out, "Do not eat the bread of him who has an evil eye" (Mishlei 23:6).

158. "And he also had made savory food...Let my father arise" (Beresheet 27:31). His speech was impertinent, rough, and impolite. Come and behold the difference between Ya'akov and Esav. Ya'akov talked to his father humbly, with humility. It is written, "And he came to his father, and said, My father" (Ibid. 18). The difference between the language of Esav and Ya'akov is that Ya'akov did not want to frighten him. Thus, he spoke humbly, saying "arise, I pray you, sit and eat of my venison." Esav, however, said "Let my father arise," as if he was not speaking to him, BUT TO HIMSELF.

159. Come and behold: When Esav entered, Gehenom came with him, and Yitzchak trembled with fear, as it is written, "And Yitzchak trembled very much" (Beresheet 27:33). HE ASKS: Why is "very much" used to describe "trembled." HE SAID: Yitzchak never felt such fear and terror during his life. Even when he was strapped upon the altar and saw the knife, he did not tremble as when Esav entered and brought Gehenom with him. Then he said: "before you came, and have blessed him? moreover, he shall be blessed." For I saw the Shechinah approving those blessings.

160. There is another explanation: Yitzchak said, "and have blessed him." A voice came forth, saying "moreover, he shall be blessed." Yitzchak wanted to curse Ya'akov, but the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, Yitzchak, it is you whom you curse, for you have said to him "cursed be those that curse you, and blessed be those that bless you" (Beresheet 27:29).

161. Come and behold: Everyone acknowledged these blessings, the upper and lower, and even he, NAMELY, SAMAEL, THE MINISTER OF ESAV, the part and portion of Esav, acknowledged them. And he blessed him and approved of the blessings, and raised him above his head, THAT IS, HE WAS SUBMISSIVE TO HIM.

162. From where do we know this? From the verse, "And he said, Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, unless you bless me" (Beresheet 32:27). It is written, "And he said, Let me go" because Ya'akov had seized him. HE ASKS: How can a man, flesh and blood, take hold of an angel, which is pure spirit, as it is written, "who makes the winds His messengers; the flames of fire His ministers" (Tehilim 104:4)?

163. HE ANSWERS: It is understood from this that when angels, the messengers of the Holy One, blessed be He, descend into this world, they are clothed in a body in the likeness of this world, for it is not seemly to deviate from the custom of the place one visits.

164. We have learned that when Moshe went up, "he was there with Hashem forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water" (Shemot 34:28) in order not to deviate from the custom of the place he went to. And of the angels, WHO VISITED AVRAHAM when they descended, it is written, "and he stood by them under the tree, and they ate" (Bereshit 18:8). Here also, the descending angel could not struggle with Ya'akov unless

clothed in a body, as is done in this world. Therefore Ya'akov wrestled with him the whole night. But if he were not clothed (in human form), Ya'akov could not have wrestled with him.

165. Come and behold: Because these those OF THE OTHER SIDE dominate only during the night, assuredly this is why Esav rules only in exile, which is night, WHEN IT IS DARK FOR US. Hence, THE ANGEL wrestled and struggled with Ya'akov during the night. But when morning came, the strength of the angel failed, and he did not prevail. Then Ya'akov got stronger, as the dominion of Ya'akov is during the day.

166. Therefore, it is written, "The burden of Dumah. One calls to me out of Se'ir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" (Yeshayah 21:11), for the dominion of Esav, who is called 'Se'ir', is during the night. Therefore the angel weakened when morning came, and then "he said, Let me go, for the day breaks."

167. "And he said, I will not let you go, unless you bless me" (Beresheet 32:27). HE COMMENTED, IT IS WRITTEN, "Unless you bless me," but it should have been "unless you will bless me", IN THE FUTURE TENSE. Why, therefore, is it written literally, "unless you have blessed me" IN THE PAST TENSE? THE REASON IS THAT HE TOLD HIM if you will acknowledge the blessings my father gave to me and not denounce me for them, THEN I WILL LET YOU GO. FOR THAT REASON, IT IS WRITTEN, "UNLESS YOU HAVE BLESSED ME" IN THE PAST TENSE, FOR IT REFERS TO THE BLESSINGS OF YITZCHAK. It is also written, "And he said, Your name shall be called no more 'Ya'akov', but Yisrael" (Beresheet 32:29). HE ASKS: Why did he call him Yisrael? AND HE ANSWERS that he told him, we are compelled to serve you, for through your exceeding might, you have been crowned above, in the highest grade. THEREFORE your name shall surely be Yisrael.

168. "For you have striven with Elohim." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of the phrase "with Elohim?" Could it be that he referred to himself WHEN HE SAID "FOR YOU HAVE STRIVEN WITH ELOHIM?" HE ANSWERS "have striven" to be joined and united "with Elohim," THE SHECHINAH, as the union of the sun and moon, WHICH ARE ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA. Hence it is not written "against Elohim," but rather "with Elohim," WHICH INDICATES JOINING TOGETHER WITH ELOHIM in a union.

169. Another explanation of "And he said" has the same meaning as "and He said, If you will diligently hearken to the voice of Hashem your Elohim" (Shemot 15:26). AS "AND HE SAID" REFERS TO THE AWAKENING TO STRIVE TO HEARKEN TO THE VOICE OF HASHEM. Here too "And he said" MEANS THAT HE WOKE HIM AND SAID "Your name shall be called no more 'Ya'akov', but Yisrael." Then was Ya'akov crowned by his grade, FOR HE STROVE TO AND ROSE TO THE GRADE OF THE NAME YISRAEL, WHICH IS THE MOCHIN OF THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, YISRAEL BEING COMPOSED OF THE LETTERS OF 'LI ROSH (LIT. 'I HAVE A HEAD'), by which he will include all the patriarchs, THAT IS, BE THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH INCLUDES THE LEFT AND RIGHT COLUMNS, THE SECRET OF THE PATRIARCHS AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. It is written, "And he blessed him there" (Beresheet 32:30). WHY IS THE CONTENT OF THE BLESSING NOT SPECIFIED? HE ANSWERS: It means that he acknowledged all the blessings with which his father blessed him.

170. Rabbi Shimon began the discourse with the verse, "When a man's ways please Hashem, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Mishlei 16:7). Come and behold: Man has much to do if he wants to improve his behavior toward the Holy One, blessed be He, by keeping the precepts of the Torah. For we have learned that assuredly man has two angels, who are messengers that join him from above. One is on his right and the other on his left. They observe man in everything he does. They are called 'the Good Inclination' and 'the Evil Inclination'.

171. When a man wishes to be purified and strives to observe the precepts of the Torah, the Good Inclination that joined him overpowers the Evil Inclination and makes peace with it. As a result, the Evil Inclination becomes a slave to the Good Inclination. When a man wishes to be defiled, the Evil Inclination is strengthened and overpowers the Good Inclination. This has already been explained. Assuredly, when man wishes to be purified, he has much to overcome. When the Good Inclination is strengthened, then "He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." For the Evil Inclination, WHICH IS HIS ENEMY, is submissive to the Good Inclination. Of this Solomon said: "Better is he that is lightly esteemed, and has a servant" (Mishlei 12:9). The servant is the Evil Inclination, WHICH BECOMES A SERVANT TO

THE GOOD INCLINATION. Then, when a man walks by the precepts of the Torah, "he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him," including the Evil Inclination and its escorts.

172. Come and behold: Because Ya'akov put his trust in the Holy One, blessed be He, and all that he did was for His sake, his enemies made peace with him: specifically Samael, who is the strength and might of Esav, made peace with Ya'akov. Because Samael made peace with Ya'akov and acknowledged all his blessings, Esav made peace with Ya'akov. Yet, as long as Ya'akov did not make peace with SAMAEL, the minister in charge of Esav, then Esav did not have made peace with him. This is because strength below always depends on strength above. As long as the strength of the ministers in charge over them is not weakened above, it is not possible to weaken the strength in this world.

173. "And Yitzchak trembled very much, and said, Who then (Heb. eifoh) is he" (Beresheet 27:33). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "Who then?" It should have been "Who is it?" FOR 'EIFOH' LITERALLY MEANS WHERE. HE ANSWERS: "Who then" is correct because the Shechinah stood there when Yitzchak blessed Ya'akov! Thus he said "Who then," WHICH MEANS where is he who stood here and approved the blessings, whom I blessed. Assuredly "he shall be blessed," for the Holy One, blessed be He, approved these blessings.

174. Rabbi Yehuda said that for this trembling that Ya'akov brought upon Yitzchak his father, Ya'akov was punished by THE SELLING OF Yosef, and he trembled when they said to him "This we have found" (Beresheet 37:32). Yitzchak said "Who then (Heb. eifoh)." And by "eifoh," Ya'akov was punished. And although the Holy One, blessed be He, approved all the blessings, nevertheless he was punished by "eifoh" as it is written, "where (eifoh) they feed their flock" (Beresheet 37:6), where Yosef was lost to him, and he was thereby punished.

175. "...and Yitzchak trembled very much (lit. 'trembled very great trembling')." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of the word "great" as used in the scripture? AND HE ANSWERS: It is written "great" here and elsewhere, as in "and this great fire" (Devarim 18:16). IN BOTH VERSES, IT REFERS TO A GREAT FIRE, MEANING that Gehenom entered with him. HE THEN ASKS: What does "very" mean? AND HE ANSWERS: It is written "very" here and elsewhere, as in "and, behold, it was very good" (Beresheet 1:31). AGAIN, BOTH REFER TO the Angel of Death; IN THIS CASE, IT IS AN ALLUSION TO THE ANGEL OF DEATH, WHO CAME IN WITH ESAV. He then said "Who then...MOREOVER, HE SHALL BE BLESSED" (Beresheet 27:33), WHEN HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE BLESSINGS BELONGED TO YA'AKOV AND NOT ESAV.

176. "And when Esav heard the words of his father..." (Beresheet 27:34). Rabbi Chiya said: These tears brought so much evil UPON YISRAEL, that Esav cried to be blessed before his father, whose words were very important to him. BECAUSE OF THEM, ACCUSATIONS WERE MADE THAT YISRAEL DID NOT HONOR THEIR FATHERS AS HE DID. "Is not he rightly named Ya'akov" (Ibid. 36) means, So He named him, He who did so," NAMELY, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. He uttered this as if spitting, to degrade HE WHO CALLED HIM 'YA'AKOV'. It is not written, "Is not he rightly named," but literally "Did not He rightly named him." THIS INDICATES THAT HE DID NOT MEAN TO DEGRADE YA'AKOV, BUT HE WHO NAMED HIM YA'AKOV.

177. "For he has supplanted these (Heb. zeh; lit. 'this') two times." HE ASKS: Why ADD THE WORD Zeh to modify "supplanted two times?" HE ANSWERS: It means two matters are contained in one. The word bechorati (my birthright) became at another time birchati (my blessing), FOR THEY CONSIST OF THE SAME LETTERS two times, WHICH INDICATES THAT THE SAME MATTER WAS REPEATED TWICE. FOR THE BIRTHRIGHT BELONGS TO THE FIRSTBORN, AND BECAUSE HE TOOK HIS BIRTHRIGHT, HE ALSO TOOK HIS BLESSING. THUS, THE TWO DECEPTIONS ARE ONE. In the same manner, the verse "surely now we had returned this (Heb. zeh) second time" (Beresheet 43:10) MEANS that two matters are in one: 1) we would have returned (Heb. shavnu) by now and not be put to shame (Heb. boshnu) by that man, and 2) LITERALLY, we would have been back already. THE HEBREW LETTERS OF SHAVNU ARE THE SAME AS OF BOSHNU.

178. Similarly, Iyov said, "and hold me for Your enemy" (Iyov 13:24). THE LETTER COMBINATION Iyov turned into oyev (enemy). This was explained according to the verse, "For He crushes me with a tempest" (Iyov 9:17). He said before Him, Master of the universe, "perhaps a tempest stormed at You," AND IYOV TURNED INTO YOUR ENEMY. Here also, "he took away my birthright" (Heb. bechorati), and the combination turned INTO "MY BLESSING (HEB. BIRCHATI), as in "he has taken away my blessing."

179. "Behold, I have made him your lord...and what shall I do now for you, my son" (Beresheet 27:37). This means that there is no one present who gives consent THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE BLESSINGS. THEREFORE IT IS WRITTEN, "what shall I do now for you, my son." He then blessed him in this world. He looked at his grade and said to him "and by your sword shall you live," for it is fitting of you to shed blood and wage wars, SINCE YOU CLEAVE TO THE LEFT, WHICH IS OF JUDGMENTS. Therefore he said: "what shall I do now for you, my son," AS YOUR GRADE MERITS NO BLESSING.

180. Rabbi Elazar discussed the verse, "what shall I do now for you." Why add "my son?" This is because he asked him "what shall I do now for you?" I have seen you in judgment, sword, and blood. And I have seen your brother walking the path of peace. He added "my son," for surely I brought all this upon you, as you are my son. Therefore "by your sword shall you live, and you shall serve your brother." This has not yet happened, for Esav is not yet a servant of Ya'akov. This is because Ya'akov has no need for him now. And he repeatedly called Esav "my master," because Ya'akov looked far ahead and saved it to the end of days, as we said above.

181. As Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yosi were walking together, they noticed that Rabbi Yosi Saba was behind them. They sat down until he caught up to them. When he did, he said: 'now the path is readied before us,' and they went on. Rabbi Chiya quoted the verse, "It is time to act for Hashem" (Tehilim 119:126), while Rabbi Yosi began with the verse, "She opened her mouth with wisdom; and on her tongue is a Torah of steadfast love" (Tehilim 31:6). "She opened her mouth with wisdom" alludes to the Congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH; "and on her tongue is a Torah of steadfast love" refers to Yisrael, who are the tongue of the Torah, which is on their lips day and night.

182. "She opened her mouth with wisdom." This is the letter Bet of Beresheet (Eng. 'In the beginning'). IT IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, CALLED 'HOUSE' (HEB. BAYIT). "And on her tongue is a Torah of steadfast love (lit. 'Chesed')" refers to Avraham, THE SECRET OF THE COLUMN OF CHESED, with which He created the world, and he speaks always OF THE TORAH, WHICH IS THE DRAWING DOWN OF CHESED. THEREFORE, IT IS SAID "AND ON HER TONGUE IS A TORAH OF CHESED." HE FURTHER EXPLAINS THAT the letter Bet is closed on one side and open on the other. It is closed on one side, as it is written, "and you shall see My back" (Shemot 33:23). On the other side Bet is open, so that its face will shine upward TOWARD ZEIR ANPIN. It is also open to receive from ZEIR ANPIN above, AS WIDE OPEN as a foyer to receive BRIGHT LIGHT. FOR A FOYER RECEIVES MORE SUNSHINE THAN A HOUSE. For that reason, THE LETTER BET stands at the beginning of the Torah. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "SHE OPENED HER MOUTH WITH WISDOM," and later was filled WITH ALL THE WORDS OF THE TORAH, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF "AND ON HER TONGUE IS A TORAH OF STEADFAST LOVE."

Another explanation for the verse, "She opened her mouth with wisdom," IS THAT IT ALLUDES TO THE TORAH, which assuredly opens with wisdom, as it is written, "In the beginning Elohim created" (Beresheet 1:1), FOR "IN THE BEGINNING" IS 'WISDOM' in the Aramaic translation. Of the verse, "And on her tongue is a Torah of steadfast love (lit. Chesed)," the Torah later reads, "And Elohim said, Let there be light, and there was light" (Ibid. 3), WHICH IS THE LIGHT OF CHESED. ANOTHER EXPLANATION FOR THE VERSE, "She opened her mouth with wisdom," is that it is the first Hei of the holy name YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS BINAH, in which everything is contained. It is concealed and revealed, comprising both what is above and below!

183. "She opened her mouth with wisdom" because it is concealed and utterly unrevealed, as it is written, "Seeing it is hidden from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the birds of the sky" (Iyov 28:21). When BINAH started to spread together with Chochmah that cleaved to it and was clothed in it, NAMELY, IN THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "SHE OPENED HER MOUTH WITH WISDOM." IT COULD NOT SPREAD UNTIL it issued a sound, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, which is "a Torah of Chesed," OF WHICH IT IS WRITTEN, "AND ON HER TONGUE IS A TORAH OF CHESED."

184. STILL ANOTHER EXPLANATION OF THE VERSE, "She opened her mouth with wisdom" is that the last Hei OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, refers to speech, which depends on wisdom. THIS MEANS THAT THERE IS NO SPEECH WITHOUT WISDOM AND THOUGHT. THEREFORE IT IS SAID OF THE NUKVA, "SHE OPENED HER MOUTH WITH

WISDOM." THE VERSE, "and on her tongue is a Torah of Chesed" alludes to the voice, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN, which controls and conducts speech, THE NUKVA. A FURTHER EXPLANATION OF "A Torah of Chesed love" is Ya'akov, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'TORAH', AND CHESED. He is "on her tongue," OVER THE SPEECH, to guide the word and be united with it, for there is no speech without sound.

185. Rabbi Chiya then quoted the verse, "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find knowledge in crafty schemes" (Mishlei 8:12). "I, wisdom" refers to the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, CALLED 'THE LOWER CHOCHMAH'; "dwell with prudence" is Ya'akov, who is prudent BECAUSE HE TOOK THE BLESSINGS PRUDENTLY AND WITH CUNNING; AND "find knowledge in crafty schemes" alludes to Yitzchak, who used knowledge and stratagems to bless Esav. Wisdom, THE SHECHINAH CALLED 'WISDOM', was joined with Ya'akov, who dealt with prudence. Therefore Ya'akov WAS TO "find knowledge in crafty devices," by which he was blessed by his father, WHO HAD KNOWLEDGE OF STRATAGEMS TO BLESS ESAV, and all the blessings rested upon him and prevailed upon him and his descendents forever.

186. Some have prevailed in this world, and all will prevail at the advent of King Mashiach, when Yisrael will be "one nation in the land" (Yechezkel 37:22), one nation before the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the meaning of the verse "and I will make them one nation in the land," and they will reign above and below, as it is written, "and, behold, one like a son of man came with the clouds of heaven" (Daniel 7:13). This is King Mashiach, as it is written, "And in the days of these kings shall the Elohim of heaven set up a kingdom..." (Daniel 2:44). Therefore, Ya'akov wanted his blessings to be postponed and did not take them at once.

187. Rabbi Yosi then quoted the verse, "But fear not, O My servant Ya'akov, and be not dismayed, Yisrael" (Yirmeyah 46:27). This verse has already been explained. Nevertheless, after Ya'akov had received his father's blessings, he searched himself and said: I want these very blessings to be postponed for the time, so they will last. He was frightened LEST THE BLESSINGS DWELL UPON HIM NOW, FOR THEY MIGHT BE NEGATED IF YISRAEL SINNED. A voice resounded, saying "Fear not, O Ya'akov My servant, says Hashem: for I am with you" (Ibid. 28), and I will never leave you, for, "behold, I will save you from afar" (Ibid. 27) at the time for which the blessings were reserved.

188. The verse, "and your seed from the land of their captivity," means that although Esav now took the blessings and HIS CHILDREN will enslave your children, I will free them from his hands. Then, your children will enslave him. Then, "Ya'akov shall return," MEANING RETURN to these blessings, TO THE SHECHINAH THAT WILL BE WITH YA'AKOV AGAIN. "And Ya'akov will return" assuredly "and be quiet and at ease," as has been explained THAT HE WILL HAVE REST from the kingdoms of Babylon, Media, Greece, and Edom, which were enslaving Yisrael." And none shall make him afraid" for ever and ever.

189. As they continued walking, Rabbi Yosi said: Assuredly, whatever the Holy One, blessed be He, does in the world is in the secret of wisdom. It is intended to teach the greatest wisdom to mankind, so man will learn from those acts the secrets of wisdom. And everything is as it should be. His works are all the ways of Torah, since the ways of Torah are the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He. And even in the smallest thing, there are ways and paths and secrets of high wisdom.

190. Come and behold: Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai used to say that 300 legal decisions are derived from the verse, "and his wife's name was Mehetav'el, daughter of Matred, daughter of Mey-zahav" (Beresheet 36:39). This he revealed only to Rabbi Eliezer, who was with him. That shows how many secrets of the Torah are in every deed in the Torah. In each word, there is wisdom and true doctrine. Therefore the words of the Torah are holy words, by which to conceive wondrous things, as it is written, "Open you my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Torah" (Tehilim 119:18).

191. Come and behold: When the serpent deceived Adam and his wife, when he approached her and injected impurity into her, Adam succumbed to temptation. Then the world was defiled and the land became accursed because of him. He brought death to the world. And the world was punished because of him, until the Tree of Life came, atoned for Adam, and subjugated the serpent, so that his seed will never rule the seed of Ya'akov.

192. For when Yisrael offered a goat, the serpent was subdued and became a slave OF YISRAEL as we learned. Therefore, Ya'akov served his father two goats (Heb. se'irim), one with which to subjugate Esav, who is hairy (Heb. sa'ir), and the other for the grade upon which Esav depended and to which he cleaved. THIS WAS SAMAEL, THE MINISTER OF ESAV.

193. Therefore the world is accursed until a woman comes, who resembles Chavah, and a man, who resembles Adam. They will deceive and beguile the serpent and the one ruling him, NAMELY, SAMAEL. We have already learned this.

194. He opened the discussion with the verse, "and Esav was a cunning hunter, a man of the field: and Ya'akov was a plain man, dwelling in tents" (Beresheet 25:27). The phrase "a plain man" MEANS a whole man, according to the Aramaic translation, AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT HE WAS "dwelling in tents." He was plain because he dwelt in tents, WHICH MEANS THAT he held fast the two sides, RIGHT AND LEFT, WHICH ARE Avraham and Yitzchak, AND HE WAS FOUND WHOLE BOTH ON THE RIGHT, THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM, AND THE LEFT, THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH. Because HE COMPRISES OF BOTH SIDES, Ya'akov came to Esav from the side of Yitzchak THAT WAS INCLUDED IN HIM. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE TWO HE GOATS HE SERVED YITZCHAK, WHICH CAME FROM THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, THE ASPECT OF YITZCHAK. As we learned from the verse, "With the merciful you will show yourself merciful...and with the perverse you will show yourself subtle" (Tehilim 18:26-27). When he came to receive the blessings, he came with support of Avraham and Yitzchak from above, NAMELY, SUPPORT FROM BOTH THE RIGHT AND LIEFT SIDES, and so all was done wisely.

195. Come and behold: When Ya'akov arose against Samael, the grade of Esav, Samael fought and wrestled with him, but Ya'akov overpowered him in several ways. He conquered the serpent with cunning and subtlety, but he was only overpowered by the goat, THAT IS, BY THE TWO HE GOATS HE SERVED TO YITZCHAK HIS FATHER. WITH THESE, HE CONQUERED ESAV, THE GRADE OF THE SERPENT, AS HAS BEEN SAID. And though all is one, NAMELY, THE SERPENT AND SAMAEL, nevertheless he also conquered and overpowered Samael in another battle. This is derived from the verse, "and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he did not prevail against him" (Beresheet 32:25-26).

196. Come and behold: The merit of Ya'akov was such, that he, SAMAEL, wanted to exterminate Ya'akov from the world. That night was the night when the moon was created, THAT IS, WEDNESDAY EVE, A TIME OF DANGER. And Ya'akov stayed alone, and no one was with him, as we have learned that a man must not venture out alone at night. This is even more true on the night when the luminaries were created, for then the moon is defective, as it is written, "Let there be lights (Heb. me'orot)" (Beresheet 1:14), and the word Me'orot is spelled without THE LETTER VAV, WHICH IS A SIGN OF A CURSE. Because Ya'akov remained alone that night, HE WAS IN GREAT DANGER, because when the moon is defective, the evil serpent is strengthened and rules. Then Samael came and denounced Ya'akov and wanted him to perish from the world.

197. But Ya'akov was strong on all sides, on the side of Yitzchak and the side of Avraham. SAMAEL came to the right and saw Avraham strong with the vigor of day, namely, the right side, which is Chesed. He came to the left, and saw Yitzchak powerful with the strength of rigorous judgment. He came to the body, NAMELY, TO THE CENTRAL COLUMN, and saw Ya'akov strong on these two sides. AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK surrounded him, one from here and one from there. Then "when he saw that he did not prevail against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh" (Beresheet 32:26), a place outside the body, the one pillar of the body ON WHICH THE WHOLE BODY IS SUPPORTED, NAMELY, NETZACH, THE PILLAR OF TIFERET, CALLED 'BODY'. Then "and the hollow of Ya'akov's thigh was put out of joint, as he wrestled with him..." (Ibid.).

198. Once day broke and night departed, Ya'akov was strengthened, and the power of Samael diminished. Then he said: "Let me go" (Ibid. 27), for it was his time to say the morning hymns and he had to leave. He confirmed his blessings and added a blessing of his own, as it is written, "And he blessed him there" (Ibid. 30).

199. Come and behold how many were the blessings Ya'akov received. The one from his father he earned through cunning, and that gained him all these many blessings; the one of the Shechinah he received from the Holy One, blessed be He, when he returned from Lavan,

as it is written, "And Elohim...blessed him" (Beresheet 35:9). He was given one by the minister of Esav and one from his father when he went to Paddan-Aram, as it is written, "And El Shadai bless you..." (Beresheet 28:3).

200. At the time when Ya'akov saw himself with all these blessings, he said, Which shall I use now? He decided to use the weakest blessing of all. And which is that? It is the last blessing from his father. And although this too is a powerful blessing, it is not as strong for having power over the world as the first ones.

201. Ya'akov said: I will avail myself of this blessing and use it. The others I will reserve until the time when I and my children after me will need them. When WILL THIS BE? At the time the nations gather to exterminate my children from the world, as it is written, "All nations compassed me about: but in the name of Hashem I cut them off. They compassed me about; indeed, they compassed me...They compassed me about like bees..." (Tehilim 118:10-12). There are three VERSES that correspond to the three blessings THAT HE DID NOT USE. The one is the blessing from his father; the second is the blessing from the Holy One, blessed be He; and the third is the blessing he was given by the angel.

202. Ya'akov said: At that time, I will need ALL THE BLESSINGS TO PROTECT ME from the kings and all the nations in the world THAT WILL SURROUND ME. THEREFORE, I will reserve these blessings for that time. And now, for Esav, this blessing should suffice, TO WIT, THE SECOND BLESSING HIS FATHER GAVE HIM. This is like a king, who had several battalions of mighty warriors and several qualified ministers of war capable of engaging in warfare against mighty kings. In the meantime, when he learned about a great robber, he sent his gatekeepers TO FIGHT HIM. When HIS SERVANTS asked him, why did you choose to send the gatekeepers when you have such strong battalions available, the king replied, these will suffice to cope with this robber. I will reserve the battalions and ministers for war against the mighty kings, so they will be available when I need them.

203. Ya'akov said the same: To cope with Esav, these blessings HE RECEIVED FROM HIS FATHER WHEN HE WENT TO PADDAN-ARAM, will suffice. But THE REST OF THE BLESSINGS, I shall reserve for that time when my children will need them to fight the kings and rulers in the world, who will rise against them.

204. When that time arrives, all the blessings will be aroused on all sides TOWARDS YISRAEL, and the world will be properly established. From that day on, this kingdom shall rise, THAT IS, THE SUPERNAL KINGDOM, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, above all the other kingdoms, as was explained when discoursing on the verse, "but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Daniel 2:44). This is the stone that was cut out of the mountain and not by man, WHICH WAS MENTIONED IN THE SCRIPTURE, as it is written, "from thence from the shepherd, the Stone of Yisrael" (Beresheet 49:24). What is this stone? It is the congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, as written, "and this stone, which I have set for a pillar..." (Beresheet 28:22), WHICH IS THE NUKVA.

205. Rabbi Chiya said that from this IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE REST OF THE BLESSINGS OF YA'AKOV REMAIN FOR YISRAEL TO USE IN THE FUTURE, as it is written, "A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Ya'akov" (Yeshayah 10:21). About these remaining blessings, IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN, "A REMNANT SHALL RETURN," MEANING THAT THEY WILL RETURN TO YISRAEL. It is also written, "And the remnant of Ya'akov shall be in the midst of many peoples" (Michah 5:6), THAT IS, among all the nations, not Esav alone, FOR THEN THE REST OF THE BLESSINGS WILL BE AROUSED, as it is written, "And the remnant...like dew from Hashem."

206. Rabbi Yisa quoted the verse, "A son honors his father, and a servant his master" (Malachi 1:6). "A son" refers to Esav, for in the whole world there was no man who respected his father as Esav did; the homage he paid him made him ruler of the world.

207. "...and a servant his master" refers to Eliezer, the servant of Avraham. This has been explained. The man came to Charan with great wealth and camels loaded with many gifts to lavish, yet he did not say to Betu'el and Lavan, that he is Avraham's friend, or any other man, who came at Avraham's request, but when he started his speech, it is written, "And he said, I am Avraham's servant" (Beresheet 24:34). Later, he repeated SEVERAL TIMES, 'my master'. Because he respected Avraham with honor and kindness, they were patient with him for some time.

208. By right of that honor that he showed to his father, the Holy One, blessed be He, was forbearing with him when he ruled this world. And these are the tears that Yisrael shed under his yoke, until Yisrael will return to the Holy One, blessed be He, with crying in tears and weeping, as it is written, "They shall come with weeping..." (Yirmeyah 31:8) and then, "And liberators shall ascend upon mount Tzion to judge the mountain of Esav; and the kingdom shall be Hashem's" (Ovadyah. 1:21).

Blessed be Hashem for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.

VOLUME 05 - Vayetze

1. "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva..."

In this section of secret Torah teachings, Rabbi Chiya discusses the symbolism and meaning of Ecclesiastes' resonant verse, "The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to its place where it rises again." The verse refers to Ya'akov, when he was in Be'er Sheva and went to Charan, where Beresheet tells us he "tarried...all night, for the sun was set." The solar directions, north and south, indicate the Left Column and the Right Columns of energy, or, respectively, the negative and positive forces. Rabbi Ashlag's commentary further clarifies the word "place" as referring to Malchut, our physical world. Both Ya'akov and "the sun" represent Zeir Anpin--the Upper World, the source of our spiritual Light. We learn that the divine emanation alluded to in the text--"And Ya'akov went out"--is a complete one, combining the secrets of Chochmah and Chassadim; that is, both the Right and Left Columns. Rabbi Chiya explains Ya'akov's journey in terms of the Light of Zeir Anpin descending into the material world of darkness, the Malchut; and Rabbi Yosi further elucidates the journey of Ya'akov in relation to the Exile of the Jews. These explanations are used to explore the nature of The Creator's more awesome aspect, His "fierce indignation..." The Rabbis proceed into a brief discussion of the Tefilin, which are emblems of the divine presence as well as antennae-like instruments for evoking the Light, which is present even in the most seemingly dark and demonic situations. The reader comes to understand that such stories from Torah are really mullet-layered allegories, revealing the structures of reality and both the inner and the outer universe, as well as the essential harmony of God's Creation. Lastly, in the secret of 22, it is shown that the driving force of the universe on every scale comprises the desire for union between Zeir Anpin, the Upper World, and the Nukva, the Malchut, our lower physical dimension. This includes such seemingly opposed aspects of the divine as male and female, darkness and light, anger and mercy. The rabbis then state that this duality that also lies at the root of our own confusion, fear, rage, and loneliness--everything that prevents us from attaining transcendence and union with the One.

The Relevance of this Passage

The patriarch Ya'akov is the living embodiment of the Central Column force, known in lay terms as Restriction or Resistance. While the Right and Left Columns correspond to the positive and negative poles of an incandescent light bulb, the Central Column correlates to the filament, which creates light through resistance. Spiritual Light operates under the same principle. We draw Light from the Upper World of Zeir Anpin into our physical world of Malchut when we apply the concept of Restriction in our own life. This is achieved by resisting our impulsive, self-centered desires. Tefilin also assists us towards that end. Tefilin is bound upon the left arm, which denotes the negative power of the Left Column. Binding and restricting the power of the left arm weakens our own Left Column, the source of our selfish, wanton desires. The forces released through our visual connection to the Hebrew letters helps strengthen our connection to the Light, so that we may resolve the inner conflicts that cause our sense of separation from the Eternal. By invoking the power of Ya'akov and Tefilin through our attention to these passages, we receive the emotional strength, willpower, and foresight to rise above the power of impulse, creating union between ourselves and the Light of the Creator.

1. "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva, and went toward Charan" (Bereshit 28:10). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to its place where it rises again" (Kohelet 1:5). This verse has been explained. The phrase, "the sun also rises," refers to Ya'akov, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, when he was in Be'er Sheva, WHICH IS BINAH. The phrase, "and the sun goes down," refers to Ya'akov when he went to Charan, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "and tarried there all night, for the sun was set" (Beresheet 28:11). The passage: "and hastens to its place where it rises again," is similar to the verse: "and lay down in that place to sleep" (Ibid. 11). THIS REFERS TO THE NUKVA, CALLED 'PLACE', WHERE THE SUN HASTENS TO SHINE.

2. Come and behold: although the sun illuminates the whole world, it travels in only two directions, as it is written: "goes towards the south, and veers to the north," (Kohelet 1:6) for south is the Right COLUMN and north is the Left COLUMN. And the sun rises every day from the east side, FROM ITS OWN ASPECT, TIFERET, and travels toward the south side, TO

THE RIGHT COLUMN, CHESED. It then veers to the north side, TO THE LEFT COLUMN, GVURAH. THAT IS, IT EVENTUALLY COMBINES THE ILLUMINATION FROM BOTH COLUMNS. And from the north it veers toward the west, THE NUKVA. Then the sun moves to the west, where it sets. HE EXPLAINED THAT the sun rises in the east, as it is written: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva," WHEN THE TWO COLUMNS, SOUTH AND NORTH, WERE COMBINED IN HIM. The sun goes west TO THE NUKVA, as it is written: "and went toward Charan." THIS TEACHES US THAT THE ILLUMINATION ALLUDED TO IN THE TEXT, "AND YA'AKOV WENT OUT," IS A COMPLETE ILLUMINATION COMPRISING THE TWO COLUMNS, RIGHT AND LEFT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM COMBINED.

3. Rabbi Shimon said that Ya'akov went out of the ambit of the land of Yisrael, as it is written: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva," WHICH IS THE NUKVA IN ITS ENTIRETY, CALLED 'BE'ER SHEVA', AND CALLED THE 'LAND OF YISRAEL'. And he went to another domain, as it is written: "and went toward Charan," OUTSIDE THE LAND OF YISRAEL, WHERE THE OTHER SIDE RULES. THUS, Ya'akov came from the east, THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN THAT COMPRISES THE RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS, as it is written: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva." This means that during the Shmitah, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, Ya'akov took the shining light from the supernal depth, BINAH, and traveled west. THAT IS, HE TOOK THE LIGHT WHICH SETS IN THE WEST, THE LEFT COLUMN WITHOUT THE RIGHT, "and went toward Charan," a place of Judgment and wrath (Heb. charon), WHICH IS THE DOMAIN OF THE OTHER SIDE.

4. According to Rabbi Yosi, this verse refers to the exile. For at first, the light descended from the supernal depth, WHICH IS BINAH, and Ya'akov, ZEIR ANPIN, took it with him and went to POUR IT on Be'er Sheva. THIS IS THE SECRET OF: "the well that the princes dug out" (Bemidbar 21:18). IT IS THE NUKVA, BUILT OF ABA AND IMA THAT ARE CALLED 'PRINCES', FROM where Ya'akov received his illumination, and perfected the well (Heb. be'er) in all its wholeness. During the days of exile, he wanders from Be'er Sheva to Charan, as written: "and went toward Charan"--that is, to fierce indignation (Heb. Charon). What is the fierce indignation of the Holy One, blessed be He? It is the evil grade, the land of the dominion of another, NAMELY, MALCHUT OF THE KLIPOT.

5. Rabbi Chiya said that when the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, goes west, THE NUKVA, the west, represents the throne of the sun, the place upon which the sun dwells. This is the meaning of the verse, "and hastens to its place where it rises again," for it goes to that place to shine upon it. It takes all the lights FROM THE RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS and gathers them to itself, THAT IS, IT BESTOWS THEM UPON THE NUKVA.

6. So we have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN, puts on Tefilin which means He takes all the supernal crowns when he. What are they? They are the secret of the supernal Aba and supernal Ima; THEY ARE THE MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH AND BINAH, THE SECRET OF THE TWO PASSAGES: "KADESH (SANCTIFY TO ME)" (DEVARIM 11:13) AND "VEHAYAH KI YEVIACHA (AND IT SHALL BE WHEN HASHEM SHALL BRING YOU)" (SHMOT 13:11-16). KADESH IS THE MOCHIN OF THE SUPERNAL ABA, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH. VEHAYAH KI YEVIACHA IS THE MOCHIN OF THE SUPERNAL IMA, BINAH. They are the head Tefilin, THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF THE TEFILIN, THE SECRET OF YUD-HEI, CALLED 'HEAD'. Thus, we have learned that the High Priest takes the first (lit. 'in the head'), WHICH MEANS HE TAKES THE FIRST THREE SFIROT. After he took THE MOCHIN OF Aba and Ima, YUD-HEI, he received from the right and left OF THE MOACH OF DA'AT THE MYSTERY OF THE TWO PASSAGES, "SH'MA (HEAR, O YISRAEL)" (DEVARIM 6:4) AND "VEHAYAH IM SHAMOA (AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, IF YOU HEARKEN)" (DEVARIM 11:13), THE SECRET OF VAV-HEI. So it is found that ZEIR ANPIN took all THE MOCHIN, THE CHOCHMAH, BINAH, CHESED, AND GVURAH, THE SECRET OF THE FOUR PASSAGES CALLED THE 'TEFILIN OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE.'

7. Rabbi Elazar SUPPORTS RABBI CHIYA by saying: The "splendor (Tiferet) of Yisrael," ZEIR ANPIN, takes all THE FOUR MOCHIN: CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT. And when the Congregation of Yisrael is drawn upward TOWARDS BINAH, it too takes them all, LIKE ZEIR ANPIN, AND COMPRISES the male world of the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY BINAH, and the female world of the Holy One, blessed be He, ITS OWN ASPECT. And just as all the lights are emitted from this world OF BINAH, the world OF THE NUKVA ALSO absorbs them all. For the worlds are equal, THAT IS, BINAH IS NOW EQUAL TO THE NUKVA, SINCE THE LATTER WENT UP TO CLOTHE IT, AND THE LOWER THAT ASCENDS TO THE UPPER ASSUMS ITS IMAGE. Therefore, Be'er Sheva is a Yovel (Jubilee year,) WHICH IS BINAH, and

Be'er Sheva is the Sabbatical (Heb. Shmitah) year, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. THIS MEANS THAT THE LIGHTS OF BINAH AND THE NUKVA ARE EQUAL, AND BOTH ARE CALLED 'BE'ER SHEVA'. Because this sun illuminates only from the Yovel the scripture reads: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva," WHICH IS BINAH, ALSO CALLED 'BE'ER SHEVA', "and went toward Charan," the west, which is the Shmitah, NAMELY, THE NUKVA.

8. Rabbi Shimon said: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva" is the west, the Shmitah year, NAMELY, THE NUKVA; "and went toward Charan" is the year of orlah. For as he fled from his brother, he went out from the sacred domain into another domain. And when he reached Bet-El, which is a sacred domain, it is written: "And he alighted on a certain place" (Beresheet 28:11).

9. HE ASKS: What is this place THAT SCRIPTURE MENTIONS? Rabbi Chiya said: This is the place OF ZEIR ANPIN, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, as it is written: "and hastens to its place," "and tarried there all night, because the sun was set," as is written: "and hastens to its place where it rises again," for he came there to shine upon it.

10. Notice that it is written: "and he took of the stones of that place," and not, 'the stones of the place'. THIS MEANS THAT HE CHOSE CERTAIN STONES FROM THERE. HE SAYS: These are precious stones, the twelve supernal pearls, as written: "twelve stones," (I Melachim 18:31) underneath which are twelve thousands and tens of thousands of polished stones, all of which are called stones. Therefore, the scripture reads, "of the stones," and not, 'the stones'. The place is the place mentioned, NAMELY, THE NUKVA.

11. Of the phrase, "and put them under his head (lit. 'heads')," HE ASKS: Whose head? AND HE ANSWERS: The heads of that place, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "heads"? It is not, as may be said, someone who puts something under his head, but rather alludes to the four heads of the universe. THESE ARE THE FOUR WINDS: SOUTH, NORTH, EAST, WEST--THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT. THIS IS DERIVED FROM THE VERSE: "AND FROM THENCE IT WAS PARTED, AND BRANCHED INTO FOUR STREAMS (LIT. 'HEADS')" (BERESHEET 2:10). HE GAVE three stones to the north wind, three to the west wind, three to the south wind, and three to the east wind. And that place is above them, to be established by them. THAT IS, THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "HE MADE A SEA" (II DIVREI HAYAMIM 4:2); "IT STOOD UPON TWELVE OXEN, THREE LOOKING TOWARDS THE NORTH, AND THREE LOOKING TOWARDS THE WEST, AND THREE LOOKING TOWARDS THE SOUTH, AND THREE LOOKING TOWARDS THE EAST" (IBID. 4).

12. In the phrase, "and he lay down (Heb. vayishkav) in that place," the word vayishkav CONTAINS THE WORDS VEYESH CAF BET ('AND THERE IS 22'). THESE REPRESENT THE twelve lower pearls UPON WHICH THE NUKVA RESTS. IT REFERS TO CHOCHMAH IN IT. And all the grades over this place, WHICH ARE THE TEN SFIROT, THEIR NUMBER REPRESENT THE ILLUMINATION OF CHASSADIM IN IT. Together, there are twenty-two, WHICH MEANS THAT IT IS MADE WHOLE FROM BOTH CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM. Once the couch was prepared, IN THE SECRET OF THE 22, he lay down in it. HE ASKS: Who lay down in it? AND HE ANSWERS: The sun, ZEIR ANPIN, DID. Therefore, it is written of Ya'akov, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN: "and sat upon the bed" (Beresheet 48:2). It was proper for him, and for no other, FOR IT IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. And therefore, "he lay down on that place," of which scripture says, "And the sun also rises, and the sun goes down."

2. Seven vanities

The hidden meaning of Ecclesiastes' maxim, "Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities, all is vanity" is revealed here. Rabbi Elazar comments that the apparent frustrations and disappointments of life are in fact blessings in disguise. He calls them "holy and necessary," because they establish the limits within which Man can find authentic happiness. "The Sun Also Rises and The Sun Goes Down," refers to the negative aspect of the seven vanities. In its dark midnight or sundown aspect, the inescapable vanity of human existence is compared to a man "Trying To Catch The Wind"--a futile and useless activity that is harmful to the spirit, and thus evil. Such habits or vices must be left behind.

The Relevance of this Passage

The spiritual influences radiating through this section help us overcome inner weaknesses that impede our progress toward the Light. These positive forces foster deeper awareness of the aspects of life that can bring us lasting happiness and true fulfillment.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

13. "And the sun also rises, and the sun goes down" (Kohelet 1:5). HE ASKS: Why did King Solomon begin his book of wisdom with this SECRET OF THE RISING AND SETTING OF THE SUN? Rabbi Elazar said that King Solomon based his book upon the seven Vanities upon which the world is established. The pillars and foundations that sustain the world are called 'vanities', for just as the body cannot endure without vanity (also: 'breath'), so the world cannot endure without these vanities mentioned by King Solomon. And these are seven, as it is written: "Vanity of vanities, says Kohelet, vanity of vanities; all is vanity" (Ibid. 2). Altogether, there are seven VANITIES IN THE VERSE: VANITY IS ONE; VANITIES IS IN THE PLURAL, AND SINCE THE PLURAL MEANS AT LEAST TWO, THAT MAKES TWO VANITIES; TOGETHER THERE ARE THREE VANITIES. AND AGAIN HE SAYS, "VANITY OF VANITIES," WHICH MAKES SIX IN TOTAL. AND IF WE ADD, "ALL IS VANITY," AT THE END, THERE ARE SEVEN VANITIES.

14. You may say that if this be so, the world is sustained on precious pearls. Yet elsewhere it is written of evil vanities that cause the destruction of the universe, as in: "this is vanity and an evil disease," (Kohelet 6:2) and "This...is vanity and harmful spirit" (Ibid. 4). HE ANSWERS THAT assuredly this is so. Although these seven vanities are holy and necessary for the existence of the world, there are corresponding vanities from which every judgment in the world radiates. These other vanities punish men and correct them, so they will walk the path of righteousness. They are called 'a vanity in which there is evil disease', and 'a vanity which is striving after wind'. And they maintain the world because they ensure that men tread the path of righteousness in fear of the Holy One, blessed be He. Therefore, there are many EVIL vanities that spread from these seven HOLY VANITIES, FOR THEY ARE ALSO THE SUSTENANCE OF THE UNIVERSE.

15. The reason he began with the mystery of the sun, THAT IS, HE BEGAN HIS BOOK WITH THE VERSE, "AND THE SUN ALSO RISES, AND THE SUN GOES DOWN," IS THAT it is a vanity that sustains the world--a secret for bringing man to the supernal faith of the Holy One, blessed be He, SO THAT HE WILL MERIT THE SUPERNAL MOCHIN OF BINAH, CALLED THE 'SUPERNAL FAITH OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE'. Therefore, whatever is beneath this grade, THAT IS, UNDERNEATH THE SUN, is not the secret of the faith AND DOES NOT PERTAIN TO HOLINESS. Therefore it is written: "and there was no profit under the sun" (Kohelet 2:11), and, "in any thing that is done under the sun," (Kohelet. 9:6) for we should not cleave underneath it.

16. And the sun is within the moon, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN IS UNITED WITH THE NUKVA. They are one without separation, and although the moon is under the sun, AS THE NUKVA IS UNDER THE GRADE OF ZEIR ANPIN, AT THE TIME OF UNION everything becomes the sun. THAT IS, EVEN THE MOON IS THEN CONSIDERED PART OF THE SUN, BECAUSE THE SPIRITUAL CLINGING MEANS SIMILARITY OF FORM. THEN THE MOON MAY RECEIVE CHOCHMAH FROM THE SUN, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, without being considered under the sun. And everything under this is harmful spirit. IF CHOCHMAH IS DRAWN BENEATH THE SUN TO ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, IT BECOMES A VANITY THAT STRIVES AFTER WIND, THAT IS, IT BECOMES A KLIPAH AND A FIEND, and it is forbidden to cleave to it.

3. The splendor of the shining mirror

This section discusses the true nature of the patriarch Ya'akov. "As the Color Purple includes all the colors, So the shining mirror comprises all the lights." Just as the mirror includes all the lights, Ya'akov springs from the same mystical source as the Fathers who preceded him, from Adam and Noah to Abraham and Yitzchak. Like the earlier patriarchs, Ya'akov's potent self and soul are forged by the fires of sexuality, the union of opposites whose power the Other Side finds irresistibly attractive. Just as Adam was tempted by the serpent, Jacob had to "bring a gift to the other side;" that is, he had to survive a similar trial of darkness and desire. Although there were differences in the formative ordeals of the five patriarchs, we are told that they were essentially alike in nature. Thus, they produced similarly potent identities

in the men who survived them. After Ya'akov endured his own trial-by-desire, he was given the name of the descendants who would share the identity he had gained for them--"Israel."

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light arising from these verses cleanses negativity created through previous impure sexual thoughts and behavior. We become more enlightened to the power and potency of sexual union, and are inspired to keep the act free from the influences of the Other Side that always attend it. The Hebrew letters summon forth the might of the five patriarchs to help us conquer the obstacles and temptations employed by the devious evil inclination dwelling both within us and around us.

17. "And Ya'akov went out" of the closed labyrinth; and from the closed mystery emerges the splendor of the shining mirror, which is composed of two colors joined together. Because they are included within one another, all the colors are visible in it. All the appearing lights are included in the color purple. THAT IS, AS THE COLOR PURPLE INCLUDES ALL THE COLORS, SO THE SPLENDOR OF THE SHINING MIRROR COMPRISES ALL THE LIGHTS. These lights run and return, FOR THEY RUN FROM THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT TO THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT TO BE INCLUDED IN IT. BUT THEN THEY IMMEDIATELY RETURN TO THEIR PLACE IN THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT. And they do not stop to see--THAT IS, TO DRAW OUT CHOCHMAH--BUT IMMEDIATELY RETURN TO THEIR PLACE. THE ILLUMINATIONS OF THE RIGHT AND LEFT are joined within that splendor, BRINGING BOTH TO THE RIGHT IN THE ILLUMINATION OF CHASSADIM. AND THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT IS NOT SEEN AT ALL, BUT IS NEAGTED AND INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT.

18. In that splendor dwells whoever dwells, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS THE FIRST THREE SFIROT. This is a name that describes something closed and utterly unknown. THAT IS, THE NAME DWELLS ON THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT, WHOSE LABYRINTH IS NOT YET OPENED OR KNOWN. IT DOES NOT DWELL ON THE LEFT, WHOSE LABYRINTH WAS OPENED AND ITS EXISTENCE BECAME KNOWN. THIS SPLENDOR is called the 'voice of Ya'akov', NOT 'A GREAT VOICE'. In this SPLENDOR, THE LIGHT OF THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF BINAH, CALLED 'the Whole Faith', is seen. THESE CHASSADIM ARE ALSO CONSIDERED PART OF THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, AS THE CHASSADIM OF THE FIRST THREE OF BINAH. And within this closed LABYRINTH OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT, which is utterly unknown, the Name of Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei dwells. It is whole on all sides, for the upper and the lower, BINAH AND THE NUKVA, are here INCLUDED WITHIN THIS SPLENDOR. Therefore, Ya'akov was selected to be the chosen among the Fathers, for he is included in all sides. This splendor OF YA'AKOV'S GRADE, AS A RESULT OF THE purification of his name, WHICH REACHED MALCHUT, IS CALLED 'THE CHOSEN AMONG THE FATHERS', as it is written: "Ya'akov whom I have chosen" (Yeshayah 41:8). He is called by two names: Ya'akov and Yisrael. First, HE WAS CALLED 'Ya'akov'. AT THAT TIME, HE LET THE RIGHT RULE. After HE ESTABLISHED THE ILLUMINATION OF BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT, FOR CHOCHMAH SHINES ONLY AFTER IT IS INCLUDED WITHIN CHASSADIM, HE WAS CALLED 'Yisrael'.

19. This is a great mystery, for the beginning, BEFORE HE WENT TO CHARAN, he was at the end of this thought, which is the explanation of the Written Torah, called the 'Oral Torah', WHICH IS THE NUKVA. THOUGHT MEANS BINAH; THE END OF THOUGHT IS THE NUKVA WHEN SWEETENED BY BINAH. It is therefore called a 'well' (Heb. be'er), as it is written: "Moshe began to declare (Heb. be'er) this Torah" (Devarim 1:5). For it is a well, which is an explanation (heb. be'ur) of that which is referred to as seven (Heb. sheva), BINAH, WHICH EXPLAINS AND REVEALS THE CHOCHMAH IN IT, as it is written: "So was he seven years in building it" (I Melachim 6:38). AND THE FIRST TEMPLE IS THE SECRET OF BINAH, which is a great voice. AND WHEN THE NUKVA RECEIVES CHOCHMAH FROM BINAH, IT IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE A GREAT VOICE, NOT YA'AKOV'S VOICE, SINCE IT IS CHASSADIM.

20. The end of this thought occurs in Be'er Sheva where Ya'akov attained the top of his faith, THAT IS, HE ATTAINED THE FIRST THREE SFIROT FROM THE ASPECT OF CHASSADIM WHICH ARE CALLED 'THE TOP OF FAITH'. Because YA'AKOV cleaved to this faith, THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF CHASSADIM, he has to be tried in the same place his fathers were tried, the place where they came and whence they left in peace.

21. Adam was tried first: HE WAS TEMPTED BY THE SERPENT. Because he was not careful, he was seduced, and he sinned with "a wife of harlotry," (Hoshea 1:2) the primordial serpent. Noah was tried, but did not take heed. He was seduced BY A WIFE OF HARLOTRY

and sinned, as it was written: "and he drank of the wine, and was drunk; and he was uncovered within his tent" (Beresheet 9:21). Avraham went in and departed, as it is written: "And Avram went down to Egypt," (Beresheet 12:10) and, "And Avram went up out of Egypt" (Beresheet 13:1). Yitzchak went in and departed, as it is written: "And Yitzchak went to Avimelech, king of the Philistines," (Beresheet 26:1) and, "And he went up from there to Be'er Sheva" (Ibid. 23).

22. After Ya'akov entered the grade of faith, WHICH WAS THE DOMINION OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT--he had to bring a gift to that side--THAT IS, TO THE RULER OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, BY SURVIVING A TRIAL. For whoever survives THE TRIAL is beloved of and chosen by the Holy One, blessed be He. It is written: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva," from the side of faith, FROM THE RIGHT SIDE, "and went toward Charan," which is the LEFT side, where a wife of harlotry TAKES HOLD, a fornicating wife. AND ALTHOUGH THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENCES AMONG THESE FIVE TRIALS--THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, THE HEADY WINE, EGYPT, THE PHILISTINES, AND CHARAN, WHICH WERE THE TRIALS OF ADAM, NOACH, AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, AND YA'AKOV--NEVERTHELESS, THEY HAVE THE SAME ROOT, NAMELY, THE DRAWING OF CHOCHMAH ONLY FROM DOWN UPWARDS, WHICH IS CALLED A 'WIFE OF HARLOTRY'.

4. Samael and the wife of harlotry

This is a discussion of the dual nature of evil, as revealed by Ya'akov's story. The Klipot, or 'shells' of negativity, have both male and female aspects. The text personifies the softer, female aspect of evil as a whore - "the wife of harlotry"- dressed up in her finery to seduce men. A foolish man is seduced by evil's glittering facade and by distracting displays of false affection. After an individual has consorted with evil, its illusion of softness melts away, replaced by the hard and punitive male aspect, [do not pronounce this name] Samael, who is an avenger and a killer. Ya'akov, a wise man, is tempted by the evil's feminine charms, and is almost seduced by the Other Side--but at the last moment, he sees its true nature and turns away. Samael is so vexed at losing a victim that he fights Ya'akov, as it is written: "and there wrestled a man with him..." Ya'akov is strong enough to defeat Samael, yet he is also forever scarred by the struggle when the demon "touched the hollow of his thigh." This mark is his badge of honor.

The Relevance of this Passage

Far too frequently, we fall prey to the illusions of our material existence, and this is never without cost. Our egos may be seduced by flattery and opportunities for gaining prestige and honor. Pride and social pressures make true spiritual growth and fulfillment almost impossible to achieve, setting the stage for perhaps the greatest of all metaphysical battles: the struggle with our own ego. The sages understood this challenge, and gave us the ability to invoke the might of Ya'akov through the Hebrew letters that compose this passage. As we are strengthened in the face of evil, we gain the power to see through its attractive facade, and to overcome the temptations that hinder our journey towards the Light.

23. A deep mystery is found in the strength of Yitzchak's light OF HOLINESS, and from the dregs of wine, WHICH ARE KLIPOT. One shape emerged FROM BOTH, made of GOOD AND EVIL, male and female, as one. It is red as a rose and extends to many sides and paths, HAVING MANY ASPECTS. The male is called 'Samael' and the female is always included within him. As on the side of holiness, ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA ARE ALWAYS INCLUDED ONE WITHIN THE OTHER; so it is on the Other Side, a male and female are included within one another. The female of Samael is called a 'serpent', "a wife of harlotry," "The end of all flesh," (Beresheet 6:13) and the end of days.

24. Two evil spirits cling together. THE ILLUMINATION OF the spirit of the male is a thin light, NAMELY, ONLY THE SIX EXTREMITIES WITHOUT THE HEAD. And the spirit of the female materializes in many ways and paths, BEING AN ENTIRE PARTZUF, HEAD, AND BODY, FOR IN THE KLIPAH, THE FEMALE IS LARGER THAN THE MALE. She cleaves to the spirit of the male, wearing ample jewelry like an abominable whore standing on main roads and pathways to seduce men. THIS TEACHES US THAT SHE VALUES ONLY THOSE WHO START WALKING THE PATH OF HASHEM AND ARE APT TO FALL INTO HER TRAP. THEREFORE, SHE IS VIEWED AS STANDING AT THE MAIN (LIT. 'START OF') ROAD TO HASHEM'S DEVOTION. BUT FOR THOSE WHO ARE ACCUSTOMED TO THE WAYS OF HASHEM, THE WHORE IS SEPARATED FROM THEM AND HAS NO POWER OVER THEM.

25. When a fool approaches her, she holds and kisses him, and she pours him wine full of dregs and snake's venom. After he drinks, he whores after her. When she sees him whoring after her and turning from the path of truth, she removes all the decorations she put on for that fool, AS WILL BE EXPLAINED.

26. Her seductive features include her hair, which is red as a rose, and her face, which is white and red. In her ears there are six earrings of Egyptian fabric. On her neck hang all the powers of Eastern lands. Her mouth is decorated by a small slit of a comely shape; her tongue is sharp as a sword; her speech as smooth as oil; and her lips as beautiful and red as a rose. Wearing purple and having forty decorations less one, she is sweeter than all that is sweet in the world.

27. The fool follows her, drinks of her wine, and fornicates with her. What does she do? She leaves him sleeping in his bed, goes up to denounce him, and receives permission TO KILL HIM. She then descends ON HIM. The fool awakes thinking of lusting after her, as before. At this point, she has taken off the decorations and has become a mighty oppressor who wears a garment of burning fire that causes great horror and frightens the body and soul. That oppressor has horrible eyes and a sharp sword on which there are bitter drops. The oppressor kills the fool and throws him into Gehenom.

28. Ya'akov went down to her, TO THE WIFE OF HARLOTRY, and went to her place, as it is written: "and went toward Charan," A PLACE OF WRATH AND JUDGMENTS. He saw all the decoration of her house there and was saved from her, AND SO HE RETURNED TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL. Her male, Samael, was vexed THAT HE WAS SAVED FROM HER. He came down to fight with him but to no avail, as it is written: "and there wrestled a man with him..." (Beresheet 32:25). Then was he saved from them all, completely perfected, and raised by a whole grade. And he was named Yisrael, WHICH CONSISTS OF THE LETTERS LI-ROSH (LIT. 'IT IS MY HEAD'). Wholly perfected, he became the middle pillar, of which it is written: "And the middle bar..." (Shemot 26:28).

29. What is meant by: "he touched the hollow of his thigh" (Beresheet 32:26)? He could not prevail against him, so he touched the hollow of his thigh, denoting Nadav and Avihu, who came from Aharon's thighs. And of Ya'akov it is written: "and the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end." (We do not consider this paragraph part of the article.)

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

5. "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva," part two

In an addendum to the previous section, an analogy is made between the pattern of Ya'akov's physical movements and the structure of the Tree of Life, which is Kabbalah's great symbol for the attributes of God. The Tree of Life is also spoken of as the Ten Sfirot, or ten dimensions. The rabbis discuss some of the relationships between the various attributes of the Tree, such as "the 32 paths" which are woven into the structure of the Ten Sfirot. An anecdote concerning Rabbi Yitzchak further explains the powerful attraction among the three pillars or columns which comprise the 'trunk' of the Tree of Life. From these grow the branches that represent the complex interconnection of all aspects of Creation.

The Relevance of this Passage

All events that transpire throughout the cosmos, from the budding of a seed in the forest to the birth of a new star in a distant galaxy, are reflections of creative processes unfolding in the Upper World, through the agency of the Ten Sfirot. Our world is a reflection--a branch automatically responding to influences that emanate from the seed that is the Upper Reality. Physical existence can be likened to a marionette, whose strings are manipulated from dimensions on high. There is, however, one exception to this metaphor--man. Man has the power to influence and control the Upper World and the Ten Sfirot through his own conduct. Prayer, meditation, rituals, and most importantly, actions are the mechanism through which we exert control over the Sfirot. Thus, we determine which influences will rebound into our realm. The spiritual forces arising from this passage help us exert positive influence upon the Tree of Life through the actions of Ya'akov. This brings more Light in our lives and diminishes the presence of darkness and evil in the world as a whole.

Tosefta (Addendum)

30. People of the world, beloved of the High One, chosen of the government: THE TOSEFTA INVITES THOSE WHO ATTAINED THE ILLUMINATION OF THE THREE COLUMNS. ON THE SIDE OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, THEY ARE CALLED 'THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD', BECAUSE ZEIR ANPIN, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, IS CALLED 'WORLD', AND ON THE SIDE OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, THEY ARE CALLED 'BELOVED' BY THE HIGH ONE. ON THE SIDE OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT COLUMN, THEY ARE CALLED 'CHOSEN OF THE GOVERNMENT', WHICH MEANS THAT THEY WERE CHOSEN TO RULE THE WORLD, AS THE POWER TO RULE COMES FROM THE LEFT COLUMN. Draw near and listen: whoever is wise among you, of intelligent eyes--NAMELY, WHOEVER IS VERSED IN CHOCHMAH OF TEVUNAH, FOR 'EYES' IS A DESCRIPTIVE NAME OF CHOCHMAH, TO BRING OUT CHOCHMAH OF STRAIGHT LIGHT--let him come and know that when the 'White Head', ATIKA KADISHA, took and engraved the three letters Aleph, Yud, and a final Nun, then was engraved Ayin (nothingness, Aleph Yud Nun). For Aleph is the head, high above all, the most hidden of all, NAMELY, THE HEAD OF ARICH ANPIN. Yud is the rising of desire, constructed from the head up, THE HEAD OF ARICH ANPIN. IT CAME AFTER ITS CONSTRUCTION, TO MALE AND FEMALE. HE EXPLAINED THAT it came down FROM THE HEAD OF ARICH ANPIN and resulted in 32 paths, WHEN IT AGAIN ENTERED THE HEAD OF ARICH ANPIN, until they were engraved between precious burning stones. These were connected with the final Nun, AND THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE JOINING OF male and female, two lovers, with strong contact between them, and the Holy Name, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, is connected to them. From them nourishment is drawn for all, and the worlds, ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, are constructed.

31. THE ZOHAR REPEATS AND FURTHER EXPLAINS THESE WORDS, SAYING: Therefore, the vertically extended straight, final Nun was engraved, FOR IT REPRESENTS the union OF MALE AND FEMALE, ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA. For the bent Nun represents the Nukva alone, WITHOUT A MALE. The letter Yud--'desire', BINAH, which produced 32 paths--struck between the letters, NAMELY, THE 22 LETTERS, WHICH ARE MALE AND FEMALE, and formed the firmament, which is Ya'akov, NAMELY, THE CENTRAL COLUMN between the two winds: THE SOUTH AND NORTH, RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS. It then joined the pieces. Then Ya'akov descended toward the bent Nun, THE NUKVA, and HIS RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS north and south, were joined in It as one. BY THIS, THE NUKVA IS BUILT AND BECOMES READY FOR UNION. Then YA'AKOV AND THE NUKVA were joined as one, AND BECAME A STRAIGHT, FINAL NUN, WHICH INCLUDES YA'AKOV AND THE NUKVA. This bent Nun, WHICH IS THE NUKVA AND INCLUDES THE STRAIGHT, FINAL NUN, is called 'Be'er Sheva' and is filled by Ya'akov to water the flocks of sheep, NAMELY, TO GIVE PLENTY TO THE LOWER BEINGS. As it is written: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva, and went toward Charan." Further, "from Be'er Sheva" MEANS above, NAMELY, IN BINAH. For he came out of it AND THERE RECEIVED PLENTY. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN: "AND YA'AKOV WENT OUT FROM BE'ER SHEVA." Then he went to water Charan, the lower well, THAT IS, THE NUKVA, WHERE THERE ARE JUDGMENTS CALLED the 'Wrath of Hashem', and the 'Sword of Hashem', IN WHICH LIES the judgment of the court house named Elohim. THEREFORE, SCRIPTURE MENTIONS THE NAME OF Elohim, as in: "Elohim, heathen nations have come into Your inheritance" (Tehilim 79:1).

End of Tosefta (Addendum)

32. Rabbi Yitzchak was sitting one day by the cave of Apikuta. A man passed with his two sons, one of whom said that the vigor of the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, is from the south side, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT, CHASSADIM. And the world, THE NUKVA, does not exist save by wind, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN, because the wind represents existence and perfection on all sides. THIS IS BECAUSE THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH IS THE WIND, INCLUDES THE SOUTH AND NORTH SIDES, WHICH ARE RIGHT AND LEFT, THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM. If it were not complete, the world, THE NUKVA, would not have been able to survive.

33. The younger brother said that if it were not for Ya'akov, the world would not have existed. Come and behold: whenever his children proclaim the unity of the supernal union saying, "Hear Yisrael; Hashem our Elohim; Hashem is one," (Devarim 6:4) which is the perfection of the High One, FROM ABA AND IMA, SO AS TO BE joined in one unison, Ya'akov their father, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, TIFERET, then joins and takes possession of his house, THE NUKVA, SECRET OF THE LOWER UNION. And he sits in it united with the fathers, THE RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS, so as to join male and female as one. BECAUSE THERE IS NO

UNION OF MALE AND FEMALE BEFORE THE CENTRAL COLUMN, YA'AKOV, MEDIATES AND ATTACHES THE TWO COLUMNS, RIGHT AND LEFT, WHO ARE AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK.

6. "Arise, Hashem"

This section continues the anecdote concerning Rabbi Yitzchak, in which the secret meaning of the phrase "arise The Creator," is debated. Both Moshe and David uttered the phrase; the text focuses on David's meaning, which concerns the intermingling of wisdom and laughter--the jesting "Levites" of the Right Column and the priests of the Left. The Creator recognizes that in David's kingdom on earth, truth often expresses itself in humorous form.

The Relevance of this Passage

Laughter denotes the Left Column energy of receiving, for laughter arouses immediate and direct pleasure. The name Yitzchak, the patriarch and father of Ya'akov, also means laughter. We access the wisdom of Yitzchak through these verses, thereby strengthening our trust in the Creator and bringing true happiness and laughter into our life. In addition, we gain strength to laugh in the face of hardship. Laughter during spiritual tests ensures that hardships pass quickly and easily. We regain control of our own happiness, rather than surrendering to external circumstances.

34. Rabbi Yitzchak said to himself: I shall join them and hear what they say. He went with them. The man opened the discussion with the verse: "Arise, Hashem, to Your resting place; You, and the ark of Your strength" (Tehilim 132:8). "Arise, Hashem, to Your resting place" MEANS may the King rise to His house of rest, to His abode.

35. Two men said, "Arise, Hashem," Moshe and David, Moshe said: "Arise, Hashem, and let Your enemies be scattered" (Bemidbar 10:35). David said: "Arise, Hashem, to Your resting place." What is the difference between them? Moshe, THE HUSBAND OF THE QUEEN, said it as if commanding his household. He ordered his wife to engage in warfare with his enemies. David invited him to repose, as a man who invites his sovereign TO HIS HOUSE. He invited the King and His consort with Him. This is the meaning of the verse: "Arise, Hashem, to Your resting place; You, and the ark of Your strength"--You, THE KING, and the ark of Your strength, THE NUKVA, so as not to separate them.

36. "Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness; and let Your pious ones shout for joy" (Tehilim 132:9). From this we learn that whoever invites the King should change his customs to bring joy to the King. If the King wants to be entertained by common jesters, he should arrange before him worthy jesters and great ministers. Unless he does so, he will not make the King happy.

37. Come and behold: David invited the King and His consort to repose, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "ARISE, HASHEM, TO YOUR RESTING PLACE..." How did he do this? By changing the King's jesters into distinguished ministers, who are, as it is written: "Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness; and let Your pious ones shout for joy." It is written: "and let Your pious ones shout for joy," but it should have been, 'and let Your Levites shout for joy', for the Levites are the King's jesters. But when David invited the King to rest, he ordered the priests and the pious ones, not the Levites, to be the King's jesters.

38. The Holy One, blessed be He, said TO DAVID: David, I do not wish to trouble them, THE PRIESTS AND THE PIOUS ONES TO DRAW THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT. THEY ARE THE MYSTERY BEHIND THE VERSE: "BECAUSE HE DELIGHTS IN MERCY" (MICHAH 7:18). David answered: Master, when You are in Your palace, You do as You please. THAT IS SIMILAR TO MOSHE WHO SAID, "ARISE, HASHEM, AND LET YOUR ENEMIES BE SCATTERED," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT WHEN ON ITS OWN. THEN ONLY THE LEVITES, AND NOT THE PRIESTS OR THE PIOUS ONES, ARE THE JESTERS OF THE KING. Now that I have invited You, my wish is to bring before You those of a higher order TO BE YOUR JESTERS, NAMELY THE PRIESTS AND PIOUS ONES, even though it is not their custom, AS THEY PERTAIN TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "BECAUSE HE DELIGHTS IN MERCY."

39. From here we learn that a man may arrange things as he pleases in his own house, but when invited somewhere else, it behooves him to follow the customs of his host. For when David replaced the Levites with the priests, the Holy One, blessed be He, accepted it according to his wishes.

7. "And Ya'akov went out," part three

Rabbi Yitzchak discusses the meaning of "And Ya'akov went out..." This text refers to the exile of the Jews, the children of Ya'akov, and their need to accommodate themselves to the customs of the lands of exile--just as the Holy One Creator adjusts Himself to changes taking place in the Eternal Female, the feminine principle or Malchut. Israel must accomplish this adjustment in order to spread the message of Torah, and to nourish the world with spiritual Light. It was for this task that Israel was chosen, and for nothing else.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Hebrew term for 'Chosen People' is Am Segulah, which is derived from the Hebrew word Segol. Segol is the name of a particular Hebrew vowel whose shape illuminates the hidden significance of "Chosen People."

The vowel Segol includes three dots, as follows: These three dots signify the Right, Left and Central Column forces. The three Columns correlate to the positive and negative poles in a light bulb, and to the resisting function of the filament. A bulb without a filament immediately short circuits, producing momentary sparks followed by sudden darkness. "Chosen People" refers to the spiritual concept of Restriction or Resistance as it applies to human behavior. The children of Israel throughout all generations represent the filament; they are therefore responsible for bringing Light to the peoples of the world. This is achieved when we, as individuals, begin to resist our self-serving aspirations. Living life in a reactive manner causes a spiritual short-circuit, leaving the rest of world empty and dark--which, according to Zoharic wisdom, is the root of anti-Semitism. A truly spiritual person seeks to exemplify the sharing principle, resisting social pressures and subjugating the ego. This passage imbues us with the fortitude to apply Resistance to rash and intolerant behavior, so that we become beacons of Light to everyone we meet.

40. David said: "For Your servant David's sake do not turn away the face of Your anointed" (Tehilim 132:10). The way I ordered things may not be changed back, THAT IS, REPEALED. The Holy One, blessed be He, responded: David, upon your life, I shall not even use My own vessels; I shall use yours. And the Holy one, blessed be He, was not gone before He lavished gifts and presents on him, as it is written: "Hashem has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it; One of the sons of your body will I set upon your throne" (Tehilim 132:11). Rabbi Yitzchak kissed him and said: Had I come this all way only to learn this, it is enough.

41. One son OF THIS MAN opened the discussion with the verse: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva, and went toward Charan." This resembles the verse: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife" (Beresheet 2:24). FOR YA'AKOV WENT OUT FROM BE'ER SHEVA, LEAVING HIS FATHER AND MOTHER BEHIND, TO GO TO CHARAN AND TAKE A WIFE. Another explanation of: "And Ya'akov went..." is that it alludes to the children of Yisrael who left the Temple and were exiled among the nations, as it is written: "And from the daughter of Tzion all her splendor is departed," (Eichah 1:6) and "Yehuda is gone into exile because of affliction..." (Ibid. 3)

42. The other, younger son began with the verse: "And he lighted upon the place and tarried there" (Beresheet 28:11). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of the phrase, "And he lighted upon the place"? IT IS SIMILAR to the king who goes to the house of the consort. He needs to gain her favor and please her with substantial things so as to treat her with respect. Even if the king has His own gold bed with artistically embroidered covers and bedding, if she prepares him a bed of rocks on the ground in a room of fodder, he will neglect his own place and sleep in hers to please her, to harmonize their desires without coercion. As we have learned, as soon as YA'AKOV went to her, it is written: "And he took of the stones of that place, and put them under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep," THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, to give her pleasure, so that even building stones were pleasant to tarry on.

43. Rabbi Yitzchak wept and rejoiced. He said: These pearls are in your hands. How can I not follow you? They replied: You shall go your own way, and we shall enter the city to attend the marriage feast of my son. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Now I must go my way--FOR HE SAW THAT THEY DID NOT WANT HIM TO WALK FURTHER WITH THEM. He set their words before Rabbi Shimon, who said: Assuredly they have spoken well. And everything THAT WAS SAID OF YA'AKOV was spoken of the Holy One, blessed be He. RABBI SHIMON said: These words

are from the descendants of Rabbi Tzadok, the invalid. Why was he called an invalid? Because he fasted for forty years for Jerusalem, so that it would not be destroyed during his life. He used to find supernal secrets in every word of the Torah, and he paved in them a path on which the children of the world may live according to its teachings.

44. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Not many days passed before I met that man and his younger son. I asked--where is your other son? He replied: I wed him, and now he stays with his wife. He recognized me and therefore said: Truly, I did not invite you to the marriage celebration of my son for three reasons. One is that I neither knew nor recognized you, and a man is invited according to his honor. I thought that perhaps you were a dignified man, and I might slight your honor. Another is that you may have been hurrying on your way, and I did not wish to inconvenience you. And the last was so that you would not be put to shame by the members of the party, for it is our custom that all who eat at the table of a bride and groom, lavish gifts and presents on them. I responded: May the Holy One, blessed be He, judge you kindly. I asked: What is your name? He said: Tzadok the Little. At that time, I learned thirteen supernal secrets of the Torah from him. And from his son I learned three secrets, one pertaining to prophecy and one to dreams--WHICH MEANS HE LEARNED FROM HIM THREE SECRETS ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROPHECY AND DREAM.

8. Prophecy vision, dream

In this extremely important and mysterious section of the Zohar, the rabbis make complex and subtle distinctions concerning the nature of prophecy, visions, and dreams. They then apply their conclusions to the role of the Jews in exile. Rabbi Yitzchak continues his discussion with Tzadok the Little, his companion of the previous verses. Although dreams, prophecies, and visions are all sent by the Angel Gabriel, we learn that dreams are a relatively inferior means of enlightenment. Visions and dreams may dramatically vary in nature, according to the level of consciousness of those who receive them, and of those who are able-or unable--to interpret them. Moreover, a dream can sometimes be used to explain the meaning of a waking vision. The rabbis use the powerful symbolism of the story of Ya'akov's Ladder to explain how dreams and visions link human consciousness to the upper realms. When the children of Israel are sinful, their sin expresses itself partly through The Creator's turning away from them and granting the gift of His inspiration to great leaders in other lands, who may one day become the enemies of Israel. Similarly, when King Solomon falls into sin, he is denied the level of vision that had once inspired him to build Jerusalem's Temple; henceforth he must rely only on dreams for inspiration. This culminates in the sad decline into paganism, and the political and financial ruin that the king and his kingdom suffered in later years. Finally, we are told that as a man ages, his inner vision dims as much as his outer vision or eyesight.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light released through the Hebrew letters inspires us to foster and follow the guidance of visions and dreams on both conscious and subconscious levels. During sleep, our dreams ascend to the higher levels of the spiritual realms, where we are assisted, in subtle ways, by the wisdom and supernal Light of the Creator in all our endeavors.

45. He asks: What is the difference between a prophecy and a dream? 1) A prophecy is part of the world of the male, and a dream is part of the world of the female, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Between them are six grades, AS PROPHECY IS PART OF NETZACH AND HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, AND DREAM IS PART OF HOD OF THE NUKVA. BETWEEN THEM IS YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN AND CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, AND HOD OF THE NUKVA, WHICH CONSTITUTE SIX GRADES. 2) A prophecy is in right and left, THAT IS, NETZACH AND HOD, and dream is in the left, NAMELY, IN HOD. (3) A dream emanates downward a few grades TO THE ANGEL GAVRIEL, FROM WHOM MEN RECEIVE THE ILLUMINATION OF DREAMS. Therefore, dreams abide everywhere in the world, EVEN OUTSIDE YISRAEL. Nevertheless, a man sees according to his grade, and according to the man, so is his grade. THIS MEANS THAT IT IS NOT THE SAME FOR EVERY MAN. But prophecy does not emanate DOWNWARD FROM MALCHUT OF ATZILUT, but shines where it is, IN THE NUKVA, THE PLACE OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE LAND OF YISRAEL, AND THE PROPHETS THAT ARE INSPIRED FROM IT.

46. Come and see, it is written: "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of Elohim ascending and

descending on it" (Beresheet 28:12). He opened the discussion with the verse: "the word of Hashem came (Heb. hayoh hayah,) to Yechezkel the son of Buzi, in the land of Casdim, by the river K'var, and the hand of Hashem was there upon him" (Yechezkel 1:3). The words hayoh hayah (lit. 'being, was') INDICATE THAT this prophecy was specific to that time, for it was needed to strengthen those in exile in order to let them know the Shechinah had gone into exile with them. Therefore, Yechezkel saw what he saw, which applied to that time only. And although the place was not worthy of it, FOR PLACES OUTSIDE YISRAEL ARE NOT WORTHY OF PROPHECY, THE SCRIPTURE READS hayoh hayah, WHICH MEANS THAT THERE IS SOMETHING NEW HERE, THAT PROPHECY LIVES OUTSIDE YISRAEL. HE ASKS: Why DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY TWICE, hayo hayah? HE ANSWERS: One is above IN ZEIR ANPIN, and one is below IN THE NUKVA, as it is written: "a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven," WHICH MEANS THAT it receives THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM above IN HEAVEN, ZEIR ANPIN, and receives below, FROM THE NUKVA CALLED 'EARTH', THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH. So in Hayo Hayah, one MEANS THE BEING OF CHASSADIM above, and the other MEANS THE BEING OF CHOCHMAH below.

47. Come and behold: this ladder was strengthened by two worlds, above IN ZEIR ANPIN and below IN THE NUKVA. THUS: "in the land of Casdim by the river K'var" (Yechezkel 1:3). The land of Casdim is the place of exile, NAMELY, THE LAND OUTSIDE YISRAEL. Nevertheless, it is "by the river K'var." What is the river K'var? IT MEANS THAT She was already (Heb. k'var) there; the Shechinah dwelt upon it before that, as it is written: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden," (Beresheet 2:10) THE RIVER BEING THE SECRET OF BINAH. AND THE RIVER K'VAR IS one of the four rivers THAT FLOWED FROM THE RIVER THAT BEGAN IN EDEN, THE RIVER OF EUPHRATES IN BABYLON. Because it dwelt upon him before and was upon it already (k'var), now too it dwells upon it and was revealed to Yechezkel.

48. Come and behold: "And he dreamed." HE ASKS: How could it be that to holy Ya'akov, the chosen of the patriarchs, Hashem was revealed in a dream; and in such a sacred place, BET-EL, WHICH IS PART OF YISRAEL, A PLACE WORTHY OF THE DWELLING OF THE SHECHINAH, he saw HASHEM only in a dream? HE ANSWERS: Ya'akov was not yet married, AND WAS THEREFORE INCOMPLETE IN HIS BODY. Also, Yitzchak was still alive AND THE TIME OF HIS ASCENDANCY HAD NOT YET ARRIVED. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN THAT HE DREAMED AND NOT THAT HE SAW A VISION WHILE AWAKE. You may wonder why, after he was married, it is written: "I...saw in a dream" (Beresheet 31:10). This was because he was outside Yisrael IN PADDAN ARAM, and Yitzchak was yet alive. Therefore it is written that he dreamed.

49. Afterwards, when he came to the Holy Land with the tribes and "the barren woman" was perfected with them: "and be a joyful mother of children" (Tehilim 113:9), AND HE WAS NOW WHOLE WITH HIS SPOUSE AND WAS IN THE LAND OF YISRAEL, it is written: "And Elohim appeared to Ya'akov," (Beresheet 35:9) "And Elohim spoke to Yisrael in the vision of the night" (Beresheet 46:2). No dream was mentioned here because he was of another, superior grade, WORTHY OF BEHOLDING A VISION WHILE AWAKE.

50. Come and behold: a dream comes from Gavriel, and A DREAM is six grades lower than a prophecy. THIS MEANS THAT GAVRIEL RECEIVES THE DREAM FROM HOD OF THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SIXTH GRADE FROM PROPHECY, AND PEOPLE RECEIVE IT THROUGH GAVRIEL. A vision IS RECEIVED from the grade of the living creature, which rules by night. BECAUSE VISION IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN IN HER ACTUAL PLACE, ABOUT WHICH IS SAID: "AND SHE RISES ALSO WHILE IT IS YET NIGHT," (MISHLEI 31:15) IT IS THEREFORE A VISION WHILE AWAKE, AND NOT A DREAM. You may contend that it is written: "and said, Gavriel, make this man understand the vision (Heb. mar'ah)," (Daniel 8:16) AND THEREFORE, ONE COULD CONCLUDE THAT A VISION IS ALSO RECEIVED FROM GAVRIEL. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly this is so, but a vision is unclear and a dream is more precise. Therefore, a dream explains that which is not clear in the vision. Thus, Gavriel, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF DREAMS, was chosen to explain the vague words of the vision.

51. Therefore, it is written: "in the vision (mar'eh)," WHICH IS DERIVED FROM THE SAME ROOT AS "AND HE LOOKED (HEB. VA'ERA)" AND "AND I SAW (HEB. VA'ERA)." The reason is that the mirror is like a mirror (Heb. mar'ah) OF POLISHED GLASS, in which all the shapes IN FRONT OF IT are seen. Therefore, it is written of it: "and I appeared (va'era) TO AVRAHAM... BY THE NAME OF EL SHADAI," (Shemot 6:3) FOR THE MIRROR, THE NUKVA,

SAID: I have shown the image OF HASHEM by El Shadai. For this is the mirror in which the images of others and all the shapes of the supernal GRADES are seen.

52. Therefore, at the time BEFORE YA'AKOV WED, it is written of him: "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth" (Beresheet 28:12). What is this ladder? It is a grade from which all other grades stem, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, THE GATE OF ALL GRADES, "and the top of it reached to heaven." It does reach up to connect to heaven. HE ASKS: What top? HE ANSWERS: The top of the ladder. And what is that? That of which it is written: "the top (lit. 'head') of the couch," (Beresheet 47:31) NAMELY, YESOD, THE HEAD OF THE NUKVA CALLED 'COUCH'. AND YESOD IS 'THE HEAD OF THE COUCH' because it is at the head of the couch, THE NUKVA, who shines with its light FROM YESOD. IT IS THEREFORE CONSIDERED HER HEAD. And "reached to heaven," because it is the final part of the body, TIFERET, CALLED 'HEAVEN'. FOR YESOD IS ATTACHED UNDERNEATH TIFERET, situated between the higher, ZEIR ANPIN and the lower, NUKVA, as the member of the Covenant, the final part of the body, lies between the thighs and the body. Therefore, THE SCRIPTURE READS, "reached to heaven," FOR THE TOP OF THE LADDER, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, REACHES HEAVEN, AS IT CLEAVES TO ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'HEAVEN'.

53. "...and behold the angels of Elohim ascending and descending on it..." (Beresheet 28:12). These are the ministers of all the nations who ascend and descend this ladder. When the children of Yisrael are sinful, the ladder is lowered and the ministers rise. When the children of Yisrael improve their deeds, the ladder is raised; all the ministers descend and their government is annulled. All depends on this ladder. Here, Ya'akov saw Esav's government and that of the rest of the nations in his dream.

54. Another explanation of the verse, "and behold the angels of Elohim ascending and descending on it," is that the ladder is used to ascend and descend through its top. For when the top, YESOD, is removed, the ladder gives in and all the ministers rule again. When the top is attached again, it is elevated and they all lose their power to govern. All this is one matter, AND BOTH EXPLANATIONS ARE ESSENTIALLY IN AGREEMENT.

55. It is written: "Hashem appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and Elohim said, ask what I shall give you" (I Melachim 3:5). HE ASKS: One may wonder why it was a dream, THAT IS, WHY IT WAS RECEIVED THROUGH GAVRIEL. What right does the grade of a dream have TO SAY TO HIM, SINCE HE IS BUT AN ANGEL: "ASK WHAT I SHALL GIVE YOU"? HE ANSWERS: Here a grade was included within a grade; the supernal grade, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE ROOT OF THE DREAM, WAS INCLUDED WITHIN AND CLOTHED by the grade down below, NAMELY, THE GRADE OF GAVRIEL. THE NUKVA SAID TO HIM, "ASK WHAT I SHALL GIVE YOU," BECAUSE IT IS WRITTEN: "AND ELOHIM SAID," WHICH IS ONE NAME OF THE NUKVA. THE REASON HE APPEARS TO HIM ONLY IN A DREAM IS THAT until then Solomon was not complete. Once he was perfected, it is written: "And Hashem gave Solomon wisdom" (I Melachim 5:26) and "Solomon's wisdom excelled," (Ibid. 10) for the moon, THE NUKVA, was then full and the Temple was built. Only then did Solomon see wisdom while awake; he had no further need of dreams.

56. After he sinned, however, he had to resort to dreams again. Therefore, it is written: "who had twice appeared to him" (I Melachim 11:9). IT APPEARS PROBLEMATIC THAT He was seen to him twice only, but THE EXPLANATION IS THAT from the side of the grade of a dream, He was seen to him only twice.

57. With all that, the dream grade of Solomon was greater than the dream grade of all other men; including one grade within another grade, VISION WHEN AWAKE, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, WAS INCLUDED within vision IN A DREAM, WHICH IS THE GRADE OF GAVRIEL. At the end of his days, the dream grade was considerably darkened. THEREFORE, SCRIPTURE REMINDS HIM OF THE TWO DREAMS THAT USED TO SHINE UPON HIM, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "ELOHIM OF YISRAEL WHO HAD TWICE APPEARED TO HIM." This happened because he sinned, and the moon, THE NUKVA, began to wane, because he did not keep the Holy Covenant and pursued foreign women. This is the condition the Holy One, blessed be He, gave to David, as it is written: "If your children will keep my covenant...their children shall also sit upon your throne for evermore" (Tehilim 132:12).

58. What is the meaning of "for evermore?" This is as it is written: "as the days of heaven upon the earth" (Devarim 11:21). Because Solomon did not keep the Covenant as he ought

to have done, the moon began to wane. At the end, he had to resort to dreams again. This was also true of Ya'akov, BECAUSE HE WAS NOT COMPLETE, as we mentioned before.

9. "And, behold, Hashem stood above it"

This passage further explicates Ya'akov's vision of the Ladder. It clarifies his special role amongst the Chosen People and his position among the other patriarchs in the Tree of Life.

The Relevance of this Passage

Ya'akov represents the Central Column force of Free Will and/or Resistance, which brings about the subjugation of the ego. Of the three patriarchs, Ya'akov embodies the delicate balance between the will of the soul-sharing and the primal urges of the body-receiving for the self. The Ladder in Ya'akov's vision corresponds to the Ten Sfirot and the array of spiritual Lights that radiates from each respective realm. Because we as individuals do not possess the strength to triumph over our egos and our selfish drives, the Zohar provides us with the additional power of the patriarch Ya'akov, whose strength is instilled within us through the Light that radiates from this passage. We also achieve a connection to the Lights of the Sfirot, which brightens our lives and the world with tranquillity and joy.

59. "And, behold, Hashem stood above it" (Beresheet 28:13) means that Ya'akov saw here, IN THE LADDER, the Knot of Faith, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, BINDING ALL THE SFIROT as one. "...stood (Heb. nitzav) above it..." as "a pillar (Heb. netziv) of salt" (Beresheet 19:26) ALLUDES TO a mound, for all the grades are as one on that ladder, THE NUKVA, so that all will be connected into one knot. For this ladder was put between the two sides, and this is the meaning of the verse: "and said, I am Hashem the Elohim of Avraham your father, and the Elohim of Yitzchak..." These are the two sides, right and left--AVRAHAM IS RIGHT AND YITZCHAK IS LEFT.

60. Another explanation of the verse, "And, behold, Hashem stood above it," IS THAT IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE STOOD UPON THE LADDER, BUT RATHER THAT HE STOOD on Ya'akov, so that a holy Chariot would be made. Then, between the right and left is Ya'akov, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, and the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, will be tied with them. This is the meaning of, "Hashem the Elohim of Avraham your father, and the Elohim of Yitzchak." How do we know that Ya'akov is in the middle OF AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK? We know from the verse, "Hashem the Elohim of Avraham your father, and the Elohim of Yitzchak." Note that it is not written 'the Elohim of Yitzchak your father', WHICH WOULD MAKE HIM THIRD AMONG THE FATHERS, NAMELY, THE SON OF YITZCHAK. FROM THIS WE LEARN THAT because he was connected to Avraham, AND WAS CONSIDERED HIS SON, HE WAS FOUND TO BE BEFORE YITZCHAK. THEREFORE, HE IS IN THE MIDDLE, BETWEEN AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. FOR THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE CHARIOT: AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK ARE RIGHT AND LEFT, AND YA'AKOV IS BETWEEN THEM. Then, it is written: "the land on which you lie," WHICH IS THE NUKVA. This makes all, THAT IS, THE THREE COLUMNS WITH THE NUKVA, into one holy Chariot. Here, Ya'akov saw that he would be the chosen of the fathers.

61. Come and behold: "Hashem the Elohim of Avraham your father." Because He said, "Avraham your father," assuredly he is in between AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. And "the Elohim of Yitzchak" alludes to the fact that Ya'akov was bound to the two sides--RIGHT AND LEFT--and was part of them. He is tied on the one side TO THE RIGHT, as it is written: "Hashem the Elohim of Avraham your father"; and on the other side he is tied TO THE LEFT, as it is written: "and the Elohim of Yitzchak." In the latter case, the letter Vav ('and') is added TO "AND THE ELOHIM," when Yitzchak is mentioned. This indicates that Ya'akov seized both sides, FOR VAV ALLUDES TO TIFERET, WHICH IS YA'AKOV, ATTACHED TO THE ELOHIM OF YITZCHAK, THE SECRET OF THE LEFT. THE SCRIPTURE CONNECTS HIM TO AVRAHAM BY CALLING HIM "YOUR FATHER," AND CONNECTS HIM TO "THE ELOHIM OF YITZCHAK" VIA THE VAV.

62. As long as Ya'akov was not married, this was not said of him openly, AS WAS SAID HERE, FOR IT IS NOT SPECIFICALLY WRITTEN: "THE ELOHIM OF YA'AKOV," AS IT WAS OF AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. It is only said openly of he who knows the ways of the Torah. THIS MEANS THAT HE WILL BECOME A CHARIOT OF THE TWO WAYS, THE RIGHT AND LEFT, AFTER HE IS MARRIED. UNTIL THEN, HE CAN BE A CHARIOT ONLY OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT, AND NOT OF THE NUKVA, THE SECRET OF THE LEFT. After he

married and begot children, it was said of him openly, as is written in the verse: "And he erected there an altar, and called it El Elohei ('the Elohim of') Yisrael" (Beresheet 33:20). Thus, we learn that whoever is not perfected below, AS MALE AND FEMALE THAT IS, WHOEVER IS NOT MARRIED, cannot be perfected above. This is not so for Ya'akov, who was perfected above and below EVEN BEFORE HE MARRIED. However, it was not proclaimed openly, BECAUSE HE DID NOT YET PROFESS HIS UNITY OVER HIM.

63. You may wonder how he was completely perfected BEFORE HE WAS MARRIED. This is not actually accurate. He was not perfected, but saw that he would eventually be perfected. If you say that it is written: "And, behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go" (Beresheet 28:15), WHICH MEANS THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY PERFECTED, IT WOULD BE INACCURATE. Rather, the explanation is that the keeping of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His protection will never leave Ya'akov without whatever he needs in this world. But in the upper world, he can not have true perception until he is perfected, NAMELY, MARRIES.

10. "And Ya'akov awoke...How dreadful is this place"

The patriarch Ya'akov awakens at the future site of the Temple. As Ya'akov recognizes the power of the sacred ground, great spiritual Light is revealed to him.

The Relevance of this Passage

Sometimes a simple observation conveys more than many words can describe. Such is the case with this passage. Suffice it to say that our souls tread the sacred ground upon which Ya'akov slept, and upon which the Temple stood.

64. "And Ya'akov awoke out of his sleep, and he said: Surely Hashem is in this place; and I knew it not" (Beresheet 28:16). HE ASKS: It is a wonder that he did not conceive such great knowledge. HE ANSWERS: The meaning of "and I (Heb. anochi) knew it not" is similar to the meaning of the verse: "and I have not made supplications to Hashem" (I Shmuel 13:12). THAT IS, "I KNEW IT NOT" ARE WORDS OF UNION AND DEVOTION, AS ARE THE WORDS, "I HAVE NOT MADE SUPPLICATION." Ya'akov said: This was all revealed to me, though I have not attentively searched to know THE HOLY NAME Anochi ('I'), WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, and come under the wings of the Shechinah to become a whole man.

65. Come and behold. It is written: "and she said, If it be so, why am I (anochi) thus" (Beresheet 25:22). Rivkah beheld the light of the Shechinah daily because the Shechinah was in her tent where she prayed. When Rivkah began to experience the pains of childbirth, it is written: "And she went to inquire of Hashem (Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei)" (Beresheet 25:22). She went from the grade of Anochi ('I') to the other grade of Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei. SO ANOCHI IS A NAME OF THE SHECHINAH. Therefore, Ya'akov said: 'I have seen so much, yet did not know I...' (anochi). This is because he was not married and did not yet come under the wings of the Shechinah.

66. Next, it is written: "And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place." "...place..." has two meanings reflecting the two sides. "How dreadful is this place," refers to the place he mentioned before, THE SHECHINAH, and to the sign of the Holy Covenant, which must not be annulled.

67. Although these are two aspects, YESOD AND MALCHUT, they are actually the same. He said, "this is none other than the house of Elohim." 'This', WHICH IS YESOD CALLED 'THIS', must not be neglected; "this" should not be left alone. Its existence is no other than the house of Elohim, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, with which it unites to produce offspring and to pour blessings upon her from all the organs of the body. For this, WHICH IS YESOD, is the gate to the entire body, WHICH IS TIFERET, as the scripture reads: "and this is the gate of heaven" (Beresheet 28:17). THAT IS, TIFERET IS CALLED BOTH 'BODY' AND 'HEAVEN'. Assuredly, this is the gate to the body by which blessings flow down TO THE NUKVA. It is attached above TO HEAVEN, WHICH IS TIFERET, and attached below TO THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED 'PLACE', AND ALSO 'THE HOUSE OF ELOHIM'. HE EXPLAINED: It is attached above, as it is written: "and this is the gate of heaven," AS YESOD IS THE GATE OF TIFERET, WHICH IS CALLED 'HEAVEN'. It is attached below, as it is written: "this is no other than the house of Elohim," WHICH MEANS THAT THIS, YESOD, IS FOUND ONLY IN THE HOUSE OF ELOHIM, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. Therefore, "he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place." THE PLACE IS THE NUKVA, AND "THIS" IS YESOD. But men disregard the

preciousness OF YESOD, of being perfected through it. The father of the young man went to him and kissed him.

68. Rabbi Yitzchak said: When I heard these words from his mouth, I wept. I said, blessed be the Merciful One for not letting high wisdom disappear from the world. I traveled with them three parasangs and entered the city with them. Shortly after they had arrived, the man affianced his son. I said to him: Your words have not been in vain, FOR AFTER DISCUSSING THE PERFECTION THAT COMES WITH MARRIAGE, HE TOLD HIM THAT HIS WORDS WOULD PREVAIL.

69. Rabbi Shimon said that the words CONCERNING THE LADDER contain secrets of wisdom and have hidden meaning. When I presented these matters to Rabbi Shimon, he said: These are not the words of a youth, but rather descriptions of supernal mysteries. They all bear the mark of wisdom.

11. "and behold a ladder set up on the earth"

The Zohar describes Ya'akov's dream of the ladder, in which he sees his children receiving the Torah on Mount Sinai. The passage explicates the secret meaning of the reception of the Torah: that is, the Torah as the key to mastery of the world through the Angel Matatron, who is in effect a gatekeeper for the angelic messengers of wisdom.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Torah is the divine instrument that imbues the children of Israel with the strength to gradually eliminate the Evil Inclination from their nature. This process takes place both in our physical world and in the supernal worlds above. We connect ourselves to the primordial spiritual Light that shone on Sinai during Revelation. This sacred emanation was so intense that all forms of darkness were eradicated, including death and decay. Through these verses we further arouse the forces of immortality and bring renewal, restoration, and rebirth to our lives.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

70. "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven" (Beresheet 28:12). It is six grades up from the level of a dream, HOD OF THE NUKVA, to the two grades of prophecy, NETZACH AND HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. The six grades are YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, AND HOD OF THE NUKVA. Therefore, a dream is one part out of sixty of prophecy, FOR EACH OF THESE SIX SFIROT INCLUDES TEN SFIROT, AND TEN TIMES SIX IS SIXTY. AND A DREAM, WHICH IS THE LOWEST, CONTAINS ONE OUT OF SIXTY. The ladder alludes to him seeing his children receive the Torah on Mount Sinai in the future, because the ladder represents Sinai, for MOUNT SINAI, AS SCRIPTURE READS, "is on the ground," "and its top," NAMELY, ITS HIGHEST POINT, reaches heaven. And all the Chariots and troops of the High Angels descended there with the Holy One, blessed be He, when he gave them the Torah, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "THE ANGELS OF ELOHIM ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON IT."

71. YA'AKOV saw all this IN HIS DREAM. He saw THE ANGEL Matatron, the elder in the house OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, ruling over what is His and governing the world by THE STRENGTH OF his mastery of the name Shadai. He rises above with the ascension of his Master's name, Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, which is the place in which Ya'akov was perfected. Afterward, the beginning of the name Shadai, which is the letter Yud, reaches heaven. After this letter rises to this place, NAMELY, TO HEAVEN, THE ANGEL MATATRON is perfected and is given his Master's name, Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei.

72. The verse: "and behold the angels of Elohim ascending and descending on it" (Beresheet 28:12) refers to holy angels close to Malchut who ascend BY WAY OF MATATRON. The other angels who are not close TO MALCHUT, THAT IS, THOSE THAT COME FROM THE OTHER SIDE, descend, AND THERE IS NO RECOVERY FOR THEM.

73. Moreover, through him, THE ANGEL MATATRON, they ascend and descend. When he rises, THE ANGELS OF ELOHIM rise with him, and when he descends, THE ANGELS OF ELOHIM go down with him. These angels are the twelve precious pearls, known as Michael, Kadmiel, Pedael, Gavriel, Tzadkiel, Chasdiel, Refael, Raziel, S'turiyah, Nuriel, Yofiel, and

Anael. They are "thousands upon thousands (Heb. Shin'an)" (Tehilim 68:18). They are the letters Shin'an (Shin, Nun, Aleph, final Nun) which consist of the initials of an ox (shor), an eagle (neshar), and a lion (aryeh); the final Nun alludes to a man who includes male and female. They rise when MATATRON rises, and descend when he descends.

74. And moreover, those who dominate in this world do so through him, MATATRON. And those who are prevented from ruling fall through him. They all are dependent on this ladder, MATATRON. Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei dominates them all. As it is written: "And, behold, Hashem stood above it." When he awoke, it is written: "this is no other than the house of Elohim, and this is the gate of heaven." Assuredly, MATATRON is the House of Elohim, the gate through which one passes to come within, as it is written: "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go in to them, and I will praise Yah (Yud-Hei)" (Tehilim 118:19). And "this is the gate to Hashem (Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei)" (Tehilim 118:20) is the gate of heaven. And all is one, WHICH MEANS THAT THE GATES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS--THE GATE OF HASHEM AND THE GATE OF HEAVEN--ARE ONE, AND THAT ONE IS MATATRON.

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

12. "And Ya'akov vowed a vow"

This passage explicates the story of Jacob in terms of the Sfirot and their interactions. Rabbi Chiya gives an interpretation concerning King David and his fear of the wickedness of the world: "the place where the books of the wicked are opened." Other rabbis add that the pillar of the left, Judgment, is necessary for the subjugation of the Klipot.

The Relevance of this Passage

Ya'akov corresponds to the Central Column, the Sfirah of Tiferet, whose position is squarely in the middle of the Tree of Life. Ya'akov is the balancing force between the Right Column energy of Mercy and the Left Column force of Judgment. Through the Sfirot, the attributes of mercy and judgment are carefully mingled, balanced, and disseminated in the physical realm, in accordance with the interactions of human beings to one another. In our world--signified by King David--wicked forces incite us to inflict judgment upon one another. Through the light of Ya'akov's soul we can temper our judgment, sweeten it with mercy, and therefore treat one another with compassion and kindness. Doing so produces the same effect in the Upper World, and the Sfirot shower our physical domain with an equal measure of mercy. Reading these passages with a pure heart will set this light in motion.

75. "And Ya'akov vowed a vow, saying, If Elohim will be with me..." (Beresheet 28:20). Rabbi Yehuda said: Although the Holy One, blessed be He, promised him all that WHEN HE SAID TO HIM, "AND, BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU, AND WILL KEEP YOU" (BERESHEET 28:15), why did Ya'akov not believe this? Rather, he questioned, "If Elohim will be with me...?" HE REPLIED: Only Ya'akov said, I have dreamed a dream, and some dreams are true, and some are not. If the events in the dream come to pass, then I shall know that the dream is true. Therefore, he said, "If Elohim will be with me," as I dreamed, "then Hashem shall be to me for Elohim" (Ibid. 21); I will draw blessings from the source of the spring of life, BINAH, to the place called 'Elohim'.

76. Come and behold: Yisrael, NAMELY, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, who is in the middle of everything, receives plenty first from the source of life, BINAH. What he receives, he draws to the place, THE NUKVA. This is understood from the verse that begins, "then Hashem shall be to me"--WHICH MEANS THAT HE IS THE FIRST TO RECEIVE--and continues, "for Elohim," WHICH IS THE NUKVA. THIS MEANS THAT HE WILL THEN PASS IT TO THE NUKVA. As Elohim will preserve me and do all this kindness by me, so will I draw from my place, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN, all these blessings, and the general connection, YESOD, will be tied to it. When will that be? In time, "so that I come back to my father's house in peace" (Beresheet 28:21), which means when I will be perfect in my grade, TIFERET, and perfect in the grade of peace, YESOD, to correct "my father's house," WHICH IS THE NUKVA, CALLED 'HOUSE'. "I come back...in peace" is precise, ALLUDING TO YESOD; "Then Hashem shall be to me for Elohim."

77. Another explanation for: "So that I come back to my father's house in peace." There, IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE, is the Holy Land, where I will be perfected and "Hashem shall be to me for Elohim." In that place I will properly rise from this grade to another, where I will worship Him.

78. Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, You shall purge them away" (Tehilim 65:4). This verse is difficult to understand because its two halves do not fit together--IT STARTS IN THE SINGULAR AND ENDS IN THE PLURAL. Only David asked forgiveness first for himself, and then for everyone else. "Iniquities prevail against me," means that David said: I know I myself have sinned, but some wicked in the world have sins more grievous than mine. For that reason, I AM AFRAID AND ask first for me and then for them: "as for our transgressions, You shall purge them away."

79. THE REASON DAVID WAS AFRAID OF THE MANY SINS OF THE WICKED OF THE WORLD IS AS FOLLOWS. Come and behold: when there are many in the world who are wicked, they rise up to the place where the books of the wicked are opened. THIS IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'BOOK', as it is written: "they sat in judgment and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:10). Then judgment rests upon that book, THE NUKVA, WHICH IS FLAWED BECAUSE OF JUDGMENTS. THEREFORE, DAVID WAS AFRAID LEST OUR TRANSGRESSIONS FLAW THE NUKVA, AND HE ASKED TO BE PARDONED, saying, "Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, You shall purge them away."

80. Similarly, Ya'akov TOO WAS AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT SIN, AND THAT BECAUSE OF THE MANY WICKED IN THE WORLD, THE FLAW WOULD REACH THE NUKVA. Therefore, he did not trust THE PROMISE OF HASHEM THAT WAS GIVEN HIM. However, do not say that he did not trust the Holy One, blessed be He. It is not so. He simply did not believe in himself, and he was afraid that he might sin AND THAT HIS SIN, TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER SINS IN THE WORLD, would prevent him from returning home in peace. And as a result, the keeping would be removed from him. Therefore, he did not trust himself. "And Hashem will be to me for Elohim" means when I will return in peace, I will put even mercy before judgment, so I will worship Him always.

81. Rabbi Acha EXPLAINED THE MATTER BY saying that Ya'akov said: Now I have no need of Judgment, ONLY CHESED, AS IT IS THE GRADE OF YA'AKOV. When I return to my father's house, I will include Judgment also--THAT IS, THE RIGHT WILL INCLUDE THE LEFT--and I will be connected TO THE LEFT AS I AM TO THE RIGHT, THAT IS, THE GRADE OF YISRAEL, THE CENTRAL PILLAR. Rabbi Yosi said: This is not so. He said, "If Elohim will be with me," AND THE NAME ELOHIM IS JUDGMENT, I NOW HAVE NEED OF Judgment to keep me until I return in peace to my father's house. FOR SUBJUGATION OF THE KLIPOT REQUIRES THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, WHICH IS JUDGMENT. But once I have safely returned, I will include Mercy within Judgment, THAT IS, THE RIGHT WILL BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE LEFT, AND LEFT WITHIN THE RIGHT. And I will be bound in the tie of faith to make all THE SFIROT as one. "...and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be Elohim's house..." because then, AFTER THE RIGHT AND LEFT ARE INCLUDED WITHIN EACH OTHER, all will become one. And this stone, THE NUKVA, will be blessed from right and left, CHOCHMAH AND BINAH, from above and below, TIFERET AND MALCHUT. Therefore, I will give a tenth from all. THAT IS, THE TENTH, THE NUKVA, WHICH IS ONE OUT OF TEN, WILL INCLUDE OF ALL TEN SFIROT FROM SOUTH AND NORTH, FROM ABOVE AND BELOW, WHICH ARE CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT.

82. Rabbi Aba said: It is written, "and he took of the stones of that place." THESE ARE THE TWELVE STONES ON WHICH THE NUKVA RESTS; THEY ARE NOT THE NUKVA HERSELF. It may be said that the stone he took is superior to all the other stones HE TOOK for his place of abode to rest on, THIS BEING THE NUKVA ABOVE THE TWELVE STONES. BUT THIS IS NOT SO, as it is written: "and this stone, which I have set for a pillar." He should have said 'the upper' ACCORDING TO WHAT YOU SAY. HE ANSWERS: This is because he said, "this is no other than the house of Elohim." Here he lifted the supernal pillar, for he put all the praise OF THIS, YESOD, on THE UPPER STONE, saying, "this is" able to provide, NAMELY TO PASS MOCHIN, "to no other than the house of Elohim," TO THE STONE ABOVE, WHICH IS THE HOUSE OF ELOHIM. And this is well. Therefore, it is written: "which I have set for a pillar," AND NOT 'THE UPPER'.

83. The phrase, "shall be Elohim's house," MEANS forever, SO THAT PLENTY WILL UNCEASINGLY POUR ON HER FROM YESOD. HE ASKS: WHY DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY, "Elohim's house," when it should have read 'Hashem's house', as it is written: "and build the house of Hashem," (Ezra 1:3) and "Let us go into the house of Hashem" (Tehilim 122:1). HE REPLIES: THE NUKVA IS a court, A PLACE OF JUDGMENTS, from two supernal sides on the

side of the Jubilee (Heb. yoval), YISRAEL-SABA, AND TEVUNAH, called 'Living Elohim', FOR THE SEVEN LOWER SFIROT OF BINAH, YISRAEL-SABA, AND TEVUNAH ARE ALSO CALLED 'ELOHIM' AFTER CHOCHMAH--THAT IS, 'GIVING PLENTY--AND ARE CALLED 'LIFE' (LIT. 'LIVING'). On the side of Yitzchak, THE SECRET OF GVURAH OF ZEIR ANPIN, it is ALSO CALLED 'Elohim'. THEREFORE, THE SCRIPTURE SAYS OF THE NUKVA, "ELOHIM'S HOUSE," WHICH IS JUDGMENT, AND NOT 'HASHEM'S HOUSE', WHICH IS MERCY.

84. Rabbi Elazar said that the Jubilee--YISRAEL-SABA, AND TEVUNAH, WHICH IS BINAH--is full of mercy, even though judgments will arise from it. Every joy comes out of it. It is the joy of all. THEREFORE, IT IS NOT TO BE SAID, AS RABBI ABA DID, THAT THE NUKVA IS CALLED "ELOHIM'S HOUSE," BECAUSE SHE RECEIVES JUDGMENTS FROM THE JUBILEE. Rather, "Elohim's house," BY ITS NAME, INDICATES that it is of the side of severe judgment, GVURAH OF ZEIR ANPIN, ITS LEFT. It is either for good, as the love OF UNION is from the left, it is written: "His left hand is under my head" (Shir Hahirim 2:6); or it is for evil, as severe judgment is aroused from the left, it is written: "Out of the north shall evil break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land" (Yirmeyah 1:14). It is THEREFORE assuredly CALLED "Elohim's house." Rabbi Shimon said: "Elohim's house" is, as written: "the city of the great king" (Tehilim 48:3). THE NUKVA IS THE CITY OF BINAH, CALLED 'GREAT KING'. HERE ALSO, THE NUKVA IS "ELOHIM'S HOUSE," WHICH IS BINAH. For there is a 'plain king', THE NUKVA, and there is a 'great king'. Assuredly, the supernal world is BINAH, CALLED 'great king'. And A 'PLAIN KING' is the city of the 'great king', BINAH.

13. Rabbi Chiya sees Eliyahu

In a dream of Rabbi Chiya's, the prophet Elijah announces the imminent destruction of the holy city within if men cease to study Torah. When Rabbi Chiya wakes and discusses his dream with the sages, Rabbi Yesa comments that although the wisdom of Torah watches over those who study it, the same is not true of "men who are strong in this world"--that is, who manifest the energy of the Left Column. Thus, the Holy City, in its external aspect, is doomed to destruction over and over again.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Talmud teaches us that the Temple was destroyed, not for lack of academic study of the Torah, but because of hatred and intolerance among the children of Israel for no reason. The spiritual meaning of "Torah study" concerns character transformation, not scholarship. Torah study is a means to an end--learning to love thy neighbor as thyself. Everything else, according to the sage Hillel, is merely commentary. Negative forces attempt to focus our attention on the study itself, arousing self-righteousness and self-importance. When this happens, the sages warn us, the Torah actually becomes poison to the body and soul. If we hold to our intolerant ways, the Temple will be destroyed repeatedly. Moreover, each year the Temple is not rebuilt represents the spiritual equivalent of its destruction. The Light activated as we read these verses hastens the rebuilding of the Temple and the final redemption.

85. Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Chizkiyah were sitting underneath the trees in the field of Ono. Rabbi Chiya dozed and saw Eliyahu. RABBI CHIYA said TO ELIYAHU: Because of my master showing the way, the field, THE NUKVA, is shining. ELIYAHU said: I have come to announce that Jerusalem, together with the cities where the sages dwell, is about to be destroyed. For Jerusalem, THE NUKVA, is judgment and is established upon it, and judgment now calls for its destruction. And Samael has already been given power over it and over the powerful men of the world. I have come to let the wise men know so they can try to extend Jerusalem's years SO IT SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED; for as long as the Torah, which is the Tree of Life on which everything is maintained, dwells in it, it remains standing. Thus, as long as the Torah is awakened from below AND MEN ARE OCCUPIED IN ITS STUDY, the Tree of Life, ZEIR ANPIN, does not leave the celestial JERUSALEM. When the Torah is no longer studied below, WHEN MEN ARE NOT OCCUPIED IN ITS STUDY, the Tree of Life, ZEIR ANPIN, is gone from the world, THE NUKVA, CALLED 'WORLD', AND ALSO JERUSALEM. THIS DOES NOT REFER TO TERRESTRIAL JERUSALEM SINCE THESE SAGES LIVED LONG AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

86. Therefore, as long as sages are happy in their study of the Torah, Samael cannot prevail against them, as it is written: "the voice is Ya'akov's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esav" (Bereshheet 27:22). This is the supernal Torah, ZEIR ANPIN, called 'Ya'akov's Voice'. As

long as the voice does not stop, speech rules and reigns, and study of the Torah can continue. Rabbi Chiya awoke. They went and told WHAT THEY HAD HEARD FROM ELIYAHU to the sages.

87. Rabbi Yesa said, that everybody knew WHAT ELIYAHU SAID. IT WAS REVEALED TO THE SAGES THAT WHOEVER TURNS TOWARD THE LEFT DESTROYS THE NUKVA. This is so, as it is written: "unless Hashem keeps the city, the watchman stays awake in vain" (Tehilim 127:1). The Holy City, THE NUKVA, is maintained by those who study the Torah, WHO CLEAVE TO THE CENTRAL COLUMN CALLED 'TORAH'. THEN, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, PRESERVES THE CITY, and not by men who are strong in this world, THAT IS, WHO CLEAVE TO THE LEFT. This is as it is written: "unless Hashem (THE CENTRAL COLUMN) keeps the city, the watchman stays awake in vain," FOR IT IS DESTINED TO BE DESTROYED, AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED.

14. "And he looked, and behold a well in the field"

Here the Zohar reveals the regenerative power of love tempered by justice. It explains how King David fled from his son Avshalom, and was comforted by the notion that his predecessors Jacob and Moses had also fled. Like them, he was consoled by the power of unconditional love, or the Eternal Female, "Nukva" or Malchut. This is symbolized by the phrase, "the well in the field." Protecting this well is a stone, which represents the rigor of severe judgment. When the spirit is regenerated by love, the stone of judgment is rolled back into place because it is necessary to protect the "waters" from the wicked. In its negative aspect, this stone of severe judgment is evil. "The other side is forever present at the well's mouth." Here once again the Zohar defines evil as judgment without mercy.

The Relevance of this Passage

Just as hatred for no reason is the singular cause of the destruction of the Temple and the resulting spiritual darkness, unconditional love has the power to remove even the most severe judgments decreed against mankind. Love is awakened in our hearts by this section-- a love for others, particularly our enemies, that sweetens and removes looming judgments.

88. "And he looked, and behold a well in the field" (Beresheet 29:2). Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion and said: "A psalm of David, when he fled from Avshalom his son" (Tehilim 3:1). This verse was known to the friends, WHO HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED AND EXPLAINED IT. Yet "a psalm of David" IS PERPLEXING, FOR why did he sing? Perhaps it is because his son, and not a stranger, rose against him, AND HIS SON WOULD HAVE PITY ON HIM AND A STRANGER WOULD NOT. BUT THIS INTERPRETATION WOULD NOT BE TRUE because this was supposed to be a greater lament for him. A man grieves more over a small hurt from his kin than a great hurt from others. HE ANSWERS: "A psalm of David" means that he sang because it was David's wish. At first he thought that the Holy One, blessed be He, would punish him for his sins in the world to come. When he saw that He would take revenge in this world, he rejoiced AND SANG.

89. Another reason is that DAVID saw that men of greater importance in this world fled alone. Ya'akov fled, as it is written: "And Ya'akov fled into the country of Aram" (Hoshea 12:13), and he fled alone. Moshe fled, as it is written: "But Moshe fled from before Pharaoh" (Shemot 2:15), and he was alone. When David fled, all the rulers of the land, the valiant men of the country and the chiefs of Yisrael, all fled with him, surrounding him from right and left to guard him on all sides. When he thus saw himself valued, he sang.

90. Rabbi Yehuda said that the others all passed by this well, THE NUKVA, WHILE THEY WERE FLEEING. HE ASKS: Why was David an exception? HE ANSWERS: David was then considered to be its foe BECAUSE IT PUNISHED HIM FOR THE SIN OF BAT-SHEVA, and therefore he did not come across it. But the well gladly accepted Ya'akov and Moshe, and wished to approach them. Therefore, when the well saw them, the water rose before them, as a wife happy with her husband.

91. You may wonder why, when Eliyahu ran away, he did not come across THE WELL? HE ANSWERS: Eliyahu is beneath the well, BEING THE CHARIOT TO THE NUKVA CALLED 'WELL', and not above the well, as were Moshe and Ya'akov. Therefore, ELIYAHU was a messenger performing the errands OF THE NUKVA, while Ya'akov and Moshe were above the well, BEING A CHARIOT TO ZEIR ANPIN. THEREFORE, the well rejoiced to see them and the water

rose to receive them. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE ASCENSION OF THE FEMALE WATERS TOWARD THE MALE WATERS, as a wife rejoices to see and welcome her husband.

92. The verse, "And he looked, and behold a well in the field," contains a secret. For he saw that the upper well, THE NUKVA, resembled THE LOWER OTHER WELL, WHICH WAS IN TUNE TO IT. As it is written: "and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it" (Bereshheet 29:2). THIS MEANS THAT THE THREE FLOCKS OF SHEEP ARE CONSTANTLY AT THE MOUTH OF THE WELL. HE ASKS: If there are three, why is it later written: "And there all the flocks gathered," WHICH MEANS THAT THERE ARE MORE HERDS? HE ANSWERS: There are three AND NO MORE: south, east, and north--NAMELY, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. South is on the RIGHT side, north on the LEFT side, and east is THE CENTRAL COLUMN between them. And those who stand on this well and join it, fill it. Why DO THEY WATER IT? Because, "for out of that well they watered the flocks," THAT IS, THE LOWER SOULS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, ASIYAH, as it is written: "they give drink to every wild beast" (Tehilim 104:11), WHICH ARE THE SOULS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, ASIYAH. IN THAT WAY, HE EXPLAINS THE VERSE, "AND THERE WERE ALL THE FLOCKS GATHERED," WHICH MEANS ALL THE SOULS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, ASIYAH. BUT ONLY THREE WATER THE WELL--THE THREE COLUMNS CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET.

93. The verse, "And there were all the flocks gathered," is similar to the verse, "All the rivers run into the sea" (Kohelet 1:7). AS THE RIVERS ARE SOULS, SO ARE THE HERDS. "...and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth..." MEANS THAT they remove from THE WELL the vigor of severe Judgment, which was congealed and frozen as a stone, thereby preventing the water from coming out. And when these rivers run to the sea, THE NUKVA, south--which is Right, CHESED--is strengthened, and north, GVURAH, cannot freeze the water. Thus, the water of the river remains abundant and does not congeal as in a river of little water.

94. Therefore, when these rivers run, south, which is the Right COLUMN, is strengthened. And the water thaws so that it can flow and water the herds, THE SOULS, as we have already said, "they give drink to every wild beast," WHICH ARE THE SOULS. "...and put the stone back upon the well's mouth in its place..." because the world needs the judgments OF THE NUKVA. There must be Judgment in order to reprimand the wicked. THEREFORE, THEY RETURN THE STONE TO ITS PLACE SO THAT THE NUKVA SHINES ONLY AT THE TIME OF UNION, WHEN SOULS RAISE FEMALE WATERS. AFTER THE UNION IS ACHIEVED, IT IS CLOSED AGAIN.

95. Come and behold: when Ya'akov, who sat upon the well, saw the water rising up to him, he knew he would meet his wife there. After Moshe, who also sat upon the well, saw the water rising toward him, he too knew his wife would come there. And so it was that Ya'akov met his wife there, as it is written: "And while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep...And it came to pass, when Ya'akov saw Rachel..." It is also written of Moshe: "And the shepherds came and drove them away..." (Shemot 22:17). And there he met Tziporah, his wife. This well caused all of this BECAUSE THE WELL IS THE SECRET OF THE SUPERNAL NUKVA. THUS, THEY MET THE NUKVA OF THIS WORLD.

96. Come and behold: this well is mentioned in this text seven times because seven IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF SEVEN, WHICH INCLUDES SEVEN SFIROT. It also alludes to Be'er Sheva (lit. 'a well of seven'). HE EXPLAINED THAT this well is mentioned seven times in this text, as it is written: "And he looked, and behold a well in the field...for out of that well...and a great stone was upon the well's mount...and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth...and put the stone back upon the well's mouth...and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth...and rolled the stone from the well's mouth." There are seven mentions. Assuredly this is so, because it includes seven grades.

97. In the text about Moshe, THE WELL is mentioned only once, as it is written: "and dwelt in the land of Midyan: and he sat down upon a well" (Shemot 2:15). This is because Moshe renounced his house below. Ya'akov, HOWEVER, did not renounce his house below at all. Therefore, a well is mentioned only once in regard to Moshe, as it is written: "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother" (Shir Hashirim 6:9). Therefore, Moshe is the owner of the house, AS HIS ROOT IS ABOVE THE LOWER NUKVA CALLED 'HOUSE' and he rose above it. Therefore, it is written of Moshe, "and he sat down upon a well," THAT IS, ABOVE THE WELL. Of Ya'akov it is written: "And he looked, and behold a well in the field," and not "and he sat down upon a well."

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

98. In the verse, "And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it" (Beresheet 29:2) the well is a grade called the 'Master of all the Earth'. HE EXPLAINED: "the field" means the field of holy apple trees, NAMELY, THE NUKVA FROM THE CHEST BELOW. The "three flocks of sheep" are the three supernal holy grades that are set on that well. They are Netzach, Hod, and Yesod of the world. And these draw water, NAMELY, PLENTY, from above, ZEIR ANPIN, and fill the well.

99. This is because this source, the foundation (Yesod) of the world, dwells inside that well, producing fruits and forever flowing. And the well is filled by it, MEANING THAT YESOD POURS INTO THE WELL, THE NUKVA, TWO KINDS OF PLENTY FOR THE PURPOSES OF: 1) PRODUCING SOULS, WHICH ARE FRUITS AND 2) SUSTAINING THE LOWER BEINGS. Because the well is filled WITH PLENTY, assuredly, "out of that well they watered the flocks," which are the multitude of souls and holy armies that drink from that well, each according to its merit.

100. "...and a great stone was upon the well's mouth..." alludes to a stone upon which stumble people in the world, "a stone of stumbling and...a rock of offense" (Yeshayah 8:14). THE OTHER SIDE is forever present at the well's mouth, THAT IS, BY ITS COMMAND, to seek justice from the entire world, so that no sustenance and goodness shall descend upon the world. THIS OCCURS WHEN THE NUKVA RECEIVES FROM THE LEFT, BUT NOT THE RIGHT, AND THEN PUNISHES AND DEMANDS JUSTICE.

101. Of the verse, "And there were all the flocks gathered," HE ASKS: why is it not written: 'And there were the flocks gathered', INSTEAD OF "ALL THE FLOCKS"? WHAT DOES "ALL" MEAN? All these flocks are the holy troops above, THE ANGELS, and the holy troops below, THE RIGHTEOUS. By singing and praising above and by prayers and petitions below, they immediately "rolled the stone from the well's mouth." They roll it and remove it from holiness; THE WELL is then separated from the Judgment, CALLED 'STONE'. Then "they watered the sheep," the supernal angels received above, and Yisrael below.

102. Then the words, "and put the stone back," mean that according to the command of the well THEY PUT THE STONE BACK IN ITS PLACE so it will be ready to demand judgment from the world--to act according to Judgment. And so it ought to be, for the world needs judgment to survive, to ensure that all will be done according to Truth and Righteousness.

103. After Ya'akov was perfected, WHEN HE FOUND HIS SPOUSE, RACHEL, he had no further need of that stone. It is then written: "and rolled the stone from the well's mouth." HE ASKS: Why is it written: "and (he) rolled," and "they rolled," instead of 'he removed', and 'they removed'? Because "they rolled" is the rolling of the Satan, for they roll everything upon him and shake him so he cannot accuse.

104. And Ya'akov alone ROLLED THE STONE and needed help from no one. For Ya'akov was the chosen of the fathers, THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Because he prevailed against Esav in this world, he could prevail above. In everything, there is need first of an action BELOW.

105. Ya'akov inherited two worlds, the Revealed World and the Hidden World. Accordingly, from the Hidden World, FROM LEAH, the six tribes were issued. And from the Revealed world, FROM RACHEL, the other two tribes were issued. Also, the Hidden world, LEAH, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, issued six ends, and the Revealed world, RACHEL, issued two. They are the two Cherubs, Matatron and Sandalfon. And Ya'akov was located between the two worlds, THE REVEALED AND THE HIDDEN, in their very shape. Therefore, all Leah said was covered, and all that Rachel said was in the open.

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

Tosefta (Addendum)

106. "And he looked, and behold a well is in the field." Rabbi Elazar said: It is written, "Hearken to me, you that follow after Righteousness" (Yeshayah 51:1), MEANING THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE NUKVA, THAT IS CALLED 'RIGHTEOUSNESS', TO AMEND IT; those who claim the secret of the faith AND THEREBY THE JUDGMENT TO CORRECT THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT COLUMN; those who cleave to the bond of the faith, THE

SECRET OF THE BOND IN THE RIGHT COLUMN; AND those who know the ways of the Supernal King, THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. THE ADDENDUM HEREBY INVITES THOSE WHO ATTAINED THE THREE COLUMNS, WHO FOLLOW THE NUKVA, TO AMEND HER, TO HEARKEN TO THESE WORDS.

107. When the two COLUMNS move toward the one COLUMN, they receive it between their arms. Thus, two COLUMNS travel with the third between them. The first two are the seat of the prophets, from which they derive sustenance. The one in the middle is attached to both of them, and receives from AND INCLUDES them all.

108. The holy well is beneath them. It is THEN CALLED a 'field of holy apple trees', "for out of that well they watered the flocks," which are the Chariots of the winged ANGELS. Three are found lying upon the well. And this well is filled by them. This is the meaning of the verse: "for out of that well they watered the flocks." It is called 'Adonai', as it is written: "Adonai Elohim, You have begun" (Devarim 3:24), and, "and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that is desolate, for Adonai's sake" (Daniel 9:17). IT IS CALLED the 'Master (Heb. adon) of all the Earth', as it is written: "Behold, the Ark of the Covenant, (of) the Master of all the earth" (Yehoshua 3:11).

End of Tosefta?

15. "And Ya'akov went out of Be'er Sheva," part two

Rabbi Aba explains the verse by citing another: "Happy are they who maintain justice and do Righteousness at all times." Those who study Torah and follow God's ways are freed from ruin--that is, "the power of death." Those unrighteous, on the other hand, are abandoned by the Shekinah and become vulnerable to the Evil Inclination, the temptation to do harm. This temptation is a powerful force in the world. One verse explains the other, Rabbi Elazar replies to Rabbi Aba, the sense that Ya'akov's leaving of the land of Israel symbolizes departure from a holy way of life.

The Relevance of this Passage

Ya'akov's departure from the Land of Israel is a metaphor for a man's departure from a pure and positive existence. Throughout life, we are lured by the material world where short-lived achievements are based on egocentric drives and ambitions. Spiritual achievements-which are eternal-come about through struggle to remain on the path of spiritual development. Here, we arouse the divine presence of the Shechinah, which protects us from seductions of the external world and the compelling impulses ignited by our Evil Inclination.

109. There is another explanation OF THE VERSE: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva, and went toward Charan." Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse: "Happy are they who maintain justice, and do righteousness at all times" (Tehilim 106:3). "Happy are they who maintain justice," happy are the children of Yisrael to whom the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the true Torah to study day and night. And whoever is occupied in studying the Torah attains freedom from everything, but especially freedom from death, which has no power over him. He who studies the Torah and attaches himself to it, holds the Tree of Life. If he relaxes his hold on the Tree of Life, the Tree of Death dwells upon him and seizes him. This is the meaning of the verse: "If you relax in the day of adversity, your strength is narrow" (Mishlei 24:10). The word "relax" means relaxing one's hold on the Torah.

110. "...in the day of adversity, your strength (Heb. kochechah) is narrow." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of, "your strength is narrow?" AND HE ANSWERS: The strength (ko'ach) of koh, WHICH TWO SEGMENTS CONSTITUTE KOCHECHAH, is narrow. IF HE RELAXES HIS HOLD ON THE TORAH, THEN THE STRENGTH OF THE SHECHINAH, CALLED 'KOH', IS NARROW, AND SHE DOES NOT PROTECT HIM. This is because THE SHECHINAH is always within the right, and always protects man when he walks the paths of the Torah. She pushes the evil out so it will not come near the man to denounce him. But when a man deviates from the ways of the Torah and relaxes his hold on it, then the strength of koh, THE SHECHINAH, is narrow, because the evil, the left, has power over that man and pushes koh, THE SHECHINAH, out until the place becomes narrow with hardship.

111. Another explanation of the verse, "your strength is narrow," is that when a man holds on to the ways of the Torah, he is beloved above and below. He becomes the beloved of the

Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "and Hashem loved him" (II Shmuel 2:24). But when a man deviates from the ways of the Torah, then the strength is narrow (Heb. tzar) of koh, THE SHECHINAH. SHE becomes his enemy (Heb. tzar), and he becomes hers. And that evil, THE EVIL INCLINATION, rules over him and becomes his accuser in this world and the world to come.

112. Come and behold: this evil, the Evil Inclination, reigns in the world in many ways and has much power in the world. It is the tyrant serpent by which Adam sinned and by which people in the world fail. They draw it upon themselves, until it takes their souls from them.

113. Come and behold: when that EVIL INCLINATION reigns, it reigns over the body, because as soon as it takes control over the body, the soul leaves it. For once the body is defiled, the soul leaves it and ascends. But the Evil Inclination has no power TO REMOVE A MAN'S SOUL until it receives permission to do so. Many that come from the side OF THE EVIL INCLINATION rule over the world. We learned that all the deeds done in the world rule over them THROUGH TEMPTATIONS. It has ministers and servants whose service pertains to worldly deeds, WHO TEMPT MEN TO DO EVIL.

114. Therefore, it is the end of the left. It has been explained that there is the end of the right and the end of the left. This end of the left is "the end of all flesh," (Beresheet 6:13) and not the end of all spirit. The secret IS THAT THERE ARE TWO ENDS. One is the end of all flesh, NAMELY, THE ONE IN CHARGE OF THE BODY. The other is the end of all spirit, THE ONE IN CHARGE OVER A MAN'S SPIRIT. Therefore, THE END OF ALL SPIRIT is internal AND THE END OF ALL FLESH is external. The INTERNAL one is holy and the EXTERNAL one is defiled. This has already been explained.

115. Come and behold: WITHIN THE RIGHT SIDE, THE SOUTH, there is a deep mystery of the faith, the mystery of the male world, ZEIR ANPIN, and the female world, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. And the holiest and deepest secrets of the faith, THE NUKVA, come from here. All life and freedom, goodness and lights are from here. All benedictions and spreading of alms and loving love--everything comes from this side, THE RIGHT SIDE. This is the secret of the south.

116. From the north side, the grades spread until the dross of gold reaches down TO BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH of the unholy side. The unholy filth grasps THE MALE above and THE FEMALE below. Here, male and female join together. They are the rider ON THE SERPENT and the serpent, which is the secret of the male and female. This is the secret of Azazel, WHICH INCLUDES THE MALE AND FEMALE OF DEFILEMENT.

117. From here the grades are divided, and several aspects come into the world. They emanate from here and rule over the world. All of them are aspects of defilement and are ministers in charge of the world. Come and behold: when Esav was born into the world, he was red as a rose--AS THE RED COLOR ALLUDES TO THE LEFT--and hairy as a goat--WHICH ALLUDES TO DEFILEMENT, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND GOATS SHALL HOP ABOUT THERE" (YESHAYAH 13:21). From here came all the chiefs and powerful officials who rule over the world. This has already been explained.

118. Come and behold: "happy are they who maintain justice" (Tehilim 106:3). THAT IS, happy are those who preserve the faith of the Holy One, blessed be He, because He is called 'Justice', and it behooves man to maintain justice and keep himself from turning the other way. This is because the Holy One, blessed be He, is Justice, and all His ways are just.

119. "...and do righteousness at all times..." (Ibid.). HE ASKS: Can a man possibly do righteous deeds at all times? HE ANSWERS: He who walks in the path of the Torah and performs righteous deeds for those who need them IS JUDGED TO BE PERFORMING RIGHTEOUSNESS AT ALL TIMES. For whoever is charitable to the poor, increases righteousness, NAMELY, THE NUKVA CALLED 'RIGHTEOUSNESS', above and below, BY BRINGING ABOUT A UNION OF MALE AND FEMALE ABOVE AND THE POURING OF PLENTY OF BLESSINGS DOWNWARD.

120. Come and behold: when whoever is striving to perform righteousness does so, that righteousness rises and reaches that place of Ya'akov, the upper Chariot, THE NUKVA CALLED 'PLACE', and draws blessings on that place from the source of all springs, FROM BINAH, FROM WHICH COME ALL MOCHIN. From that righteousness, THE NUKVA, AFTER

RECEIVING BLESSINGS FROM BINAH, he blesses the lower ones and all the Chariots OF THE ANGELS and the supernal armies. All are blessed, and the lights are properly added. All THE LOWER BEINGS AND THE ANGELS are called "time," BECAUSE THEY ARE DRAWN FROM THE NUKVA CALLED 'TIME'. Therefore, it is written: "and do righteousness at all times," WHICH MEANS THEY INCREASES ABUNDANTLY FOR ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE THREE WORLDS--BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH--THAT EMANATE FROM THE NUKVA, AND ARE CALLED 'TIME,' LIKE THE NUKVA.

121. Come and behold: when the children of Yisrael were in the Holy Land, they drew blessings downward. When the children of Yisrael left the Holy Land and came under the dominion of another, blessings were withheld from the world.

122. Come and behold: Ya'akov was under the Holy Government IN THE LAND OF YISRAEL. After he left the land, he came under another dominion, WHICH IS NOT HOLY. Before he came under another dominion, the Holy One, blessed be He, was revealed to him in a dream. He saw what he saw, and the holy angels walked with him until he sat upon the well. After he sat on the well, the water rose toward him. So it was with Moshe because there his wife chanced to meet him. The secret OF THE RISING WATER of the well is that it only rises when it sees its union, NAMELY, ITS SPOUSE to be joined with him.

123. Rabbi Aba said that all these verses contradict each other. First, it is written: "And Ya'akov went out from Be'er Sheva, and went toward Charan," and Lavan dwelt in Charan. IF IT BE SO, why then did Ya'akov leave Charan, as it is written: "Then Ya'akov lifted up his feet, and went to the land of the people of the east" (Beresheet 29:1)? How do we know that Lavan dwelt in Charan? Because it is written: "And Ya'akov said to them, 'My brethren, where are you from?' And they said, 'of Charan are we.' And he said to them, 'Do you know Lavan the son of Nachor?' And they said, 'We know'" (Ibid. 4-5). This teaches us that Lavan then lived in Charan. WHY DID YA'AKOV TRAVEL TO THE LAND OF THE PEOPLE OF THE EAST?

124. Only Ya'akov thought: I want to join the Shechinah, THE SECRET OF THE WELL, because I want to take a wife. My father, when he was to be married, sent a servant to find a source of water where a wife chanced to be found for my father. But in this place, CHARAN, I did not find a source, a well, or water. Immediately, therefore, "Ya'akov lifted up his feet, and went to the land of the people of the east," where he chanced upon the well and met his wife, as we have said.

125. Rabbi Elazar said: Assuredly, YA'AKOV was in Charan, WHICH IS THE LAND OF THE EAST. And this well was in the jurisdiction OF CHARAN. If this be so, why is it written: "and she ran and told her father" (Beresheet 29:12)? This is because it was close to the town.

126. Rabbi Elazar mused that if a wife chanced to Ya'akov by the well, why not Leah? She gave to Ya'akov all those tribes. HE ANSWERS: The Holy One, blessed be He, did not want to unite her with Ya'akov openly, as it is written: "And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah," (Beresheet 29:25) but this was not revealed earlier, FOR THIS WAS THE WILL OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE.

127. Another reason WHY RACHEL WAS SEEN AND NOT LEAH was so that Rachel's beauty would catch the eye and heart of Ya'akov, so he would establish his dwelling there. Because of her, Leah too was united with him, and gave birth to all those tribes. HE ASKS: How did Ya'akov recognize Rachel, AS HE KNEW HER NOT? The shepherds told him, as it is written: "and behold, Rachel his daughter comes with the sheep" (Beresheet 29:6).

16. "I will serve you seven years"

This mysterious passage interprets the seven years Ya'akov served Lavan to win Rachel's hand as symbolizing the seven Sfirot. The secret in the matter is in the phrase, "and they seemed to him but a few days"--since they were served in the hidden or unrevealed world.

The Relevance of this Passage

A man cannot win the hand of his soulmate until he merits her through his own spiritual growth and transformation. Ya'akov's seven years of service corresponds to the years, or lifetimes, that we must endure before the reunification of two halves can take place. When

this spiritual truth is ingrained in our consciousness, and if we are proactive in the removal of our negative traits, we can hasten the arrival of our true soulmate.

128. Come and behold. It is written: "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter" (Bereshheet 29:18). HE ASKS: Why did Ya'akov say "seven years" instead of ten months or one year? HE ANSWERS: Ya'akov acted wisely so that people would not say that he lusted after Rachel's beauty, but WOULD KNOW that he acted wisely. For the moon, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, is seven years old, MEANING IT NEEDS TO BE BUILT BY THE SEVEN SFIROT--CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD AND MALCHUT. And all the seven upper years--CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD YESOD AND MALCHUT OF BINAH--rested on Ya'akov before he married Rachel so that they would suit her properly, THAT IS, GIVE OF THE SEVEN SFIROT OF BINAH TO HER SEVEN SFIROT. For at first Ya'akov took everything FROM BINAH and then he came to her, so that he should be CONSIDERED AS ZEIR ANPIN, the heaven, and she should be CONSIDERED THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, the earth.

129. The secret of the matter is in the phrase, "and they seemed to him but a few days." HE ASKS: What is "a few (Heb. achadim) days?" HE ANSWERED that he considered all seven years as the SEVEN upper YEARS FROM BINAH, which are united (Heb. achadot) BY ONE UNION and never separated. They are bound to each other. "...for the love he had to her..." MEANS THAT HE LOVED HER, because she is to him as the supernal UNION WITHIN BINAH.

130. Come and behold: even Lavan hinted at these seven SFIROT--although he did not know what he was saying, for he opened the discussion with the words, "It is better (lit. 'good') that I give her to you..." Rabbi Aba said: Surely this is so. He worked seven years, WHICH ARE THE SEVEN SFIROT, to be united with the Shmitah (Sabbatical year,) NAMELY, TO PASS THE SEVEN SFIROT TO THE NUKVA, RACHEL CALLED 'SABBATICAL YEAR'. Rabbi Elazar said: Come and behold. Everywhere the Jubilee is undisclosed, while the Shmitah is disclosed.

131. Come and behold: when Ya'akov served the first seven years, a voice resounded, saying, "from the world to the world" (Tehilim 106:48). THIS MEANS THAT THERE IS A DRAWING FROM THE HIDDEN WORLD, LEAH, TO THE DISCLOSED WORLD, RACHEL. The undisclosed world above, which is jubilee, NAMELY LEAH, is the starting point, AND NOT THE REVEALED WORLD, WHICH IS RACHEL. And these GRADES, which are undisclosed and not revealed to us, are from the Jubilee and were therefore hidden from Ya'akov, who did not even know THAT THEY WERE FOR LEAH, THE JUBILEE. He thought they were for the Shmitah, THAT IS, FOR RACHEL. ANOTHER REASON WAS to make him start from the supernal world, LEAH, it was hidden from him THAT THEY BELONGED TO LEAH, because the Jubilee is undisclosed. BEING CLOSED AND COVERED BY CHOCHMAH, HE DID NOT WANT TO START AND DRAW FROM IT, UNLESS HE THOUGHT THEY BELONGED TO THE DISCLOSED WORLD. Later, when the seven undisclosed years of the Jubilee were over, Ya'akov served the seven disclosed Shmitah FOR RACHEL, and YA'AKOV was adorned in both worlds, THE UNDISCLOSED AND THE DISCLOSED WORLD, and was united with them.

17. Upper Righteous and lower Righteous

This passage concerns the hidden significance of Ya'akov's sons with Leah and Rachel, especially the righteous Yosef and Benyamin. The Zohar is again employing the language of metaphor to trace the flow of Light through the complex structure of the spiritual worlds. The Zohar intricately describes a perfect and exact system--a science of the supernal worlds, a physics of spiritual Light.

The Relevance of this Passage

This section connects the reader to the metaphysical infrastructure of reality, the source of our soul, our light, and, ultimately, our happiness and fulfillment.

132. Come and behold: Leah gave birth to six sons and one daughter, and so it should be, because six directions are established upon her, THAT IS YA'AKOV, WHO IS TIFERET, INCLUDING CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD. These six and the one daughter came out according to a supernal mystery. THE SIX SONS CORRESPOND TO THE SIX EXTREMITIES, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD OF YA'AKOV, AND THE ONE DAUGHTER CORRESPONDS TO MALCHUT.

133. Rachel bore two righteous sons, and so it should be, BECAUSE RACHEL is THE SECRET OF the Shmitah that sits forever between two righteous ones, as it is written: "The righteous shall inherit the land" (Tehilim 37:29). These are the righteous above IN ZEIR ANPIN, and the righteous below IN THE NUKVA. From the righteous above, the supernal waters are drawn, THE SECRET OF DIRECT LIGHT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD, and from the righteous below, the Nukva wells up water to the male, THE SECRET OF REFLECTED LIGHT FROM BELOW UPWARD, in complete passion. AND SO IT COMES TO PASS THAT SHE HAS the righteous ones on both sides. As the supernal male, ZEIR ANPIN is situated between two females, BINAH AND NUKVA, so the lower female--MEANING THE NUKVA OF THE CHEST AND BELOW ZEIR ANPIN--is situated between two righteous ones, YOSEF AND BINYAMIN.

134. Therefore Yosef and Binyamin are both righteous. Yosef merited to be the righteous above, IN ZEIR ANPIN, because he kept the sign of the Covenant. Binyamin is the righteous below, IN THE NUKVA HERSELF, so that the Sabbatical year, THE NUKVA, shall be adorned between the two righteous ones, Yosef, and Binyamin.

135. HE ASKS: Was Binyamin righteous? AND HE ANSWERS: Yes, because never in his life did he transgress in regard to the sign of the Covenant, although he was not tried by deeds as was Yosef. HE ASKS: If this be so, why is he called 'Righteous' IF HE WAS NEVER CONFRONTED BY TEMPTATION? THERE ARE MANY WHO KEEP THE COVENANT ALL THEIR LIVES, BUT THEY ARE NOT CALLED 'RIGHTEOUS' UNLESS THEY ARE TRIED. HE ANSWERS: All the days Ya'akov was in mourning for Yosef, he did not perform his marital duty. FOR THAT, HE DESERVED TO BE CALLED 'RIGHTEOUS'. You may say that when Yosef was taken from Ya'akov, Binyamin was a mere child and not married. HE ANSWERS: Even when he married later, he did not want to perform his marital duty.

136. HE INSISTED AGAIN, YET we learned that when Yosef asked Binyamin "have you a wife?", he answers: "yes." He asked him, "have you sons?" He said, "yes." He then said to him, "what are their names." He replied, "they are named after my brothers, Gera and Na'aman..." as it is written: "And the sons of Binyamin were Bela and Becher..." (Beresheet 46:21). But you say he did not have conjugal intercourse.

137. He said to him: I do. At that time, he did not yet have sons. HE THUS DISAGREES WITH THAT AGGADAH. And if you say IT IS EXPLICIT FROM THE VERSE, "And the sons of Binyamin were Bela and Becher," when they came to Egypt, this is surely so, FOR HE ALREADY HAD SONS. Yet as long as Ya'akov mourned for Yosef, Binyamin did not perform his marital duty or beget any children. Binyamin said: My brother Yosef was the sign of the Covenant of my Father, AS YA'AKOV IS TIFERET, WHICH INCLUDES CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, AND YOSEF IS YESOD OF YA'AKOV, because the Covenant, YESOD, is the final part of the body, TIFERET. Because he is lost, I will guard my brother's place, THAT IS, I WILL BE THE ASPECT OF THE RIGHTEOUS YESOD, THE ENDING OF TIFERET, LIKE YOSEF.

138. You may say that when Yosef was lost, he was not yet righteous, because one cannot be righteous before one is tried, AND AT THAT TIME HE WAS NOT YET TEMPTED. HE ANSWERS: Everybody knew it from Ya'akov, who knew that Yosef would inherit this place, MEANING THAT HE KNEW FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT HE WOULD BE TRIED BY THE WIFE OF POTIFAR AND WOULD MERIT TO BE CALLED 'RIGHTEOUS'. Therefore, he stopped a long time at the house of Lavan AND DID NOT RETURN HOME before the body was perfected. And the final part of the body is the Covenant, NAMELY, YOSEF. Therefore it is written: "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Yosef, THAT YA'AKOV SAID TO LAVAN, SEND ME AWAY..." (Beresheet 30:25). He said: Now THAT YOSEF, YESOD, IS BORN, surely the body, TIFERET, is perfected. Because the body is perfected, I desire to go "TO MY OWN PLACE, AND TO MY COUNTRY," AS YA'AKOV KNEW FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT YOSEF IS OF THE ASPECT OF YESOD, AND FROM HIM EVERYONE ELSE KNEW AS WELL. Therefore, Binyamin knew and guarded his brother's way, THAT IS, HE BECAME THE RIGHTEOUS, YESOD, FOR HIS FATHER, INSTEAD YOSEF, AFTER HE WAS LOST.

139. When he came to Yosef, and he was found, NAMELY MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BROTHERS, Binyamin returned home and performed his marital duty and begot children. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, made him Righteous below IN THE NUKVA, as Yosef was Righteous above IN ZEIR ANPIN. Thus did Rachel bear two sons, and Leah six sons and a daughter.

140. Therefore, the first seven years were undisclosed, because Ya'akov did not know THEY WERE FOR LEAH, as they stem from the Jubilee year, WHICH IS BINAH, THE SECRET OF THE HIDDEN WORLD. And the SEVEN YEARS of the Sabbatical year, THE DISCLOSED WORLD, were revealed, AS HE KNEW HE WAS SERVING FOR RACHEL. Because of the Sabbatical year, the Disclosed WORLD, he ACTUALLY served for the Jubilee year, the Hidden WORLD. THAT IS, HE THOUGHT HE SERVED FOR RACHEL, THE SECRET OF THE SABBATICAL YEAR, BUT ACTUALLY HE SERVED FOR LEAH, THE SECRET OF THE JUBILEE YEAR, as it is written: "And Ya'akov served seven years for Rachel." He served seven undisclosed years--NAMELY, FROM THE ASPECT OF THE HIDDEN WORLD, LEAH--for Rachel, and served the supernal seven years, THE SEVEN SFIROT OF LEAH, and so became attached through them to the two worlds. WHILE HE THOUGHT HE SERVED FOR THE DISCLOSED WORLD, HE WAS SERVING FOR THE HIDDEN WORLD. From this we learn that from the disclosed, a man reaches that which is hidden.

141. You may say that he served the first seven years for the Jubilee, WHICH IS LEAH, and it is written of the Jubilee, "seven times seven years" (Vayikra 25:8). There are seven years, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND HE SERVED SEVEN YEARS," BUT what happened to seven times SEVEN? DID HE HAVE TO WORK 49 YEARS, THE NUMBER OF THE YEARS OF THE JUBILEE? HE ANSWERS: These are the seven days he kept at the feast of Leah, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND FULFILLED HER WEEK" (BERESHEET 29:28)--which amounts TO 49, because each day represents one SEVEN, as it is written: "Seven times a day I praise You because of Your righteous Judgments" (Tehilim 119:164). THUS, there are seven in each day called one, seven times seven AMOUNTS TO 49, THE NUMBER OF THE YEARS OF THE JUBILEE.

142. In regards to Rachel it was not so, for he did not keep the seven days OF HER FEAST, but seven years only after HER MARRIAGE. You may say, if this be so, he should have served first the years of the Shmitah and then joined the Sabbatical year, RACHEL. FOR HE HAD TO DRAW FIRST THE SFIROT FOR HER, AS HE DID FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR, LEAH. HE ANSWERS THAT because he was intent upon serving, it was considered as if he already did serve, AND IMMEDIATELY THE SEVEN SFIROT FOR RACHEL WERE DRAWN TO HIM. Rabbi Aba came to him and kissed him. He said: Blessed be the Merciful One, that I merited an understanding of this verse. It is written of this place--FROM THE CHEST AND DOWN OF ZEIR ANPIN, NAMELY THE DISCLOSED WORLD, RACHEL--"Hashem was well pleased for his Righteousness' sake, to magnify Torah, and to make it glorious" (Yeshayah 42:21).

18. Four joints

This passage seems to assign lesser importance to the four sons that Ya'akov had with the handmaidens of Leah and Rachel. However, the Zohar reveals that the spiritual system and supernal structure of reality is perfect, complete, and includes all components, no matter how irrelevant they might appear. Though the four children are not present among the Sfirot, they are included in the symbolic body of Adam Kadmon as the joints of his arms and legs.

The Relevance of this Passage

A good computer system depends on a powerful microprocessor. If a tiny, "insignificant" wire is absent or defective, the entire system is rendered inoperable. All the elements are, in a manner of speaking, equally important. Similarly, everyone in this world is as important as the most righteous sage, including those we might consider to be on a lower level of spirituality than ourselves. It behooves us to stop judging others, and to recognize that every person plays a vital role in the spiritual structure of humanity. This passage instills this wisdom in our consciousness, so that we may begin living it every day.

143. Rabbi Elazar continued the discussion: We have learned that Leah surely bore six sons and one daughter, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD AND MALCHUT. And Rachel bore two sons, THE TWO UPPER AND LOWER RIGHTEOUS ONES. This is also so. But what of the four sons of the handmaids? What is their connection? AS IN THE SONS OF RACHEL AND LEAH THERE ARE ALREADY ALL THE SFIROT. HE ANSWERS: They are the four knots called 'hinder parts', of whom it is written: "and all their hinder parts were inward" (I Melachim 7:25).

144. In the right arm, CHESED, there are three joints, AS THE ARM IS DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS--THE BICEPS, THE ARM, AND THE HAND. THE PARTS ARE CONNECTED BY THREE

JOINTS. However the joint in the middle is bigger than the others and is CONSIDERED AS a hinder part protruding outward. Similarly, there is ONE MIDDLE JOINT OF THE THREE JOINTS in the left arm; one OF THE THREE JOINTS in the right leg; and one OF THE THREE JOINTS in the left leg. When everything is properly arranged, all four hind joints COME inside THE BODY, in keeping with the verse, "and all their hinder parts were inward."

145. All the other joints, EXCEPT FOR THESE FOUR, are on the same plane WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY; only these four protrude out of the arms and legs to indicate the sons of the handmaids. For although they are of the twelve TRIBES, they are not of the same rank as the sons of Leah and Rachel. Therefore, they protrude out OF THE ARMS AND LEGS.

146. Another explanation is that these SONS OF THE HANDMAIDS are the four JOINTS which force all the other joints to move; these four knots carry the others. Rabbi Aba said: Surely this is so, and therefore they are all connected as one.

19. "And Hashem saw that Leah was hated"

The Zohar reflects on the symbolic importance of Ya'akov's relations with Leah, whom he hated in public but loved in private, and who bore him six sons and one daughter. Ya'akov was unaware that his true relationship with Leah was hidden. She had a direct relation to the Eternal Mother, and therefore most of Ya'akov's sons came from her. In this same way, God's true intentions hidden from us.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our perceptions often deceive us, as hidden truths lurk behind the physical existence. Though it appeared that Ya'akov hated Leah, a profound spiritual love existed on a deeper level. The lives of many of us are like that. Hence, the Light of this passage instills within us a keen awareness and desire to probe to hidden levels of the relationships and events that life presents us.

147. "And Hashem saw that Leah was hated" (Beresheet 29:31). Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "He makes the barren woman to keep house, and be a joyful mother of sons, Haleluyah" (Tehilim 113:9). The verse, "He makes the barren woman (also: 'the principal part') to keep house," refers to Rachel, the principal part of the house, and "a joyful mother of sons" refers to Leah, WHO BORE SIX SONS AND ONE DAUGHTER.

148. According to another explanation, "He makes the barren woman to keep house," refers to the Sabbatical year, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, which is the principal part, because the whole world is guided by her. "...a joyful mother of sons..." refers to the Jubilee year, BINAH, on which all joy and bliss in all the worlds OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH depend. FOR THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN HAS NOTHING OF HERSELF EXCEPT WHAT ZEIR ANPIN RECEIVES FROM BINAH AND PASSES ON TO HER. THEN SHE PASSES IT ON TO ALL THE WORLDS. THUS, ALL JOY IN THE WORLDS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH COMES FROM BINAH. This verse comprises everything, because it includes all in the secrets of Holiness, NAMELY, THE HIDDEN WORLD AND THE DISCLOSED WORLD. Therefore, the verse ends with Halleluyah, WHICH IS THE HIGHEST OF ALL PRAISES IN THE BOOK OF TEHILIM.

149. "And Hashem saw that Leah was hated." HE ASKS: Why was she hated? The sons of a hated wife cannot be decent sons, yet we see that all the good sons came from Leah. Now you say that Leah was hated. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly, the Jubilee year is always the Hidden World, and its words are never revealed. Therefore, all its acts were hidden from Ya'akov. THAT MEANS THAT SHE WAS LOVED BY HIM IN PRIVATE, BUT IN PUBLIC IT SEEMED AS IF SHE WAS HATED.

150. Come and behold: the lower world, WHICH IS RACHEL, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, is revealed; it is the beginning of the ascension of the grades. The supernal Chochmah OF ARICH ANPIN is the starting point for everything FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD, as the lower world is Chochmah, the starting point FROM BELOW UPWARD. Therefore, it is called "You," because it is a Sabbatical year and therefore disclosed.

151. And the supernal world is the Jubilee year, NAMELY, LEAH WHO IS DRAWN FROM IMA, and we call it "he," because all of its words are hidden. FOR THE WORD "HE" ALLUDES TO THE HIDDEN WORLD. The secret is as it is written of Leah: "And he lay with her that night

(lit. 'that night he')" (Beresheet 30:16). It is therefore written: "And the Levite shall serve he," (Bemidbar 18:23) WHICH MEANS THAT THE LEVITE SERVES in order to draw blessings from "he" to all THE WORLDS. "He" is ever the supernal secret world, and Ya'akov willingly cleaved only to what was revealed. This is the secret of the verse: "and cleave to his wife" (Beresheet 2:24).

152. "And Hashem saw that Leah was hated," BECAUSE SHE IS DRAWN FROM IMA. From here it is understood that man has an aversion toward incest with his mother, BECAUSE HIS MOTHER IS THE SECRET OF THE HIDDEN WORLD, OF WHICH IT IS SAID, "THEREFORE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER." Moreover, a man may stay alone with his mother anywhere, and not fear OF BEING ALONE WITH HER. Thus, all was unknown to Ya'akov, because the supernal world, LEAH DRAWN FROM IMA, is completely undisclosed.

20. The tribes

The Zohar reflects that civilization as we know it started with Ya'akov. Before him, civilizations rose and fell without a trace. The sons of Ya'akov commence the twelve tribes of Israel. This too has a hidden significance.

The Relevance of this Passage

The twelve tribes correspond to the celestial influences emanating from the twelve constellations. The power of Ya'akov and the patriarchs is in their ability to rise above any negative influences streaming down from the heavens. Using the mystic secrets of the Torah, they took control over the signs and captained their own destiny. This governing power over the stars is bequeathed to the reader of this passage.

153. Come and behold: the world perseveres for Ya'akov's sake. It may be said that it does so for Avraham's sake, as it is written: "THESE ARE THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVEN AND OF THE EARTH when they were created (Heb. behibar'am)" (Beresheet 2:4); the Hebrew word contains the letters of the name of Avraham. THIS MEANS THAT THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVEN AND OF THE EARTH EXISTED DUE TO AVRAHAM. HE ANSWERS: Yet Avraham existed for the sake of Ya'akov, as it is written: "Therefore thus says Hashem, concerning the house of Ya'akov, who redeemed Avraham" (Yeshayah 29:22). Before that, the Holy One, blessed be He, used to build and destroy worlds. After Ya'akov came, the worlds were constructed from him and were not destroyed as before. This is the meaning of the verse: "thus says Hashem that created you, Ya'akov, and He that formed you, Yisrael..." (Yeshayah 43:1)

154. Come and behold. It is written: "Yisrael is My son, My firstborn...Let My son go, that he may serve me" (Shemot 4:22-23). For Yisrael is called 'a son to the Holy One, blessed be He,' because he cleaved to him, as it is written: "and what is his son's name, if you can tell" (Mishlei 30:4).

155. When Leah bore Reuven, it is written: "and she called his name Reuven," (Beresheet 29:32) simply Reuven (lit. 'see, a son'), WITHOUT FURTHER EXPLANATION, AS SHE GAVE FOR SHIMON, SAYING "BECAUSE HASHEM HAS HEARD..." AND AS SHE GAVE FOR HER OTHER SONS. BECAUSE HE IS OF THE ASPECT OF CHESED, WHY DID SHE NOT CALL HIM BINYAMIN (LIT. 'SON OF THE RIGHT')? HE ANSWERS: This is because he was included within the three Columns which join to become one, THAT IS, WITH Shimon and Levi, THE LEFT AND THE CENTRAL COLUMNS. Why then DID SHE CALL THE THIRD SON Levi? The name Levi means accompaniment, which indicates the joining of all the aspects.

156. Rabbi Yehuda said that from this it is understood THAT HE COMPRISES THE THREE COLUMNS, as it is written: "the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power" (Beresheet 49:3). The translation into Aramaic is as follows: Birthright, THE CENTRAL COLUMN; Priesthood, THE RIGHT COLUMN; AND Kingdom, THE LEFT COLUMN," because Malchut is on the side of Gvurah. Therefore she simply called him Reuven, 'see, a son', TO SHOW THAT HE COMPRISES THE THREE COLUMNS.

157. Rabbi Aba said THAT SHE simply SAID: "see, a son," AND NOT, 'SON OF THE RIGHT', because he was included with Shimon and Levi. Thus, Leah reasoned, INCLUDING HIM WITHIN THE TWO OTHER SONS, as it is written: "Now this time will my husband be joined to me, because I have born him three sons," (Beresheet 29:34) which indicates that there are

three united as one, SO THAT EACH INCLUDES ALL THREE. SHE COULD THEREFORE NOT CALL HIM BINYAMIN ('SON OF THE RIGHT'), BECAUSE HE ALSO INCLUDED THE LEFT.

158. Come and behold: this is so, because the supernal Chariot comprises the fathers: AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, YA'AKOV, and King David, who joined them. And all these four supernal Chariots are the secret of the Holy Name, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. THE YUD-HEI-VAV ARE THE FATHERS, NAMELY THE THREE COLUMNS, AND THE LAST HEI IS THE SECRET OF KING DAVID, NAMELY, THE NUKVA. According TO THE SAME SECRET, Reuven, Shimon, and Levi ARE THE THREE COLUMNS, YUD-HEI-VAV, and Yehuda, who inherited the kingdom (Malchut,) IS THE SECRET OF THE LAST HEI OF THE NAME OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. Therefore, they are all in this place, THAT IS, IN THE MYSTERY OF THE CHARIOT. AS EACH OF THE THREE COLUMNS IS INCLUDED WITHIN THE CHARIOT, SO EACH OF THE TRIBES INCLUDES THE THREE COLUMNS.

159. It is written: "Now will I praise Hashem...and she left off (lit. 'stood from') bearing." This is because in here, YEHUDA, were completed the four legs OF THE THRONE, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT. REUVEN IS THE SECRET OF CHESED; SHIMON OF GVURAH; LEVI OF TIFERET; AND YEHUDA OF MALCHUT. HE ASKS: IN THE VERSE, "Now will I praise Hashem," why did she say OF THIS SON, "Now will I praise Hashem," why she did not say it OF THE REST OF THE SONS? HE ANSWERS: It is understood that as long as the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY, MALCHUT, was in exile, the Holy Name was not complete. Come and behold: although she had three sons before she bore Yehuda, WHO ARE CHESED, GVURAH AND TIFERET, the throne was not perfected. ONLY WITH YEHUDA'S BIRTH, MALCHUT, WAS THE THRONE PERFECTED. She therefore said, "Now will I praise Hashem," ONLY IN REGARD TO YEHUDA and not in regard to all of them. Therefore, "she stood off bearing." What is the meaning of this verse? It is that the chair stood on its legs, FOR WITH YEHUDA, THE FOUR LEGS OF THE THRONE, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT WERE COMPLETED.

160. "And she stood" NEEDS FURTHER EXPLANATION. Until now, MEANING UNTIL YEHUDA, WHO IS MALCHUT, she stood united. From here and down, NAMELY, BELOW MALCHUT OF ATZILUT, the World of Separation, IN THE THREE WORLDS, BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH OF SEPARATION. It may be said that the two sons she bore after YEHUDA, YISASCHAR AND ZVULUN, are of this aspect, NAMELY, OF SEPARATION, BECAUSE THEY WERE BORN AFTER MALCHUT, YEHUDA. HE ANSWERS: No. These two sons, YISASCHAR AND ZVULUN, were joined TO REUVEN, SHIMON, AND LEVI, because the six directions of the worlds are as one.

161. Come and behold: all twelve tribes are the essential parts of the congregation of Yisrael in this world. They properly strengthen the supernal black light. FOR THIS IS THE PERFECTION OF THE LEFT, BECAUSE CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM IS A BLACK LIGHT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE DARKNESS OF IMA. They also restore the foundation to its place, FOR THE SECRET OF CORRECTING THE RIGHT IS TO ALLOW CHASSADIM TO RULE. CHASSADIM ARE THE FOUNDATION; WITHOUT THEM, THERE IS NO ILLUMINATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLDS, BECAUSE EVEN THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT IS BLACK AND DARK WITHOUT IT. All the worlds are identical; WHATEVER IS IN THE UPPER WORLD IS ALSO IN THE LOWER. Through this--NAMELY, THE TWELVE--the lower world, THE NUKVA, was constructed according to the supernal world, BINAH.

162. Yisaschar and Zvulun ARE NETZACH AND HOD. Now there are six sons who represent the six directions of the world. REUVEN, SHIMON, LEVI, AND YEHUDA ARE CHESED, GEVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT; YISASCHAR AND ZVULUN ARE NETZACH AND HOD. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE PERFECTION OF THE RIGHT, THE SIX EXTREMITIES OF CHASSADIM. Similarly, there are the four sons of the handmaids, who are joined WITH THE SIX EXTREMITIES. The four sons are the four joints that are attached to them, THE TWO JOINTS OF CHESED AND GVURAH AND THE TWO JOINTS OF NETZACH AND HOD. THEY ARE THE PERFECTION OF THE LEFT. BECAUSE THEY WERE CONNECTED TO THE RIGHT, it is written: "and their hinder parts inward" (I Melachim 7:25), SO THAT THE HINDER PARTS CAME TO BE INNER PARTS. Though they are the sons of the handmaids, OF THE ASPECT OF DARKNESS AND HINDER PARTS, YET they are inward.

163. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: If this be so, we have learned that whatever the lower world, THE NUKVA AT THE END OF ATZILUT, begets is separated, as it is written: "and from thence it was parted" (Beresheet 2:10). What would you say, then, about Yosef and Binyamin? If you

say that they are of one world, OF THE ASPECT OF UNION OF THE WORLD OF ATZILUT, this is not so, for they did not come from the upper world. So it is found that whatever the lower world begets, it begets below, MEANING THAT ITS GENERATIONS ARE BENEATH THE BOTTOM OF ATZILUT, and not above. If it is so, they are separated--THAT IS, THEY ARE OF THE WORLD OF BRIYAH OF SEPARATION.

164. Rabbi Aba went to him and kissed him. He said: This matter is difficult because the upper world is perfected by the twelve that are its own. Yet come and behold: the Righteous constantly leaves and enters the lower world. He is therefore built in this place. Thus, he is of importance above and below, but constantly in the lower world, as it is written: "And it came to pass, as her soul was departing, for she died" (Beresheet 35:18).

165. Come and behold: the Righteous both enters and leaves the lower world, THE NUKVA. When he enters, he is in the secret of Yosef the Righteous, and when he leaves, he is in the secret of Binyamin THE RIGHTEOUS. This is the meaning of the verse: "And it came to pass, as her soul (Nefesh) was departing, for she died." HE ASKS: What is her Nefesh? HE ANSWERS: This is the Righteous, who came out from it.

166. Therefore, Binyamin was called "the son of my sorrow" (Beresheet 25:18), because she thought she bore him beneath ATZILUT, in the World of Separation, so that there remained eleven within the supernal TRIBES, NAMELY, IN ATZILUT. Yet it is written: "but his father called him Binyamin," WHICH MEANS 'Son of the Right', because he had gone up to the supernal world; for when Yosef was lost, Binyamin took his place. Therefore, the righteous enters and leaves the lower world. And so Yosef and Binyamin, and all the twelve tribes, are in the image of the supernal TWELVE united together. THE SIX SONS OF LEAH ARE THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD; THE FOUR SONS OF THE HANDMAIDS ARE THE SECRET OF THE FOUR JOINTS; THE TWO SONS OF RACHEL ARE THE SECRET OF THE TWO RIGHTEOUS ONES.

21. "Now I will praise...And she called his name Yehuda"

Here the Zohar relates a discussion between Rabbis Shimon, Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yosi concerning the secrets of the name "Yehuda." Once again, the unity of all things is stressed in the verse, "I will praise The Creator with my whole heart." Both the good and evil in one's soul must be brought to God in prayer--that is, with total honesty. "Yehuda embraces all sides."

The Relevance of this Passage

Kabbalah's unique perspective on the evil that men do is revealed in this section. The ultimate objective of spirituality is not to remove the existence of evil or humanity's negative traits. Instead, we must confront and transform these dark forces, for it is only through the struggle of transformation that we ignite the spark of divinity within us. The name "Yehuda" expresses this profound kabbalistic notion, and our connection to this name invokes in us the courage to confront and triumph over our evil tendencies.

167. "Now will I praise Hashem..." Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion with the verse: "I will praise Hashem with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation" (Tehilim 111:1). HE ASKS: Why is it written: "with my whole heart (Heb. levav)," instead of THE MORE COMMON lev? HE ANSWERS: David, in the supernal secret of the Holy Name, YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, wanted to praise the Holy One, blessed be He. "I will praise Hashem with my whole heart," MEANS with both the Good Inclination and the Evil Inclination, THE TWO HEARTS, THAT IS, THE TWO INCLINATIONS THAT DWELL IN THE HEART, the two sides, right and left.

168. "...in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation..." refers to the other aspects of this world, THE NUKVA, for the whole heart resembles south and north, CHESED AND GVURAH. "In the assembly of the upright," are the other sides, which are altogether six EXTREMITIES formed in the likeness of above, THAT IS, IN THE IMAGE OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD. They abide "in the assembly of the upright," NAMELY, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, "and in the congregation (Heb.edah)," which refers to the place of Yehuda, NAMELY, MALCHUT. It is also written: "and my Testimony (Heb. edoti) that I shall teach them" (Tehilim 132:12), WHICH REFERS TO THE ORAL TORAH, MALCHUT.

169. It is written: "Yehuda still rules (Heb. rad) with EI" (Hoshea 12:1). THIS MEANS THAT YEHUDA--MALCHUT CONNECTED TO YUD-HEI-VAV- HEI--WENT DOWN (HEB. YARAD) FROM THE SIX-SIDED NAME OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI TO THE NAME EI, A NAME OF MALCHUT, IN THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "AND AN EI WHO HAS INDIGNATION EVERY DAY" (TEHILIM 7:12). It is also written: "I will praise You with my whole heart: before princes (lit. 'Elohim') I will sing praise to You" (Tehilim 138:1), TO THE NAME ELOHIM, AND NOT THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, because he praised this grade OF MALCHUT, CALLED 'ELOHIM', in order to unite it with the right side OF CHASSADIM. THEREFORE, IT IS WRITTEN HERE: "I WILL PRAISE YOU WITH MY WHOLE HEART (HEB. LIBI)," AND NOT LEVAVI, BECAUSE HE PRAISED ONE PLACE ONLY, THAT IS, MALCHUT OF THE LEFT, WHICH DOES NOT CLEAVE TO THE NAME OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI.

170. Come and behold: THE NAME Yehuda is attached all sides. It is attached to the south and the east because YEHUDA comes from the left side. It starts in the north and holds to the south. From there it goes to the right side, CHESED, and takes hold of the body, TIFERET. AND SO IT HOLDS ALL THE SIDES. Therefore, it is written: "Now will I praise Hashem," WHICH INDICATES THAT IT INCLUDES ALL THE SIDES. In the phrase, "and she left off (lit. 'stood from') bearing," 'stood' means that she stood firm, stood properly, FOR NOW THAT SHE HAS BORN FOUR SONS, REUVEN, SHIMON, LEVI, AND YEHUDA--CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT--the entire holy Chariot is fixed, WHICH IS CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT.

171. Rabbi Shimon went to the country, where he chanced to meet Rabbi Aba, Rabbi Chiya, and Rabbi Yosi. When he saw them, he said: It behooves us to hear new expositions of the Torah. The three sat with him. When Rabbi Shimon turned to leave, each of them opened the discussion with a verse IN HONOR OF RABBI SHIMON.

172. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse: "And Hashem said to Avram, after Lot was separated from him: Lift up now your eyes, and look" (Bereshheet 13:14). HE ASKS: Is Avraham to inherit land according to his range of vision? For how far can a man see--three, four, or five parasangs? And the scripture says: "for all the land which you see..." (Ibid. 15).

173. HE ANSWERS: Because he saw the four winds of the world, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "NORTHWARD, AND SOUTHWARD, AND EASTWARD, AND WESTWARD," he saw the whole land. For the four winds of the world comprise the whole world. Another explanation is that the Holy One, blessed be He, lifted him above the land of Yisrael, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and showed him that it is connected to the winds of the world, THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH AND BINAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE CHARIOT. Then he saw everything. Similarly, whoever sees Rabbi Shimon sees the whole world, BECAUSE HE, TOO, COMPRISES THE WHOLE WORLD. He is the joy of high and low.

174. Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "the land on which you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed" (Bereshheet 28:13). HE ASKS: Did the Holy One, blessed be He, promise him only this place, a mere four or five cubits, and no more? HE ANSWERS: At that time the Holy One, blessed be He, folded the whole land of Yisrael underneath him, so that this place included the whole land. If this place included the whole land, then Rabbi Shimon, the lamp of the whole land, is of equal value with the whole world.

175. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse: "Now will I praise Hashem." HE ASKS: Did it not behoove her to praise the Holy One, blessed be He, for each of the sons she bore and not only this son? HE ANSWERS: Yehuda is the fourth son of the throne, BEING MALCHUT, THE FOURTH LEG, and he completed the throne. Therefore, Yehuda alone perfects the throne; he is the pillar that supports all the other pillars, BECAUSE HE COMPLETES THE THRONE. How many lights shine because of Rabbi Shimon, who illuminates the world much more with the Torah, BEING THE PILLAR OF ALL PILLARS.

22. His thought was with Rachel

Ya'akov thought of Rachel while making love with Leah. This act cost Reuven his patrimony. This is a very important and insightful passage that illuminates the relation of thought to action. Wisdom can be seen on a man's face and in his eyes. On the other hand, whoever indulges in evil contemplation lives in lies, or false consciousness. Such a person is not to be able to see good when it comes. Accordingly, bad acts follow bad contemplation.

The Relevance of this Passage

Consciousness creates reality. For this reason, the Other Side attempts to raise doubts, create uncertainties, and induce immoral and negative thinking. The great gift of contemplation and consciousness even has the power to determine the grade of soul that is drawn to an unborn child at the moment of conception. The spiritual influences of this passage help us abolish doubts and negative thoughts, particularly during moments of intimacy and times of adversity. It is then that we are most vulnerable, and it is then that the Other Side unleashes a mindstorm of negativity.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

176. Mishnah. Children of the High One, supernal sages, Blessed of the World, of the inner part of the nut, gather and know: a bird descends every day, and is awakened in the garden with a flame of fire in her wings and three shovels in her left hand as sharp as a sword, and the keys to the treasures in her right hand.

177. She cries out loud, saying TO THE RIGHTEOUS IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN: Whoever among you has a shining face--THAT IS, WHO MERITED WISDOM, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "A MAN'S WISDOM MAKES HIS FACE SHINE" (KOELET 8:1)--who entered, left and was strengthened by the Tree of Life. THAT IS, WHOEVER ENTERED BY MEANS OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, LEFT BY MEANS OF THE LEFT COLUMN, AND WAS STRENGTHENED BY THE TREE OF LIFE, THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Whoever touched its branches--CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, INCLUDED WITHIN ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE TREE OF LIFE--whoever grasped the roots, THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN; whoever eats from its fruits which are sweeter than honey, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF ITS FRUITS. IT IS SWEET, ACCORDING TO THE MYSTERY IN THE VERSE: "TRULY THE LIGHT IS SWEET...FOR THE EYES" (KOELET 11:7), AND THE EYES ARE THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, who revives the soul and heals the body.

178. SHE ANNOUNCES THAT WHOEVER MERITS ALL THAT IS the one who is kept from the evil contemplation that defies the Tree of Life; from CONTEMPLATION that defiles the river and the spring, which is the source of Yisrael; and from CONTEMPLATION that results in death to the soul and breaking of oneself, so that he has no existence.

179. The contemplation, which defiles the source OF THE TREE OF LIFE, ZEIR ANPIN, produces a tree of lies because that contemplation rises and exchanges one soul for another, THAT IS, THE SOUL (NEFESH) OF THE LIGHTS OF THE OTHER SIDE IS EXCHANGED FOR THE SOUL (NEFESH) OF THE LIGHTS OF HOLINESS. FOR BECAUSE OF THAT CONTEMPLATION, the Tree of Life is gone and the Tree of Death, from which he draws his soul, clings to him.

180. Woe to him who, because of that contemplation, is uprooted from the Tree of Life and attached to the Tree of Death, which has no branches. THIS MEANS THAT ITS LIGHT NO LONGER ILLUMINATES. He who clings to it never sees goodness. He is dry, without moisture OF LIGHT, his fruits as bitter as wormwood. Of him it is said: "For he shall be like the juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good comes" (Yirmeyah 17:6).

181. But good contemplation ascends and seizes the Tree of Life, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN, embracing its branches and eating its fruits. All that is holy and all blessings come from it. He inherits life for his soul and healing for himself. Of him it is said: "For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out its roots by the river..." (Ibid. 8)

182. Every act in the world follows thought and contemplation. Of this the scripture reads: "you shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy" (Vayikra 11:44), because sanctities in the world are manifested and drawn by means of good contemplation.

183. He who is defiled by the evil contemplation of thinking about another woman while inseminating his wife, will confuse the supernal high grades BY SWITCHING the Holy grade with the grade of Defilement. As he changes his thoughts from his wife to another woman, so he causes change above.

184. As the body of the son he begets is called a 'changed son', so his soul is also called 'changed son', as his contemplation was not drawn from holiness, and his soul was thus changed into another grade, NAMELY, A GRADE FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

185. It was revealed before the Holy One, blessed be He, that all Ya'akov, the perfect one, did was true, and that he harbored thoughts of Truth. The night he had intercourse with Leah, his thoughts were of Rachel. He was with Leah and thought of Rachel, and his issue came from that thought.

186. Unknowingly HE DID THIS, because he did not know IT WAS LEAH. Therefore Reuven was not given a proper name. Yet the Holy One, blessed be He, knew IT WAS LEAH, and He showed him, and said: See, a son is born into the world. It is therefore written: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" (Yirmeyah 23:24) Do not read er'enu ('see him'), but ar'enu ('show him'). It was known before the Holy One, blessed be He, that it was not intentional and that Ya'akov wished to contemplate the way of Truth. Thus, Reuven was not disqualified as a member of the holy tribes; THAT IS, HE WAS NOT CONSIDERED A CHANGED SON. If it were not so, he would have been disqualified.

187. Because contemplation is so important and translates into action, the Holy One, blessed be He, who knew the place to which that contemplation clung during THE INSEMINATION OF the first drop, kept the birthright FOR THAT PLACE--as it is written: "for he was the firstborn; but since he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to Yosef" (I Divrei Hayamim 5:1). For to the place to which contemplation followed at the time of insemination of the first drop, the birthright was taken from Reuven and given to the place he thought of. He thought of Rachel and the desire clung to her; thus, the birthright was attached to Rachel, and everything followed thought and contemplation.

188. In the same manner, WE FOUND THAT contemplation and thought result in deeds and draw from what man secretly attaches himself to, as it is written: "the wife of the dead shall not marry abroad to a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in to her" (Devarim 25:5). Here, his thought and desire should cleave TO THE SOUL OF HIS DEAD BROTHER, and by that desire and thought he draws and does his duty, so that the dead man's name shall not be erased from the world.

189. This is the secret of the verse: "If he set his heart upon man, if he gather to himself his spirit and his breath (Ruach and Neshamah)" (Iyov 34:14). Assuredly this is so. Will and thought produce flowing and perform action in everything needed. Therefore in prayer, we need to desire and contemplate upon it. Thus, in every service of the Holy One, blessed be He, contemplation and thought act and are drawn to that which is in need of them.

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

23. "and found mandrakes in the field"

This is a lengthy and mysterious passage concerning birth and Creation. It is an explanation of the phrase "the world was formed by word and spirit together, Male and Female." The hidden world is male, this one female. The Zohar reflects on the allegorical importance of the mandrake root, whose magical properties allowed Rachel to conceive. The Rabbis Chiya and Rabbi Yosi continue their discussion with a person called The Man of Arka, connecting the passage concerning the mandrakes, Rachel, and the birth of Reuven with the secret meaning of matzoh in the Passover story. "Out of the earth comes bread." That is, the birth of a child is like the creation of worlds.

The Relevance of this Passage

The creation of the cosmos is the same creative process that unfolds with the birth of each new child in this world. Each of us, therefore, is a supernal world, imbued with the divine Light of the Creator. Along with this comes the responsibility of recognizing the Godliness within and around us. Evolving this awareness constitutes the work of spiritual development.

190. "And Reuven went in the days of the wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field" (Beresheet 30:14). Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion with the verse: "how manifold are Your works, Hashem, in wisdom have You made them all: the earth is full of Your creatures" (Tehilim 104:24). This verse has already been explained in several places. Yet who can count

the works of the Holy One, blessed be He? For there are many different armies and legions OF GRADES AND ANGELS. They are countless, AS IS INDICATED IN THE VERSE, "HOW MANIFOLD ARE YOUR WORKS." THIS SHOWS THAT THEY ARE WITHOUT NUMBER, WHICH IS AN ALLUSION TO MOCHIN OF CHASSADIM. THE PHRASE, "IN WISDOM HAVE YOU MADE THEM ALL," REFERS TO MOCHIN OF NUMBER, CHOCHMAH. HE SAYS THAT ALTHOUGH THEY DIFFER FROM ONE ANOTHER, they were created together. Just as a hammer striking a stone or a red hot iron produces sparks on all sides simultaneously, the Holy One, blessed be He, brought forth countless, different kinds of legions all at once.

191. Come and behold. The world was formed by word and spirit together, MALE AND FEMALE, as it is written: "By the word of Hashem were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath (spirit) of His mouth" (Tehilim 33:6). Thus, "the word of Hashem" is speech, THE NUKVA, WHICH SHINES WITH CHOCHMAH, and "the breath of His mouth" is the spirit, ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH SHINES WITH CHASSADIM. The one cannot exist without the other, and so they are included within each other, and several armies upon armies, legions upon legions were issued all at once, DIFFERING FROM EACH OTHER IN THEIR ILLUMINATION, THE ONE WITH CHOCHMAH AND THE OTHER WITH CHASSADIM.

192. Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to create the worlds, He produced one closed Light, THE LIGHT OF BINAH, BY INSERTING THE LETTER YUD WITHIN THE LIGHT (OR: ALEPH, VAV, RESH) AND PRODUCING AIR (AVIR: ALEPH, VAV, YUD, RESH). From that light, all the revealed lights radiated, THAT IS, BY TAKING OUT THE YUD FROM AVIR, THE AIR BECAME LIGHT AGAIN. From that light, all other lights radiated. This is the supernal world, BINAH.

193. That Supernal Light, BINAH, spread further, and from it the artist, THE EMANATOR, created a light that does not illuminate. Thus, He made the lower world, THE NUKVA. Because this light does not shine, it needs to be attached above and below. Through the attachment below, it is connected so as to illumine through the connection above.

194. This light that does not shine, NAMELY, THE LEFT COLUMN of the connection OF THE THREE COLUMNS above IN BINAH produces all the different armies and legions--THOSE IN CHOCHMAH AND THOSE IN CHASSADIM. This is the meaning of, "how manifold are Your works, Hashem in wisdom have You made them all."

195. Whatever exists down on earth also exists above. There is nothing in this world, IN THE NUKVA, be it ever so small, which does not depend on something appointed over it above, IN BINAH. WHAT EXISTS IN THE NUKVA IS WHAT SHE RECEIVES FROM BINAH. THEREFORE, THERE IS NOTHING IN THE NUKVA THAT DOES NOT HAVE ITS ROOT IN BINAH. Thus, when something is aroused below IN THE NUKVA, ITS ORIGIN, appointed over it from above IN BINAH, is aroused because everything is united.

196. Come and behold: "Give me, I pray you, of your son's mandrakes" (Beresheet 30:14). This does not mean THAT the mandrakes caused Rachel to bear children, BUT RATHER that the Holy One, blessed be He, arranged for the birth of Yisaschar, who was destined to observe the Torah more than the other tribes, just as Rachel held fast to Ya'akov and did not let him go to Leah. This is the meaning of the verse: "Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband? ...Therefore he shall lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."

197. The mandrakes caused Yisaschar to come into the world so that the fragrance of the Torah ascended before the Holy One, blessed be He. Thus scripture reads, "The mandrakes give a fragrance" (Shir Hashirim 7:14), BECAUSE YISASCHAR HELD FAST TO THE TORAH MORE THAN THE OTHER TRIBES. It is written: "And he lay with her that night (lit. 'that night he')" (Beresheet 30:16). Assuredly, it is "he," AND NOT 'THAT HE'. It has already been explained that the supernal world is called "he," because it is neither disclosed nor revealed. Because the Torah came out from the supernal world, WHICH IS UNDISCLOSED AND NOT REVEALED, THE UNION THAT RESULTED IN YISASCHAR WAS ALLUDED TO IN THE WORDS: "AND HE LAY WITH HER THAT NIGHT HE"--BECAUSE YISASCHAR IS A CHARIOT TO THE TORAH, AS HAS BEEN SAID.

198. The supernal world is uniformly called "he" because it is undisclosed, as it is written: "But the Levite shall serve he," (Bemidbar 18:23) WHICH MEANS THAT HE SERVES THE SUPERNAL WORLD CALLED "HE," in order to draw from there blessings on all the worlds. And Yisaschar held TO THE SUPERNAL WORLD. Therefore, we call ZEIR ANPIN the Tree of Life, as

it is a tree THAT COMES from the supernal life OF THE SUPERNAL HIDDEN WORLD, called "he," and not 'you', AS THE PRONOUN 'YOU' INDICATES THE KNOWN, AND THE PRONOUN "HE," THE HIDDEN.

199. It may be said that the mandrakes opened Rachel's womb. This is not so, as it is written: "and Elohim hearkened to her and opened her womb" (Beresheet 30:22). Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, OPENED HER WOMB, and nothing else. As for the mandrakes, although they have the power of action above, it is not in their power to give children, because children depend upon Mazal, and nothing else.

200. It may be said that the mandrakes were created for nothing, NAMELY, THAT THEY HAVE NO POWER TO ACT. This is not so. THEY HAVE A SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY even concerning this BEARING OF CHILDREN. They help those who are slow to give birth but are not barren, although it was decreed that they give birth through Mazal. THIS MEANS THAT IF THIS WAS DECREED IN THE SECRET OF MAZAL, BUT THEY ARE DETAINED FOR SOME REASON, THE MANDRAKES HELP.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

201. "And Reuven went in the days of the wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field." We have learned that the cup of blessings--THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA IN HER ASPECT OF ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH THAT SHINES IN THE SECRET OF, "WINE THAT CAUSES TO REJOICE ELOHIM AND MEN" (TEHILIM 104:15)--is blessed only on the right side, CHASSADIM, AS CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM IS DARKNESS. Therefore, while the right awakens TO POUR to the cup of blessing, THE NUKVA, the left, is unsupported because within the cup the right found a cause for its arousal toward the supernal world, WHICH IS CHASSADIM COVERED BY CHOCHMAH.

202. This is the secret of: "And Reuven went." Reuven is the south side, NAMELY, THE RIGHT COLUMN, CHASSADIM. Because of this, his standard faces south, which is the head and beginning of the twelve borders. THE SECRET OF THE TWELVE BORDERS IS THE SECRET OF THE FOUR DIRECTIONS, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT. EACH HAS THREE COLUMNS, SO CHESED IS THE BEGINNING OF THE TWELVE BORDERS. The desire of the south side is to find a reason for and to give a present to the Matron, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, so as to bless her.

203. It is written: "and found mandrakes in the field." He searched the treasures OF THE NUKVA and found the mandrakes in the field, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. The scripture reads, "The mandrakes give a fragrance" (Shir Hashirim 7:14). These are the two Cherubs, the emendation OF THE NUKVA, who are awakened by the arousal above TOWARD BINAH. Because of all the amendments in that field, only the Cherubs aroused BINAH.

204. When is the south side, CHESED, aroused toward her? When does it find a reason to bless her, THAT IS, TO DRAW CHASSADIM UPON HER? In the days of the wheat harvest, MEANING, the spoils are divided among her armies, THAT IS, THE ANGELS--ACCORDING TO THE MYSTERY IN THE VERSE, "SHE RISES ALSO WHILE IT IS YET NIGHT, AND GIVES FOOD TO HER HOUSEHOLD" (MISHLEI 31:15)--and given to all the reapers of the field, THAT IS, THE SOULS WHO MERIT TO RECEIVE THE FRUITS OF THE NUKVA CALLED 'FIELD'. He immediately "brought them to his mother Leah," WHICH MEANS THAT he elevated their fragrance and desire to the covered supernal world, CALLED 'LEAH', to bring blessings on the lower world, RACHEL.

205. When the mandrakes are blessed, THAT IS, CLOTHED IN CHASSADIM, they receive and give to all the worlds, as it is written: "And the mandrakes give a fragrance..." When they give a fragrance, NAMELY, WHEN THEY SHINE UPWARD WITH CHOCHMAH FROM BELOW, WHICH IS CONSIDERED FRAGRANCE, that fragrance receives the south side, CHESED, and uses it to raise it towards the supernal world, THAT IS, TO ILLUMINE UPWARD FROM BELOW. Immediately, it is written: "and at our gates are all manner of choice fruits" (Shir Hashirim 7:14), and no goodness is absent from the world.

206. The lower world is not awakened toward the supernal world, TO RECEIVE MOCHIN FROM IT, except when the mandrakes give a fragrance to the right. Once they do and the right is aroused toward the supernal world, the lower world is immediately aroused to ask for whatever it needs. Thus, it is written: "Then Rachel said to Leah, 'Give me, I pray you, of

your son's mandrakes'," WHICH MEANS: give me blessings from the arousal of the mandrakes which were aroused to be included within the right side, THAT IS, TO BE CLOTHED IN CHASSADIM OF THE RIGHT.

207. Then the supernal world answers pleasantly and joyfully, saying, "Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband?"--as a mother who is DELIGHTED WITH her daughter, AND IS NOT REPRIMANDING HER. HE ASKS: If this is so, then IT SOUNDS AS IF the husband of the upper world, BINAH, is Ya'akov, AS SHE SAID CONCERNING YA'AKOV, "IS IT A SMALL MATTER THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN MY HUSBAND?" YET CHOCHMAH IS THE HUSBAND OF BINAH. HE ANSWERS: This is not so. The love of the father, CHOCHMAH, is always toward the daughter, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, because he loves his daughter always, for she is an only daughter among the six sons, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD. To all six sons he gave portions, delights, and presents, but to her he dealt nothing, and she inherits nothing BECAUSE THE NUKVA HAS NOTHING FROM HERSELF EXCEPT WHAT HER HUSBAND ZEIR ANPIN--THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, THE SIX SONS--GIVES HER. Therefore, he regards her with more love and friendship than all of them.

208. In his love he called her 'daughter'. As this did not suffice, he called her 'sister'. As this did not suffice, he called her 'mother', after his own mother. As this did not suffice, he called her by his name, as it is written: "But where shall wisdom be found" (Iyov 28:12), and thus he did surely call her Chochmah. Thus the upper world, BINAH, IMA ('MOTHER'), said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband?"--CHOCHMAH, NAMELY, ABA ('FATHER'), for all his love is drawn toward you. Thus, the mother talked to the daughter fondly, with love.

209. HE INSISTED: IF THE MOTHER DID NOT SPEAK HARSHLY WHEN SHE SAID, "IS IT A SMALL MATTER THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN MY HUSBAND?" Why then did RACHEL respond, "Therefore he shall lie with you tonight?" HE ANSWERS: Wherever the word "therefore" is used, it is an oath. HE ASKS: In the verse, "he shall lay..." what is the meaning of the word "lay"? HE ANSWERS: Any mention of the word "lay" refers to the amendment of the Nukva by the male, who will insert into her the shapes of all the letters. Yishcav (lit. 'he shall lay') contains Yesh ('there is'), Caf Bet (= 22). Yesh is the upper world, BINAH, THAT CAME TO BE CHOCHMAH AGAIN; Caf Bet is the secret of the Torah, ZEIR ANPIN, a hidden point, where the twenty-two letters are aroused. This is the meaning of Yesh Caf Bet ('there are twenty-two'). Thus, Yesh is the world to come, as it is written: "That I may cause those who love me to inherit substance (yesh)" (Mishlei 8:21). (Yesh) Caf Bet is the supernal point that brings forth all the twenty-two letters, the secret of the whole Torah.

210. This is the meaning of, "he shall lay." It is PLAINLY written: "he shall lay with you," instead of, "Ya'akov shall lay with you." This ALLUDES TO the hidden one, NAMELY, THE SUPERNAL ABA, who is worthy of joining you.

211. "And Ya'akov came out of the field in the evening." "And Ya'akov came," refers to the holy Tiferet, ZEIR ANPIN, who came from the field that embraces all the blessings, of which the scripture reads: "which Hashem has blessed" (Beresheet 27:27), THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Why is it written: "in the evening?" HE ANSWERS: It is as it is written: "And Yitzchak went out to meditate in the field at the evening time" (Beresheet 24:63); THAT IS, WHEN THE NUKVA RECEIVES THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT WITHOUT THE RIGHT, THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM, IT IS DARKENED AND CALLED 'EVENING'. This is when Yitzchak, his father, used to be aroused toward this field and hold it, for Yitzchak is not aroused toward this field, SINCE IT BELONGS TO YA'AKOV, THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN. Only in the evening after Ya'akov had gone, BECAUSE THE DAY DECLINED, THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM, AND IT BECAME DARK, he left the field to Yitzchak his father, THE SECRET OF THE LEFT SIDE. Ya'akov then ascended TO BINAH.

212. It is written: "and Leah went out to meet him" (Beresheet 30:16), that is, the supernal mother, BINAH, went out to meet her only son, ZEIR ANPIN. "...and said, 'You must come in to me'," which means, under my wings, so I can bless and satiate you with pleasures and supernal joys. Now is a time of goodwill and delight, a time to give you much satisfaction, for that field, THE NUKVA, before it is burned because of the Judgment of Yitzchak, THE LEFT COLUMN, WHICH ILLUMINATES WITHOUT CHASSADIM OF THE RIGHT, AND IS THEN CONSIDERED TO BE A BURNING FIRE.

213. Because she receives Ya'akov under her wings, "he lay with her that night (lit. 'that night he')." "IT IS NOT WRITTEN "THAT ONE" BUT RATHER HE" THAT REFERS TO THE HIDDEN, the most undisclosed "he"; "he" from which all blessings and sanctities derive. THIS IS THE SUPERNAL ABA. It is not written: 'and Ya'akov lay', but rather, "and he lay," which refers to he who is worthy of being united with her, THAT IS, THE SUPERNAL ABA, WHO GIVES PLENTY TO BINAH.

214. Before YA'AKOV, who receives the sanctities and blessings, came under its wings OF BINAH, the supernal world was not filled with blessings and sanctities from the undisclosed point. Therefore mandrakes rouse everything, and everything is in the likeness of the supernal secret, WHICH MEANS THAT ALL THIS REFERS TO THE SEPERNAL SECRET. What is Reuven? THAT IS, WHO NAMED HIM SO AND SAID OF HIM, 'REU-BEN' (LIT. SEE, A SON)? HE ANSWERS, the Holy One, blessed be He, gave names (Heb. shemot) in the land, THAT IS, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, CALLED HIM REUVEN, as written, "Come, behold the works of Hashem, who has made desolations (Heb. shamot) in the earth" (Tehilim 46:9).

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

215. "...and Leah went out to meet him, and said, 'You must come in to me...'" HE WONDERED IF the phrase, "YOU MUST COME IN TO ME," is impertinent. HE ANSWERS: No. Rather, THE OPPOSITE, for here we learn of Leah's modesty. She did not say it in the presence of her sister, but hastened to the road, and whispered to him to let him know that she had obtained Rachel's permission, as it is written: "for indeed I have hired you" (Beresheet 30:16). From Rachel, I obtained permission. In order that Rachel should not be displeased by it, she said it to him outside and not at home.

216. Moreover, Leah's tent faced the road, and she let Ya'akov in through the outside entrance before he entered Rachel's tent. Why? So that she would not have to say anything in the presence of Rachel and sound bold. Also, Leah said: If Ya'akov enters Rachel's tent, it is not right to make him leave it. Therefore, she hastened to meet him outside.

217. HE ASKS: What is the purpose of all this? HE ANSWERS: The Holy Spirit stirred within Leah, and she knew that all the Supernal Holy Tribes would come from her. She hastened to do it for love of the Holy One, blessed be He. For that reason, THAT SHE MERITED THE HOLY SPIRIT; she KNEW HOW TO name them according to the secret of wisdom.

218. While walking together, Rabbi Yosi said to Rabbi Chiya: Each time we discuss the Torah, the Holy One, blessed be He, performs miracles before us. The way before us is long. Therefore, let us study the Torah, and the Holy One, blessed be He, will join us.

219. Rabbi Chiya began the discussion with the verses: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, shall you eat unleavened bread," (Shemot 12:18) and "seven days shall you eat unleavened bread with it, the bread of affliction (lit. 'of poverty')" (Devarim 16:3). Note that "bread of poverty (Heb. oni)" is spelled WITHOUT THE LETTER VAV. The friends were already engaged on this account. But come and behold: when Yisrael were in Egypt, they were under an alien power. When the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to bring them near to Him, He gave them the grade of the bread of poverty. HE ASKS: Who is the poor referred to in, "bread of poverty?" HE ANSWERS: He is King David, of whom it is written: "for I am poor and needy" (Tehilim 86:1).

220. This bread of poverty is called Matzah, WITHOUT THE LETTER VAV, ZEIR ANPIN, because the female without the male is poor. First, YISRAEL approached the ASPECT OF Matzah, BEING THE FIRST GRADE. Afterward, the Holy One, blessed be He, raised them to higher grades and the male joined the female, THAT IS, SHE WAS UNITED WITH ZEIR ANPIN, AND RECEIVED CHASSADIM FROM HIM. Then, when Matzah was united with the male, it was called 'precept' (mitzvah), with the letter Vav, FOR IT ALLUDES TO ZEIR ANPIN. This is the meaning of the verse, "For this commandment" (Devarim 30:11). Therefore, in its first GRADE, it is called Matzah; later, IN HIGHER GRADES, it becomes a precept.

221. While they were walking, they heard a voice say: A group of murderers lurk in wait for you on the way. Therefore, turn upward and do not descend through the unroofed castle below. Rabbi Yosi said: One may derive from this that the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to guard our way. They ascended a mountain located between strong rocks. They said: Since

the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes us to take this path, we should expect to behold something noteworthy, perhaps a miracle.

222. They sat down by a cleft in a rock and were surprised when a man appeared before them. Rabbi Yosi asked: Who are you? The man replied: I am from the people of Arka. When asked: Are there people there? He said: Yes, and they sew and reap. Some are of a strange shape that is different from my own; THEY HAVE TWO HEADS. I came up to you to learn the name of the land in which you dwell.

223. He said: It is called the 'earth' (Heb. *eret*), because it is the land of the living, as it is written: "As for earth (*eret*), out of it comes bread" (*Iyov* 28:5). Bread comes from this earth. Other lands do not have bread or, if they do, it is not of the seven kinds. He returned to his place. They wondered and said: Assuredly, the Holy One, blessed be He, desires to awaken us by this.

224. Rabbi Chiya said: Assuredly, it happened because of the verse you quoted. I remember learning about a supernal matter concerning Pesach from my grandfather. The Holy One, blessed be He, gave Yisrael this bread from the land of the living, NAMELY, THE NUKVA CALLED 'MATZAH'. Later, this bread became bread from the heaven, NAMELY, FROM ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'HEAVEN'. This has already been explained.

225. He also said that when a man comes into this world, he knows nothing before he tastes bread. After he does, he is motivated to know and perceive. So when Yisrael went out from Egypt, they knew nothing until the Holy One, blessed be He, gave them bread from this land, THE NUKVA, CALLED 'MATZAH', as it is written: "As for earth, out of it comes bread." Then Yisrael came to know and conceive the Holy One, blessed be He, like a baby who knows or conceives nothing before he tastes the bread of this world.

226. The children of Yisrael had no knowledge or conception of higher matters, UPPER GRADES, until they ate of the supernal bread, WHICH IS DRAWN FROM ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'HEAVEN'. BEFORE THEY ATE OF THE SUPERNAL BREAD, they knew and conceived only that place, THE NUKVA, AND NO MORE. The Holy One, blessed be He, desired that the children of Yisrael should know more of the place, which is worthy of this land--THAT IS, THE UPPER GRADES THAT SHINE FROM THE PLACE OF ZEIR ANPIN TO THE NUKVA--but they could not until they tasted bread of that SUPERNAL place. What is that? That which is called 'heaven', NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you" (*Shemot* 16:4). Then did they know and conceive that SUPERNAL place. But before that, they knew nothing and had no conception OF THAT SUPERNAL PLACE, ZEIR ANPIN.

227. Rabbi Yosi came to him and kissed him. He said: Assuredly this is why the Holy One, blessed be He, aroused us TO SPEAK WITH THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE OF ARKA, FOR BECAUSE OF HIM WE CAME TO DISCUSS THIS VERSE. Therefore, the beginning of the knowledge of Yisrael was bread, NAMELY, THE BREAD OF AFFLICTION. They stood to go. While they were walking, they saw two Damascene plum trees, a male and a female. Rabbi Yosi said: There is nothing in the world that is not male and female. Moreover, whatever is on earth, exists also in the sea.

228. Rabbi Yosi began with the verse: "And Ya'akov came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him." HE ASKS: How did she know HE WAS COMING? HE ANSWERS: They said his ass was braying, so Leah knew and went toward him. Thus, the ass caused Yisaschar to come from Leah. This is the meaning of the verse: "Yisaschar is a strong (Heb. *garem*) ass" (*Beresheet* 49:14). Do not read *garem*, but rather *garam*, meaning 'caused', BECAUSE the ass caused him TO BE BORN. Leah said: Surely I know that if Ya'akov enters Rachel's tent, I cannot make him leave. Therefore, I shall wait for him here, and he shall come into my tent.

229. "...for indeed I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." HE ASKS: Why did she say, "with my son's mandrakes?" WAS NOT IT ENOUGH TO SAY, 'WITH MANDRAKES'? HE ANSWERS: So that Ya'akov will draw satisfaction from their help in childbirth. Yet Ya'akov knew that this matter did not depend on the mandrakes, but on above, ON MAZAL.

230. He began by quoting: "He makes the barren woman to keep house, and be a joyful mother of children. Haleluyah" (*Tehilim* 113:9). Rabbi Chiya said: The holy spirit said, "He makes the barren woman to keep house," refers to Rachel, and "a joyful mother of children,"

refers to Leah. HE EXPLAINED FURTHER THAT "He makes the barren woman to keep house," refers to the lower world, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'RACHEL', AND "a joyful mother of children," refers to the upper world, BINAH, CALLED 'LEAH'. Therefore, Halleluyah CONTAINS THE LETTERS OF HALLELU ('PRAISE'), YUD-HEI, BECAUSE THE UPPER WORLD WAS CREATED BY THE YUD, AND THE LOWER WORLD CREATED BY THE HEI.

231. Rabbi Yehuda said that all the tribes are the result of correcting down below, NAMELY, OF THE NUKVA; they were all amended to resemble above, BINAH. "For I have hired you" to take from him a body. And what is it? It is the Torah. "...for indeed I have hired you..." MEANS you, your own body. "I have hired you" to bear your very shape.

232. From this we understand that whoever studies the Torah inherits the world to come, THE MOCHIN OF BINAH, and the portion of Ya'akov, THE MOCHIN OF THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA, as it is written: "Yisaschar"--which contains the letters of Yesh sachar ('there is a reward'), as in: "for your work shall be rewarded (sachar)" (Yirmeyah 31:15). THE WORK IS THE STUDY OF THE TORAH, as it is written: "That I may cause those who love me to inherit substance (Heb. yesh); and I will fill their treasures" (Mishlei 8:21).

233. "...because I have born him six sons..." Rabbi Chizkiyah said: They are above and below, NETZACH AND HOD, and to the four winds of the world, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET AND YESOD. Whoever prolongs the "one" IN KRIAT SH'MA should claim the sovereignty of the Holy One, blessed be He, above and below, and on the four directions of the world, namely, one.

234. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: It is written: "mountains of separation" (Shir Hashirim 2:17) and, "mountains of spices" (Shir Hashirim 8:14). HE ASKS: What are the mountains of spices? HE ANSWERS: They are the six sons of Leah, who include the other six, YOSEF, BINYAMIN, AND THE SONS OF THE HANDMAIDS. Together they are twelve and six, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY MAY BE COUNTED AS EITHER TWELVE OR SIX, because they include each other. IF YOU COUNT THE MAIN ONES, THEY ARE SIX, BUT IF YOU ALSO COUNT THOSE INCLUDED WITHIN THEM, THEY ARE TWELVE. And Leah presides over them, to fulfill the verse, "a joyful mother of sons. Halleluyah."

235. It is therefore written: "you shall not take the mother bird together with the young," (Devarim 22:6) because she is of the hidden world which is not revealed, BECAUSE THE LOWER BEINGS HAVE NO CONCEPTION OF IT. Therefore, "you shall surely let the mother go, and take the young to you" (Ibid. 7), because the dam is of the hidden world, which is never revealed.

236. "...and take the young to you..." This resembles the verse: "For ask now of the days that are past...and from one side of the heaven to the other" (Devarim 4:32)--FROM CHESED, THE SIDE OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'HEAVEN', TO YESOD, THE OTHER SIDE OF ZEIR ANPIN, THAT IS, THE SIX EXTREMITIES CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED THE 'SIX SONS OF LEAH'. They are all called "the mountains of spices." From there downward, BENEATH MALCHUT OF ATZILUT, they are called "mountains of separation," as it is written: "and from thence it was parted, and branched into four streams" (Beresheet 2:10).

237. Rabbi Yehuda said: The sons of the handmaids tied knots, the four knots that need correcting. Rabbi Elazar said: Therefore the knots (joints) protrude from the body. And although they are all one, NAMELY, EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE CORRECTED IN THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "AND ALL THEIR HINDER PARTS WERE INWARD" (I MELACHIM 7:25), THEY NEVERTHELESS PROTRUDE FROM THE BODY, BEING AT FIRST, BEFORE THE UNION, EMPTY WITHOUT LIGHT. THIS MEANS THAT THE OTHER JOINTS are all on one plane, AND DO NOT PROTRUDE OUT OF THE BODY. Therefore, all the tribes ascend as testimony above, as it is written: "there the tribes used to go up, the tribes of Yah, as a testimony to Yisrael, to give thanks to the name of Hashem" (Tehilim 122:4).

24. "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Yosef"

This is an enigmatic passage in which the rabbis comment on the symbolic and mystical importance of Ya'akov's leaving his father-in-law, Lavan, and going into the land of Israel, once Yosef has been born and Benjamin has been conceived. For these commentators, Leah symbolizes the upper world, or all that is mysterious in life.

The Relevance of this Passage

Ya'akov's ability to evolve spiritually was limited during his stay with his Lavan. His going into the Land of Israel is a metaphor for his readiness to ascend to the level of the Upper World. The lesson for the reader is this: our physical location is a mirror of where we are spiritually. This passage awakens us to the importance of constant forward motion, both physically and spiritually, in order to continue the evolution of our souls, which is the very purpose of our life. Moreover, the act of meditating upon these verses helps our soul ascend to higher levels.

238. Rabbi Elazar quoted the verse: "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Yosef" (Beresheet 30:25). HE ASKS: Why did Ya'akov ask to leave only after Yosef was born? Before Yosef was born, he did not ask to leave. HE ANSWERS: As it was explained, he saw that the adversary of Esav was born, as YOSEF WOULD BE THE ADVERSARY OF ESAV, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND THE HOUSE OF YA'AKOV SHALL BE FIRE, AND THE HOUSE OF YOSEF FLAME, AND THE HOUSE OF ESAV FOR STUBBLE" (OVADYAH 1:18).

239. Come and behold: Yosef perfected the place OF YA'AKOV after him, BEING THE SFIRAH OF YESOD, THE LAST SFIRAH OF YA'AKOV. Also, Yosef deserved to be called 'Righteous', NAMELY, YESOD, where the ending of the body is, THE LAST SFIRAH. After Ya'akov saw that the body was perfected WITH THE BIRTH OF YOSEF, the body asked to leave. The final part of the body is the member of the Covenant, NAMELY, YOSEF. With all that, Binyamin completed the number, because with him the number twelve was reached.

240. One may wonder if Ya'akov knew that until this time the number of the tribes was not yet complete, even though Yosef had been born. Why, then, did he not wait for Binyamin to be born and the tribes to reach completion? HE ANSWERS: Ya'akov acted wisely, and he did know THAT THE TRIBES WERE NOT YET COMPLETED. He said: Surely if the tribes are completed here, then perfection will be achieved here; yet I do not want them to be perfected in this country--only in the Holy Land.

241. Come and behold: the twelve tribes are the perfection of the lower world, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN FROM THE CHEST DOWNWARD. After Binyamin was born, AND THE TWELVE TRIBES WERE COMPLETED, Rachel died, and the lower world, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, assumed its place and was perfected through them. Therefore, Binyamin was born only in the Holy Land. This is the meaning of the verse: "And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died by me in the land of Cna'an on the way" (Beresheet 48:7). Rachel died there, and was replaced by the lower world, which received a house in which to dwell. As long as Rachel was alive, the lower world was not yet perfected BY THE TWELVE TRIBES. Rachel died, BECAME ONE WITH THE UPPER NUKVA, and received a completed house.

242. HE ASKS: You may wonder why Leah did not die at the same time, WHEN THE TWELVE TRIBES WERE COMPLETED. HE ANSWERS: This is because the house is in the lower world, IN THE NUKVA FROM THE CHEST DOWNWARD, CALLED 'RACHEL'. And it behooves all to be perfected by it, WHICH MEANS THAT THE PERFECTION OF ALL THE LOWER BEINGS, IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH, DEPEND ON IT and not on the upper world. Therefore, Leah did not die at the same time. All that concerns Leah is hidden, as the upper world is covered and not discovered. Therefore, Leah did not die at that time, AS SHE WAS NOT ANNULLED.

243. Come and behold: this is assuredly so. All that pertains to the upper world, LEAH, is hidden, and all that pertains to the lower world is revealed. Therefore, Leah was hidden and buried in the cave of the Machpelah, and Rachel was buried by the open road. The one is hidden, and the other is open. Thus, the upper world excels in secrecy, as it is written: "And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher" (Beresheet 30: 13).

244. Thus, all became one, because all comes from the upper world. This is true everywhere, BOTH WHEN ALL IS PERFECT AND WHEN ALL IS NOT PERFECT. There are two worlds: the one disclosed and the other hidden. We bless the Holy One, blessed be He, only through both worlds, as it is written: "Blessed be Hashem the Elohim of Yisrael from the world to the world" (Tehilim 106:48). We therefore call the upper world "he," IN THE THIRD, HIDDEN PERSON, and the lower world "you," IN THE SECOND, PRESENT PERSON. And because He is

blessed from the upper world by the Righteous, it is written: "Blessed be Hashem out of Tzion, He who dwells at Jerusalem" (Tehilim 135:21). BECAUSE THE LOWER WORLD IS BLESSED BY CHASSADIM FROM THE UPPER WORLD, IT IS REVEALED TO US. This is so because it is from Tzion, YESOD OF THE UPPER WORLD, that it is blessed. THEREFORE, THE UPPER WORLD SHOULD ALWAYS EXIST IN THIS ASPECT.

245. Come and behold: "Hashem, Hashem," AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES, refers to the two worlds, the revealed and the hidden. Therefore, there is a comma between the two. But in, "from the world to the world," all is one, BECAUSE THE DISCLOSED WORLD HAS NOTHING OF ITS OWN. EVERYTHING IT HAS IS GIVEN FROM THE HIDDEN WORLD.

246. "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Yosef." Rabbi Yehuda said: Come and behold the perfection of Ya'akov, who did not wish to leave without Lavan's permission. It may be said that at another time he did not take his leave, but rather fled from him. HE ANSWERS: This was because Ya'akov was afraid that Lavan would not let him go; then the twelve tribes would have been completed in a foreign land. Therefore, after Ya'akov saw that the time has come for Binyamin to be born, he fled, as it is written: "So he fled with all that he had" (Beresheet 31:21).

247. This was because after Binyamin was born, the Shechinah attached herself to all the tribes and lived with them. Ya'akov, who understood the mystery of wisdom, saw that once the twelve tribes were perfected, the Shechinah would be adorned and attached to them, Rachel would die, and the Shechinah would receive the house.

248. Come and behold: we have learned as much. The lower world, THE SHECHINAH, was worthy of being united with Ya'akov, as it was worthy of Moshe. However, it could not achieve union until there were twelve tribes in the house for her to be connected with. When the twelve tribes were completed, Rachel was removed, and THE SHECHINAH received the house containing the twelve tribes and became its foundation (Heb. ikar). Then, it was written: "He makes the barren (Heb. akarah) woman to keep house" (Tehilim 113:9).

249. Ya'akov said: The time has come FOR BINYAMIN TO BE BORN, AND for the twelve tribes to be completed. Surely the world above descended to the house to be connected with them--and for this poor woman, RACHEL, to be removed from before it. If she dies here, I shall never leave. Moreover, this land is not worthy of completing the house, ONLY THE HOLY LAND IS WORTHY. Therefore, "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Yosef," means before the tribes were completed.

250. Rabbi Shimon heard. He said: All Rabbi Yehuda's words were correct, but the last surpasses them all. You may wonder why he did not leave immediately, BUT RATHER STAYED AND WORKED SIX YEARS WITH LAVAN'S CATTLE. This was because as long as Rachel was not yet pregnant with Binyamin, he was delayed. Once the time had come AND SHE WAS PREGNANT with Binyamin, he fled. And he did not request his leave FROM LAVAN so that he would not be detained, and so that Ya'akov would be connected with all the tribes in the proper place IN THE HOLY LAND.

251. Rabbi Aba began with the verse: "And Moshe went and returned to Yeter his father in law" (Shemot 4:18). Come and behold: Moshe was a shepherd for the cattle of Yitro, his father-in-law, and dwelled with him. When he desired to leave, he first obtained Yitro's permission. But why did not Ya'akov, who was a perfect man and dwelled constantly with Lavan, ask permission AS MOSHE DID? HE ANSWERS: We have learned THAT YA'AKOV DID NOT ASK LAVAN'S PERMISSION BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID Lavan would find excuses to make him stay. Once before he had told Lavan HE WISHED TO GO HOME. Immediately Lavan found excuses, and he stayed. Therefore, since he was afraid of him, HE DID NOT ASK HIS LEAVE.

252. But Yitro did not oppose Moshe as Lavan, who was a sorcerer, opposed Ya'akov. Lavan used sorcery in everything he did against Ya'akov. Now Ya'akov did not desire to be delayed, because the Holy One, blessed be He, told him, "Return to the land of your fathers" (Beresheet 31:3). He therefore did not wish to be delayed and forsake the command of his Master. HE THEREFORE DID NOT ASK HIS PERMISSION.

25. "A song to Alamot"

The Friends discuss the mystical meaning of angels or 'messengers', who are grouped in ranks of three in the heavens, singing to the "Alamot," or the maidens of song. We learn that true spiritual songs are songs of the soul, connecting us to the supernal realm of the angels, and drawing their positive influences into our lives.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we connect our souls to the realms where angels reside, and where they serve as a metaphysical interface between the mortal and the Divine. The sacred Light received through this bonding attunes us to the positive influences of these angelic forces, so that we hear their whispers and melodies over the distractions of everyday life.

253. Come and behold. It is written: "And Elohim remembered Rachel..." (Beresheet 30: 22) He began by quoting the verse: "To the chief musician for the sons of Korach, A song to Alamot" (Tehilim 46:1). We need to study this verse because it contains the secret of wisdom. All the songs and praises that the sons of Korach uttered WERE NOT NEW. RATHER, THEY WERE OLD songs and praises sung anew. The songs and praises David sang with his followers, WHO ARE MENTIONED IN THE BEGINNING OF WITH PSALMS IN TEHILIM, were part of the secret of the upper one, BINAH, in the secret of Chochmah.

254. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, formed the lower world, THE NUKVA, so that it resembled the upper world, BINAH, AS IT RECEIVES FROM IT. And all that David, his son Solomon, and the true prophets arranged, they arranged IN THE LOWER WORLD in the image of above, BINAH.

255. Come and behold: as there are watches on earth, AND THE TWELVE HOURS OF THE NIGHT ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE TIMES FOUR, so it is that in the firmament THERE ARE THREE GROUPS OF ANGELS chanting to their Master, singing always. They stand one above the other ACCORDING TO THEIR RANK, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSE: "FOR THERE IS A HIGH ONE WHO WATCHES OVER HIM THAT IS HIGH; AND THERE ARE YET HIGHER ONES OVER THEM" (KOHELET 5:7). They sing and praise standing in rows, EACH GROUP CHANTING ACCORDING TO ITS RANK. This has already been explained by the friends.

256. HE ASKS: WHAT is the meaning of "A song to Alamot? (lit. 'maidens')" HE ANSWERS: It is similar to the verse, "There are sixty queens, and eighty concubines and young maidens without number" (Shir Hashirim 6:8). The "young maidens without number" are the same as in the verse, "Is there any number to His armies" (Iyov 25:3). As they are countless, it is written: "and young maidens without number."

257. They are arranged in rows facing each other, singing and praising their Master. These is "A song to Alamot (lit. 'maidens')," in the verse, for there are maidens who do not sing as these do. Thus, these are called 'maidens of song'.

26. Every order is by three

The Zohar explains how relations between letter and number, earth and heaven, and male and female are structured in the form of a three part structure, or triad.

The Relevance of this Passage

Before the creation of our universe, the infinite Light of the Creator shared its untold fulfillment with the infinite Vessel: Sharing and Receiving; Two Columns. The birth of our universe occurred when the primordial Vessel-composed of all the souls of humanity-purposely stopped receiving the Light of the Creator for the chance to create its own Light, and thus become the cause of its own fulfillment through spiritual development. This act brought into being a third force: Resistance. These three Columns--sharing, receiving, and resistance--are present throughout every scale of reality. In our own lives, we must use our free will as the force of resistance to control impulsive and self-serving drives. As a light bulb glows brightly when the filament performs resistance, our lives shine brilliantly when we apply restraining force. Life then has true circuitry. The strength and consciousness to live in accord with the three Columns is imbued into our nature by these passages.

258. There are three orders divided among the four directions of the universe. Every order in each direction contains three other orders, SO THAT the first order of the eastern wind comprises three orders which are actually nine. In this way, every order contains three other orders. Thus, the three orders of each direction are actually nine orders. Underneath them, there are thousands and myriads of angels.

259. These nine orders all follow CERTAIN engraved letters, and each order constantly looks up SO AS TO RECEIVE PLENTY from these engraved letters WHICH PERTAIN TO IT. When these letters soar in the air of the spirit, which is assigned over everything, they travel. One letter below is struck, and it travels up and down, the two letters soaring above it. The letter below elevates the lower order and joins THE TWO SOARING LETTERS to become three letters, similar to the letters Yud-Hei-Vav, which are the three of the shining mirror, ZEIR ANPIN. These letters, YUD-HEI-VAV, divide into three orders--the two letters and the letter that joins them to form a trio.

260. Come and behold: the two supernal letters that ascend in the air, THE RIGHT LETTER AND THE LEFT LETTER, are included within each other, as Mercy is included within Judgment. FOR THE RIGHT LETTER IS THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM AND MERCY, AND THE LEFT LETTER IS CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM AND JUDGMENT. BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM, they are considered two. They are of the supernal world, the secret of the male. The letter that ascends to join them, NAMELY, THE MIDDLE LETTER, is a female and is included within both of them. THIS MEANS THAT THE RIGHT AND LEFT LETTERS ARE UNITED WITH THE MIDDLE LETTER, WHICH TURNS INTO THREE LETTERS OF THE RIGHT, LEFT, AND MIDDLE. As the Nukva in her entirety comprises both the right and left sides--WHICH SHE RECEIVES FROM ZEIR ANPIN IN THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "HIS LEFT HAND IS UNDER MY HEAD, AND HIS RIGHT HAND EMBRACES ME" (SHIR HASHIRIM 8:3)--and joins them, so does the MIDDLE letter, the Nukva, join the other two letters. And they TURN WITHIN THE MIDDLE LETTER into the RIGHT AND LEFT sides. THE TWO LETTERS IN IT become supernal, and it stands below them. All three letters become one, male and female IN THE SECRET OF THE UNION, LIKE A MALE AND A FEMALE--TWO UPPER ONES ARE MALE AND THE MIDDLE ONE FEMALE. For when the world was created, the two letters from the supernal world issued all the deeds below in their very shape--BUT NOT THE CENTRAL COLUMN. HENCE, THESE TWO LETTERS ARE CONSIDERED MALE. Therefore, whoever conceives them and is careful of them is beloved above and below.

261. Rabbi Shimon said that all the letters, THE 27 LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET, are males and females included within each other as one. THE LETTERS OF THE RIGHT AND LEFT ARE MALES; THOSE OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN ARE FEMALES--in the secret of the supernal and female waters. THE MALE LETTERS POUR SUPERNAL WATERS AND THE FEMALE LETTERS RAISE FEMALE WATERS. All is joined and becomes one. This is the complete union. Therefore, whoever knows of these UNIONS and is careful IN MEDITATION upon them will have a happy lot in this world and the world to come. For the main part of the properly perfected union contains groups of threes, AS THE LETTERS ARE DIVIDED INTO GROUPS OF THREE: TWO MALES ABOVE AND ONE FEMALE BELOW, on this side and that side in one unity--WHICH MEANS THAT RIGHT AND LEFT WILL BE PROPERLY UNITED BY THE MIDDLE ONE, the perfection of all. Everything is in the secret of the high order, which is in the likeness of above, IN BINAH, which is arranged by groups of threes in the secret of one.

262. After explaining the nine orders in the first arrangement towards the east, Tiferet, he now explains that the second order is of the southern wind, CHESED. There are three orders in that direction, and each is further divided into three orders. Thus, there are nine orders, as was explained IN RELATION TO THE SOUTHERN WIND. They all emerge from the order of the patriarchs, the three Columns above IN BINAH, CALLED 'AVRAHAM', 'YITZCHAK', AND 'YA'AKOV', according to the arrangement of the letters Yud-Hei-Vav of the Holy Name, as has been explained. These nine orders follow certain letters, THAT IS, THE THREE GROUPS OF THE THREE LETTERS THAT ARE RIGHT, LEFT, AND MIDDLE. They travel after them, and armies and myriads of angels below IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH travel and follow that order OF THE SOUTHERN DIRECTION.

263. The third order is of the northern wind, GVURAH. There are three orders of that direction, each of which contains three orders. These nine orders are of the three sides--RIGHT, LEFT, AND MIDDLE, as has been explained.

264. The 27 ORDERS are the secret of the 27 letters. Although there are only 22 letters, the entire alphabet, TOGETHER WITH THE FINAL LETTERS MEM, NUN, TZADIK, PEI, CAF, comprises 27 LETTERS. So does this order. There are 27 orders DIVIDED into three orders for each wind: THREE TO THE EAST WIND, THREE TO THE SOUTH WIND, AND THREE TO THE NORTH WIND. BECAUSE EACH OF THE THREE IN EACH DIRECTION INCLUDES THE OTHERS, the three of each direction become nine. Altogether, there are 27 LETTERS.

265. The secret is that these 27 are the secret of the nine female letters that are united with the other 18 orders in the secret of the males. All is as it is ought to be.

266. Come and behold: resembling the letters in the supernal world, IN BINAH, there are other letters below, IN THE NUKVA. The supernal letters IN BINAH are big, and the lower letters IN THE NUKVA are small. Each resembles the other, and whatever is true for the LETTERS IN BINAH is true for the LETTERS IN THE NUKVA. The secrets within the mystery of male and female within the letters also apply to them, and all is perfected, WHICH MEANS THAT WHATEVER APPLIES TO THE SUPERNAL WORLD ALSO APPLIES TO THE LOWER WORLD.

27. To remember and to visit

Here the friends discuss the nature of luck in terms of remembrance in the upper world and the resulting effects in the world below. Good luck attends those without sin. Bad luck originates in remembrance on the other side, followed by a visit from its messengers, who are known as The Accusers. Their visit results in punishment and misfortune.

The Relevance of this Passage

As with many of the Zohar's discourses, inner meanings are often obscured by the literal text. Good and bad luck are not authentic concepts. They are simply codes for the principle of cause and effect. We create our own luck through our behavior and interactions with other people. Actions that are selfish, abusive, or inconsiderate propagates misfortune in our lives which we mistakenly interpret as bad luck. The wisdom of this truth is awakened in our souls so that we may see the future consequences of our present actions.

267. "And Elohim remembered Rachel." This is because CHILD BEARING depends on Mazal, THE SECRET OF THE RIVER THAT FLOWS OUT OF EDEN AND WATERS THE GARDEN, THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN. Therefore the term "remembering" is used. IT IS DERIVED FROM THE WORD "REMEMBER," WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHILE VISITATION IS DERIVED FROM THE NUKVA. HE ASKS: Does the verse, "And Hashem visited Sarah" (Beresheet 21:1), not come from Mazal, AS THE TERM "REMEMBER" IS NOT MENTIONED? It may be said that childbearing does depend on Mazal and not on a lower place, THE NUKVA. So here, there was no Mazal ('luck') for Sarah. HE ANSWERS: There is Vav-Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND THE HASHEM (IN THE TEXT: VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI) VISITED...", which comprises all in one. FOR VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI ALLUDES TO HIM AND HIS COURT OF LAW, ZEIR ANPIN TOGETHER WITH THE NUKVA. THUS, REMEMBRANCE FROM ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF MAZAL, IS ALSO MENTIONED IN CONNECTION WITH SARAH.

268. HE ASKS: If it be true THAT VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI ('AND HASHEM') INCLUDES BOTH ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, THE SECRET OF REMEMBERING AND VISITING, why then is the term "visiting" used? VAV-YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI ALSO INCLUDES "VISITING". HE ANSWERS: Because remembrance had already occurred, and the key FOR CHILDREN was delivered downward, as it is written: "But My covenant will I establish with Yitzchak, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time..." (Beresheet 17:21). Afterward, it is similarly written: "AND HASHEM SAID...I WILL RETURN TO YOU, AT THIS SEASON, AND SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON" (BERESHEET 18:13-14). Because remembrance has already been mentioned in the secret of above, OF ZEIR ANPIN--AS WRITTEN: "MY COVENANT," WHICH IS YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN--it was said in the secret of visiting, the Nukva, so that all will be united into one, and both REMEMBRANCE AND VISITATION will be together for her.

269. "And Elohim remembered Rachel." Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Yisrael, kept in bondage by Egypt; and I have remembered My covenant" (Shemot 6:5). "I have remembered" refers to remembrance (Heb. zachor), for it is above IN ZEIR ANPIN, because Mazal, which abides above in the male (Heb. zachar), comes upon visitation, the Nukva below, while she is in

exile, TO REDEEM HER. It is similarly written: "And Elohim remembered Rachel," which has the same meaning as, "and I have remembered My covenant."

270. Come and see: It is written: "I have surely visited you" (Shemot 3:16). HE ASKS: COULD THE SCRIPTURE USE THE WORD "visited," while visitation was in the Nukva, who was in exile at the time? How could she say, "I have surely visited," WHEN SHE WAS IN EXILE? HE ANSWERS: Here we should look at the mystery of wisdom, AND ASK: 1) Since she was in exile, how was she revealed to Moshe, and 2) how could she say, "I have surely visited?"

271. HE ANSWERS: We have learned that when the sun shines, it is in heaven, and its power and strength rule everywhere on earth. Similarly, it was said OF HASHEM that "the whole earth is full of His glory," while the Temple was in existence. This verse refers to the Holy Land, NAMELY, THE NUKVA. THE SHECHINAH IS THEN WONT TO BE REVEALED. Now when Yisrael are in exile, THE SHECHINAH is above YET her power IS DRAWN TOWARD THE EARTH LIKE THE SUN, WHICH HIDES IN THE SKY, YET ITS POWER AND STRENGTH FILL THE EARTH. SHE encircles Yisrael to protect them, although they are IN EXILE in a different land.

272. HE FURTHER EXPLAINED: Come and behold. There is the Shechinah below and above THE CHEST OF ZEIR ANPIN. The Shechinah above abides in the twelve borders of the holy Chariots and the twelve supernal living creatures. The Shechinah below abides in the twelve holy tribes. The Shechinah includes of above and below and they all shine simultaneously. AND THEN, "THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY" (YESHAYAH 6:3), AND THE SHECHINAH IS REVEALED BELOW IN THIS WORLD. When the children of Yisrael were in exile, the Shechinah was not perfected below or above. This is because the Shechinah is in exile with them.

273. HE ASKS: How is the Shechinah amended DURING HER EXILE SO AS TO BE REVEALED BELOW? HE SAID: This is like a king whose son died. What did he do? He even turned down his bed for the mourning, and did not make it, but threw thorns and thistles under it and lay on them. So did the Holy One, blessed be He, behave when Yisrael went into exile, and the Temple was destroyed. He put thorns and thistles underneath Him. This is the meaning of the verse: "And the angel of Hashem appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush" (Shemot 3:2). HE DID THIS because Yisrael were in exile. THIS EXPLAINS HOW THE SHECHINAH WAS REVEALED TO MOSHE IN EXILE. SHE APPEARS TO MOSHE IN A THORNBUSH, WHICH IS UNPERFECT AND FULL OF JUDGMENT, FOR SHE CAN APPEAR IN THIS MANNER EVEN IN EXILE.

274. "I have surely visited you." HE RETURNED TO THE OTHER QUESTION: whom can a person who is not in his own domain, BUT IS IN EXILE, visit? What can he do? HOW COULD THE SHECHINAH SAY, "I HAVE SURELY VISITED YOU (LIT. 'VISIT I HAVE VISITED YOU')," WHEN SHE WAS IN EXILE? HE ANSWERS: "visit" means from above, ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF REMEMBRANCE, and "visited" is below IN THE NUKVA. He did not mention the word "remember," because remembrance has been over Her earlier, as it is written: "and I have remembered My covenant." Once it was written: "and I have remembered," remembrance had been inserted into Her. Therefore she later said, "Visit I have visited you," THE WORD "VISIT" ALLUDING TO THE REMEMBRANCE ALREADY GIVEN HER, because She held to that sign--IN THE WORDS "VISIT, I HAVE VISITED YOU," beforehand. The same applies to Sarah, as it is written: "And Hashem visited Sarah." As for Rachel, who was not remembered before, the term "visiting" is not used. Rather, "remembrance" is used. Everything that pertains to "remembrance" is in the secret meaning of Mazal.

275. Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Chizkiyah were going from Cappadocia to Lod. Rabbi Yehuda was riding, and Rabbi Chizkiyah was on foot. As they traveled, Rabbi Yehuda dismounted FROM THE ASS and said: From now on let us be occupied with the Torah, as it is written: "ascribe greatness to our Elohim" (Devarim 32:3).

276. He said to him: It would be better if there were three of us, because one would speak and the other two would respond. He replied: This is true only for benedictions, when one mentions the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and two respond, as it is written: "because I will call on the name of Hashem: ascribe greatness to our Elohim." "...because I will call on the name of Hashem..." is the one WHO UTTERS THE NAME; "ascribe greatness to our Elohim," refers to the two WHO RESPOND. But in regard to the Torah, even two who sit

AND STUDY THE TORAH ascribe greatness, might, and the splendor of the Torah to the Holy One, blessed be He.

277. Rabbi Chizkiyah asked: In regard to the benedictions, why do we need three? He replied: This has already been explained, concerning the verse, "ascribe greatness to our Elohim," WHICH MEANS THAT TWO NEED TO RESPOND. The secret of the benedictions is that one blesses and two answer in order to raise the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He, by the secret of three--THE SECRET OF THE THREE COLUMNS: the one who blesses IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH REVEALS THE LIGHT; the two who affirm AND SUSTAIN THE BLESSINGS ARE THE LEFT AND RIGHT COLUMNS, WHICH EMBRACE THE CENTRAL COLUMN AND SHINE WITH ITS POWER. Thus, the benedictions are sustained to be fitting in the supernal secret and according to the secret of three, as explained.

278. While they were walking, Rabbi Yehuda said: We learned that there is a remembering for good and a remembering for evil; there is a visiting for good and a visiting for evil. HE EXPLAINS: The remembering for good is as it is written: "But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors" (Vayikra 26:45); "And Elohim remembered Noach" (Beresheet 8:1); "And Elohim remembered His covenant" (Shemot 2:24). There is a remembering for evil, as it is written: "For He remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passes away, and comes not again" (Tehilim 78:39). There is a visiting for good, as it is written: "I have surely visited you" (Shemot 3:16), and there is a visiting for evil, as it is written: "then I will punish (lit. 'visit') their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with strokes" (Tehilim 89:33). All these are deep mysteries.

279. All the remembering and visiting for good represent specific grades of the mystery of the faith. Remembering and visiting symbolize the male and female of one mystery; REMEMBERING IS THE SECRET OF THE MALE AND VISITING OF THE FEMALE. Both are for good. The remembering and visiting for evil are the mystery of the Other Side, which is in the secret of strange Elohim, both male and female, as one. The remembering is FROM THE MALE, and visiting FROM THE FEMALE. They are always intent upon evil. Their sides correspond to each other. THE MALE AND FEMALE OF THE OTHER SIDE STAND IN OPPOSITION TO THE MALE AND FEMALE OF HOLINESS. From THE REMEMBERING AND VISITING OF HOLINESS come all the mysteries of the faith and all the holy upper GRADES, as has been explained. From THE REMEMBERING AND VISITING OF THE OTHER SIDE come out all sorts of evil, all kinds of deaths and aspects of wickedness in the world. It was explained that THE OTHER SIDE is in opposition TO HOLINESS.

280. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: This is surely so. Happy is he whose lot is with the good side. He turns not to the Other Side, but escapes it. Rabbi Yehuda answered: Assuredly this is so; happy is he who can be saved from that side, and happy are the Righteous who escape it and wage war against that side. Rabbi Chizkiyah said to him: How DO THEY WAGE WAR? His answer began with the quotation, "For by wise counsel you shall make war..." (Mishlei 24:6) What war is that? The war that a man must fight against the evil side in order to escape it.

281. Come and behold: this is what Ya'akov did to SUBDUE, deceive, and outwit Esav when it was needed in order to rule over him in the beginning and the end, so that all will be as it ought to be. The beginning and the end were as one, each resembling the other, as it is written: IN THE BEGINNING "my birthright" (bechorati, Bet Caf Resh Tav Yud), and in the end "my blessing" birchati (Bet Resh Caf Tav Yud) (Beresheet 27:36). THEY ARE WRITTEN USING THE SAME LETTERS, BECAUSE the beginning and the end were one and the same. The purpose of all this was to dominate him by the right means as befits him. Thus, happy is he who escapes THE OTHER SIDE and can govern it.

282. Come and behold: remembrance and visiting are for good, that is, when they are as one in the mystery of the faith, THE NUKVA--NAMELY, WHEN ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF REMEMBERING, AND THE NUKVA, THE SECRET OF VISITING, ARE UNITED. Happy is he who strives to be worthy of the faith, as it is written: "They shall walk after Hashem, Who shall roar like a lion..." (Hoshea 11:10) Rabbi Chizkiyah said: This is surely so.

283. Come and behold: when a man says his prayer, he should refrain from asking, "remember me and visit me," for himself, because there is remembering and visiting for good, and remembering and visiting for evil. The accusers might receive the words, "REMEMBER ME" AND "VISIT ME," from his mouth, and then recall his sins and punish him. THIS MEANS THEY WILL BRING UPON HIM REMEMBERING AND VISITING FOR EVIL, unless

he is absolutely righteous; in that case, the remembering and visiting for evil, THE MALE AND THE FEMALE OF THE KLIPAH, will look for his sins, but will not find any. ONLY THEN MAY HE SAY, "REMEMBER ME," "VISIT ME," as did Ezra, who said, "Remember me, O my Elohim, for good" (Nechemyah 13:31).

284. Whenever a man prays, it behooves him to include himself within the multitude, among the crowd. Come and behold: Elisha said to the Shunamitess, "Would you be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" (II Melachim 4:13). "Would you be spoken for to the king" means that it was the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, when the kingdom of heaven sits in judgment on the world. The Holy One, blessed be He, is then called "the King of Judgment." Therefore, he asked her, "Would you be spoken for to the king?" THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, AS A KING.

285. It is written: "And she answered, I dwell among my own people" (Ibid.). HE ASKS: WHAT did she say? WHAT DID SHE MEAN BY THAT? HE ANSWERS: SHE SAID, I do not wish to be distinguished above as extraordinary, but rather to be one of many. Thus, it behooves a man to be included within the crowd and not be singled out, so that THE ACCUSERS shall not look at him and remember his sins.

29. And Elohim remembered Rachel

The Zohar discusses the ability of Rachel to give birth to Binyamen, which came about through the spiritual level of Mazal. This spiritual realm is where all child-bearing originates.

The Relevance of this Passage

Though it may be a person's destiny to be unable to bear children as a result of a prior incarnation, spiritual transformation of character gives one the power to rise above destiny--the stars and planets in the heavens--and experience in the miracle of childbirth.

We can reach this spiritual level, which lies above the plane of the planets, through the Light that shines in Rachel's soul. Our connection to the matriarch's soul is made through this passage and we can share her energy with people who are struggling to bear children.

291. Come and behold: "And Elohim remembered Rachel, and Elohim hearkened to her, and opened her womb" (Beresheet 30:22). HE ASKS: Why is Elohim mentioned twice? WOULD IT NOT BE ENOUGH TO SAY, 'AND HE HEARKENED TO HER AND OPENED HER WOMB?' HE ANSWERS: This is because one is from the world of the male, NAMELY, BINAH, WHICH IS CALLED 'ELOHIM'; and one is from the world of the female, NAMELY, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, ALSO CALLED 'ELOHIM'. For it depends upon Mazal, WHICH IS OF THE MALE WORLD, AS IT HAS ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED THAT CHILDBEARING DEPENDS ON MAZAL.

292. When Rachel was inspired by the name OF BINYAMIN, as it is written: "Hashem shall add (Heb. yosef) to me another son" (Beresheet 30:23), Ya'akov knew that it would be so because she is worthy of increasing the number of the tribes TO TWELVE. He also knew THAT AFTER THAT, she would no longer live in the world. That is why he wanted to go TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL: SO THAT THE TRIBES WOULD BE COMPLETED IN THE LAND OF YISRAEL AND RACHEL SHOULD NOT DIE OUTSIDE OF YISRAEL. He could not go BECAUSE LAVAN DETAINED HIM. So when Binyamin was due, NAMELY, AFTER SHE CONCEIVED HIM, he ran away so that the House would not be perfected BY THE TWELVE TRIBES, and the Holy World, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, would not be attached to it in a foreign country.

293. This is the meaning of the verse: "And Hashem said to Ya'akov, 'Return to the land of your fathers, and to your kindred; and I will be with you'" (Beresheet 31:3). HE ASKS: What is THE MEANING OF, "and I will be with you?" HE ANSWERS: THE Holy One, blessed be He, said to him--Until now Rachel, the foundation of the house, was with you. From now on, I shall be with you and take the House, NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH, with you by the twelve tribes. This is what is meant by the verse: "And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died by me" (Beresheet 48:7). It was because of me that Rachel was removed, and another tenant, NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH, came in and dwelt with me in the House.

30. "Appoint me your wages"

The rabbis comment on Ya'akov's payment by his father-in-law, Lavan. Because Ya'akov was whole-hearted and sincere in his relations with Lavan, God rescued him and took him into the Holy Land, even though Lavan dealt with him unfairly. Through his honesty, Ya'akov was testing his luck-a necessary precaution before he could take the next step out of exile. This verse teaches us to deal honestly even with those who exploit us. Time will bring our reward.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our rewards in life are often delayed by time, to test the authenticity of our virtuous behavior. The delay may create the illusion that honest behavior goes unrewarded, and that the wicked prosper from their negative deeds. This severely limited view of life only generates affliction and judgment at a later point in our lives. Here the ability to perceive the cause and effect principle that governs the cosmos is aroused in our consciousness.

294. "Appoint me your wages, and I will give it" (Beresheet 30:28). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "Appoint?" Rabbi Yitzchak said: The wicked one said--I see that Ya'akov has eyes only for females, therefore he shall serve me. He then said: "Appoint (Heb. nokvah) me your wages," a female (Heb. nekevah) shall be your wages, as before. "...and I will give it..." means 'tell me what woman you have cast your eyes on, and you shall serve me for her.'

295. "And Ya'akov said, 'You shall not give me anything'" (Beresheet 30:31). Ya'akov said, heaven forbid! whatever I did, I did for the glory of the holy King AND NOT FOR MY PASSIONS. Therefore, "You shall not give me anything," because it was NEVER my intention but, "if you will do this thing for me..."

296. "And he removed that day the he goats" (Beresheet 30:35). Rabbi Elazar began the discussion with the verse: "Hashem, who shall abide in Your tent" (Tehilim 15:1) This was explained by the friends. "He that walks in perfection" is Avraham, for when he was circumcised, he became perfect; "works Righteousness" refers to Yitzchak; and he who "speaks truth" is Ya'akov. Assuredly, Ya'akov cleaved to the attribute of Truth. HE ASKS: If he cleaved to the attribute of Truth, why did he behave as he did with Lavan, NAMELY, WHEN PEELING THE RODS?

297. HE ANSWERS: Ya'akov was testing his luck BY WHAT HE DID. It is permissible for a man to see if fortune is with him before he returns to his country. If his luck stands by him, all is well; if it does not, he shall not set foot to go until the time is favorable.

298. Come and see: It is written: "So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come..." (Beresheet 30:33) for he did not attempt to obtain something from Lavan for nothing, but did everything truthfully and wholeheartedly. Moreover, he received permission from Lavan to do this. Thus, it is written THAT HE ANSWERS HIM: "I have learned by signs that Hashem has blessed me for your sake" (Ibid. 27). Lavan used magic and sorcery and tested his luck to find out WHETHER HE SUCCEEDED because of Ya'akov. He found that every month he added a hundred sheep, a hundred lambs, and a hundred male goats to his flocks because of Ya'akov, AND THEREFORE GAVE HIM PERMISSION.

299. Rabbi Aba said: Ya'akov used to bring an additional thousand cattle, thousand lambs, and thousand male goats every month. This is what is meant by the verse: "For the little which you had before I came is now increased to a multitude; and Hashem has blessed you since my coming" (Beresheet 30:30). Blessing from above does not dwell on less than a thousand of each kind. So there were a thousand sheep, a thousand lambs, and a thousand male goats, since blessing from above does not dwell on a lesser number. Thus, Ya'akov brought Lavan great wealth.

300. When Ya'akov asked for his wages, he found only ten of each kind, yet he thought it generous. He saw THE DIFFERENCE between the small amount he received from Lavan and what Lavan received as a result of his efforts. And what Ya'akov received was given reluctantly, as a result of the rods he placed against the cattle.

301. Come and behold: how much did the perfect Ya'akov toil for Lavan? It is written: "And he set three days' journey between himself and Ya'akov" (Beresheet 30:36), and he brought him much wealth. Yet because Lavan did not want to pay Ya'akov's wages, he gave Ya'akov

ten of this kind and ten of that kind, and said to him: Take these, and if they issue as you said, SPECKLED AND SPOTTED, they will be your wages. THIS MEANS HE MAY TAKE TEN OF EACH. This is the meaning of the verse, "and changed my wages ten times (Heb. monim)," (Beresheet 31:7) that is, ten of (Heb. min) this and ten of (Heb. min) that. It is written: "And your father has deceived me, and changed my wages ten times." By these ten, he strove after the Holy One, blessed be He, and blessed Him. With all his conditions, Lavan went back on his words and took everything from Ya'akov, until the Holy One, blessed be He, took pity on him and took from Lavan by force.

31. The rods

In this passage the rabbis discuss the allegorical meaning of the rods, or peeled branches of poplar, that Jacob used to separate his flocks from those of Laban at the drinking troughs. These rods represent the power of judgment, or the ability to make distinctions. Rabbi Elazar says, "All these verses instruct us wisely," even the most trivial.

The Relevance of this Passage

In our material existence, the differences between good and evil, and truth and falsehood, are often blurred. This makes our spiritual efforts very challenging, and thus very rewarding also. The power of discernment is instilled in our consciousness, so that our choices in life keep us secure in our spiritual path.

302. Rabbi Elazar said: All these verses instruct us wisdom. We have learned that in supernal matters, some depend on actions, SUCH AS TEFILIN AND THE TZIZIT (FRINGES;) some depend on speech, LIKE THE RECITAL OF THE SH'MA AND PRAYER; and some on devotion, SUCH AS LOVE AND FEAR. Whoever wishes to receive blessings should do so through prayer, speech, and devotion. Yet some are not DRAWN through prayer, but depend on actions.

303. Come and behold: all that honest Ya'akov did was wise. It is written: "And he set the rods which he had peeled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs" (Beresheet 30:38). All this he did in wisdom, to draw blessings from the source of all to the supernal grades, which are his lot.

304. HE ASKS: What are "the rods?" AND HE ANSWERS: They are the grades of Judgment, "which he had peeled," NAMELY, from which he removed Judgment; "in the gutters" (Heb. rehatim) is similar to the verse, "a king is caught in its tresses (Heb. rehatim)" (Shir Hashirim 7:6), because from that king, THE SUPERNAL KING, blessings come to all the worlds.

305. Another explanation for the verse, "a king is caught in its tresses," is that this King, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, is bound and tied to the supernal gutters through which everything is watered by the high King. "...in the watering troughs..." refers to the rivers that run until they come to the place where they gather. "...when the flocks came to drink..." is similar to the verse, "they give drink to every wild beast: the wild asses quench their thirst" (Tehilim 104:11), which refers to the place where the water gathers, THE NUKVA, and everyone, THE INHABITANTS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH, comes to drink of it.

306. And they were heated." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of this verse? HE ANSWERS: When the north wind blows UPON THE NUKVA, NAMELY THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM, water, which is plenty, congeals and does not flow. When the south wind, THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT, CHASSADIM, RISES, the water is heated, the ice breaks, and it flows TO THE THREE WORLDS: BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH. Then everyone drinks, because the heat from the south breaks THE FROZEN WATER. Everyone is heated and drinks with joy, because the coldness of the north HAS PASSED. This is the meaning of the verse, "And they were heated." HE ASKS: Why is it written IN THE FEMININE, WHEN 'CATTLE' IS MASCULINE? HE ANSWERS: Because they are all females.

32. "And he took a fresh poplar rod"

This verse continues the discussion of the secret meaning of the rods Ya'akov used to separate his animals from those of Lavan. Rabbi Elazar comments that God selected Ya'akov as his Chosen, and that Ya'akov also chose God. Typically, the Zohar here conflates cause

and effect as one: that is, God choosing Ya'akov and Ya'akov choosing God are one and the same, indicating interrelated nature of creation. In Rabbi Elazar's interpretation, "Man is the measure of all things." God not only chooses his flock, but each of us has the power to choose God as well.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power of the spiritual truths throughout this section awakens a realization of the power of choice God has bestowed upon us. We begin to recognize the daily opportunities to choose the Light of God over the evil of Darkness.

307. Ya'akov meant to perform the following act wisely, NAMELY, TO DIRECT HIS ACTIONS ACCORDING TO SUPERNAL GRADES, as it is written: "And Ya'akov took him rods of fresh poplar" (Beresheet 30:37). Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "For Yah has chosen Ya'akov to Himself, Yisrael for His peculiar possession" (Tehilim 135:4). Come and behold: we do not know from the verse, "For Yah has chosen Ya'akov to Himself," who chose whom. Did the Holy One, blessed be He, choose Ya'akov, or did Ya'akov choose the Holy One, blessed be He. IN HEBREW, IT CAN BE INTERPRETED BOTH WAYS. HE ANSWERS: From what the scripture tells us, I know that the Holy One, blessed be He, took Ya'akov for Himself as His portion. As it is written: "For Hashem's portion is His people; Ya'akov is the lot of His inheritance" (Devarim 32:9).

308. Come and behold: Ya'akov also chose his inheritance and lot as his portion; he rose above all the grades and took as his portion, "rods of fresh poplar (Heb. livneh)," namely, the white (Heb. lavan) grade of the right side, and "almond and plane tree," the red grade of the left side.

309. "...and peeled white streaks in them..." He removed the Judgment FROM THE ALMOND AND THE PLANE TREE THAT ARE OF THE LEFT, and connected them to the right. He himself, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, came between them and brought them together so that they became one with two colors. With all that, he "made the white appear" IN SUCH A MANNER that the white dominated the red. Why should he do that? To pour blessings on his portion, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, from the universal source, and to perfect this grade by the three COLUMNS, so the three COLUMNS shall become as one.

310. We already explained the verse, "in the gutters in the watering troughs." By this wise act, BY THE PERFECTION OF THE THREE COLUMNS, blessings flow downward; all the worlds are watered, and blessings dwell on them, as was explained when discussing the verses, "in the morning he shall devour the prey" (Beresheet 49:27), and, then "at night he shall divide the spoil" (Ibid.). Then all the worlds below will be blessed, THE THREE WORLDS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH. And Ya'akov took his portion from the blessings which dwell on him below, because it is the lot of the Holy One, blessed be He.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

311. "And Ya'akov took him rods of fresh poplar..." The intention of this act was for the bonds of Faith--TO DRAW THREE KNOTS, THE THREE COLUMNS, ON THE NUKVA, CALLED 'FAITH'. The sound of sounds was brought from above downward, and our eyes opened. HE EXPLAINED: The wheel turned a few times and the melodious sound was heard. Those who slumber and sleep, who have sleep in their eye sockets, awake! They do not know, or look, or see, for they shut their ears, heavy hearted, asleep without knowledge. The Torah is before them, yet they pay not attention, nor know what they look at. They see, yet do not see. The Torah raises sounds. Behold, fools, open your eyes, and know. But there is no one to notice, no one to lend an ear. How long will you be in darkness because of your evil desires? Look to know, and the shining light shall be revealed to you.

312. As a result of his problems in a foreign country and rule with strange grades, INSTEAD OF IN THE HOLY LAND, honest Ya'akov rejected them all and chose as his inheritance--NAMELY, WITHIN THE CENTRAL COLUMN--a light out of darkness, THE RIGHT COLUMN, and wisdom out of stupidity, THE LEFT COLUMN. He honored his Master while still under foreign rule IN PADDAN ARAM, HE BEING THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Then it was said of him: "Ya'akov shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now grow pale" (Yeshayah 29:22).

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

Tosefta (Addendum)

313. The pure knot rose in the innermost place. Before it found an inhabited place, that place did not exist; it was lost to all, and ruin was everywhere. Ruin alludes to the male, Samael, who was created from the impurities of the might of Yitzchak. Death is its female, the primordial serpent called a 'wife of harlotry', about whom it is written: "Her feet go down to death" (Mishlei 5:5). These two, Ruin and Death, heard the strong commandment of the King.

314. There is a deeply held mystery, undisclosed and not revealed, that is, hidden more than any thought. From it came the letter Yud, the supernal point from which everything else develops. THE YUD drew and issued the letter Hei, the supernal mother, who waters all. From this Hei comes the letter Vav, the secret of the six SFIROT, which unites all the sides. It is " the rods of fresh poplar and almond and plane tree."

315. It contains two arms. THE ARMS come out and are included within the last Hei, to bind the tabernacle into one. Then the thirteen attributes of Mercy become one, AS THE NUMERICAL VALUE OF ECHAD ('ONE') IS THIRTEEN. White was engraved on the colors and predominates, as it is written: "white appear." Then it reads, "Hashem shall be one and His name One" (Zecharyah 14:9) and "Hashem is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me in the paths of Righteousness" (Tehilim 23:1).

End of Tosefta (Addendum)

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

316. "And Ya'akov took him," means that he chose his lot and portion. "The rod of fresh (also: 'moist') poplar," is the Right COLUMN, the white color. It is moist, FROM THE ASPECT of water, CHASSADIM. The almond is the Left COLUMN, red as a rose, and the plane tree combines them together, BEING THE RIGHT COLUMN, WHICH CAUSES THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN EACH OTHER. Right embraces and overpowers them through its WHITE color, as it is written: "white appears." THIS INDICATES THAT THOUGH ZEIR ANPIN, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, is connected to the two Columns, RIGHT AND LEFT, its lot is with the Right Column. It engraved THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT on both COLUMNS. He was then called a 'perfect man', complete in every respect.

317. It is written in the scriptures: "And it came to pass, whenever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Ya'akov laid the rods..." This mystery of mysteries was transmitted to those who were wise of heart. Within the legions of High Angels, there are grades and higher grades. Some are internal and some external. The internal are attached to the Holy King, ZEIR ANPIN, and are attached to Yisrael, the holy children of the Holy One, blessed be He. They are called "the stronger (also: 'attached') cattle," NAMELY, the troops OF ANGELS attached above TO THE RIGHT SIDE and TO THE CENTRAL COLUMN below.

318. When the passion of the angels is for the supernal splendor of above, the middle pillar, the perfected Ya'akov, takes the rods, THE PORTIONS OF the head Tefilin, AND PUTS THEM in the gutters, the place and receptacle of the Tefilin. From this place, all the supernal armies and battalions, which are attached above TO THE RIGHT COLUMN and below TO THE CENTRAL COLUMN, NAMELY, THE STRONGER CATTLE, receive light and resplendence. IN THE SAME MANNER, once they receive illumination from the gutters and the troughs of water, they become springs and sources which flow down ON BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH generously.

319. For this reason, Ya'akov distinguished between the supernal holy grades and the other grades of the rest of the nations, as it is written: "and he put his own flocks by themselves and put them not to Lavan's cattle." He separated cattle for himself so that his portion would not be like that of the other nations. In the same manner, Ya'akov separated the grades of faith above. HE SEPARATED THE STRONGER CATTLE, BORN OF THE NUKVA CALLED 'FAITH', FROM THE EXTERNAL TROOPS DRAWN FROM THE LEFT. He also had to separate the grades of the holy armies below--THE HEALTHY LAMBS BORN TO THE CATTLE WERE SEPARATED FROM THE FEEBLE ONES BORN TO THE EXTERNAL ARMIES--to attach them to the palaces of the Queen, THE NUKVA.

320. All bear the mark of the High King, ZEIR ANPIN, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, because as the children of Yisrael are marked AND DISTINGUISHED among the nations, so are the grades of the supernal troops of HOLY angels distinguished as the portion of the Holy One, blessed be He, from the other armies and legions of angels, WHICH ARE NOT OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Therefore, Ya'akov chose for his lot and portion the secret of the Faith, THE NUKVA. And the Holy One, blessed be He, chose Ya'akov from among the other armies and legions of the world.

321. The supernal legions are divided among themselves, because when the brightness of the fire within the illumination of the Shechinah is revealed, all the other grades, DRAWN FROM THE LEFT, are ashamed and enfeebled; THAT IS, THEY ARE WEAK IN THEIR PASSION for the splendor they can not approach. But the holy grades are all perfected BY THE CENTRAL COLUMN, YA'AKOV. When the splendor is revealed, they joyously ascend to approach it and cling to it. And the splendor is thus improved because of them. This is the secret of, "so the feeble were Lavan's," BECAUSE THEY ARE DRAWN FROM THE LEFT AND THEY ARE ENFEEBLED WHEN THE SPLendor IS REVEALED. "...and the stronger Ya'akov's..." ARE THOSE WHO ARE PURIFIED AND CAN BE ATTACHED TO IT.

322. Ya'akov had to choose and divide the STRONGER holy grades as his portion, from the FEEBLE grades of other nations. Ya'akov had to do all this. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, wrote in the Torah about the faithfulness AND RIGHTEOUSNESS of Ya'akov in these secret words. Happy is his portion.

End of Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

33. "Blessings are upon the head of the righteous"

Rabbi Shimon explains the verse "Blessings are upon the head of the righteous." When blessings flow into this world, they emanate from those people who read Torah and keep God's commandments.

The Relevance of this Passage

The truly righteous souls in our world uphold and sustain its existence. Their souls are worth far more than the souls of millions of wicked human beings. The deeds of the few outweigh the abundance of negative deeds performed by the multitudes. We gain the power of the righteous to help to counter any negative deeds that we have committed.

323. Rabbi Yesa Junior frequently visited Rabbi Shimon. He said to him: It is written, "Blessings are upon the head of the righteous" (Mishlei 10:6), when it should have been written: 'upon the righteous'. Why, then, is it written: "head of the righteous?" He replied: The "head of the Righteous" is the holy crown, THE CROWN OF YESOD. This has already been explained. Moreover, Ya'akov is the head of the righteous. He is TIFERET, AND THE BODY, AND IS CALLED THE "HEAD OF THE RIGHTEOUS" because he receives blessings and showers them on the righteous, NAMELY, ON YESOD, CALLED 'RIGHTEOUS', from where they flow in every direction, THAT IS, RIGHT AND LEFT OF MALCHUT. Thus, all the worlds are blessed.

324. We also explained that the verse, "Blessings are upon the head of the righteous," refers to the place, which is the covenant, called 'righteous', from which rivers flow. As the mouth of the pitcher, from which the wine is poured, is at the top, so is the head of the righteous. The place from which springs gush into the Nukva is called the 'head of the Righteous'. The righteous is the head because all the blessings dwell therein AND FLOW FROM THERE.

325. We should further explain that a man who succeeded in keeping the sign of the Covenant and observing the precepts of the Torah is called 'righteous', and is considered righteous from head to feet. OF HIM THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "BLESSINGS ARE UPON THE HEAD OF THE RIGHTEOUS." For when blessings flow into the world, they dwell on his head, and it is because of him that blessings abide in the world--through the holy, righteous children that are his issue.

326. Rabbi Yesa further said: It is written, "I have been young, and now am old..." (Tehilim 37:24). This verse was said to have been uttered by the Minister of the World. He said it with greater wisdom than most people think. HE THEREFORE WISHED TO UNDERSTAND ITS

MEANING. Rabbi Shimon said: My son, indeed THIS VERSE WAS WRITTEN WITH GREAT WISDOM, because the words, "I have been young, and now am old," refer to the holy union.

34. "I have not seen a just man forsaken"

This verse refers to the fact that a righteous person, even in exile, cannot be abandoned by the eternal Light of the Creator, regardless of the changes that are taking place in the supernal world.

The Relevance of this Passage

Sometimes, the presence of negativity in our environment is so intense, it can attach itself to even the most spiritual of people, even though it's unwarranted. However, through the Light of this passage, we can connect ourselves to a higher spiritual level where the negative vibrations of the physical environment are unable to exert any form of influence.

327. The verse, "yet I have not seen a just (lit. 'righteous') man forsaken" (Tehilim 37:24), praises the union OF ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA. THIS TEACHES US THAT there is no day, ZEIR ANPIN, without night, THE NUKVA. For night always clings to day, ZEIR ANPIN TO THE NUKVA. The Righteous, YESOD, is attached above TO ZEIR ANPIN, DAY, and below TO THE NUKVA, NIGHT. THIS IS THE SECRET OF JOINING TOGETHER IN UNENDING UNITY.

328. What is the meaning of the verse: "and his seed begging bread" (Tehilim 37:24)? HE SAID: As long as his seed flows, he claims and asks not for the Nukva, because she is with him in a never ending union. She is then ready for him, because the seed is not ejaculated until the female is ready. Their passion is as one, in unending devotion. Therefore, he does not have to ask for her.

329. He said to him: This is not so in exile. ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA ARE IN AN UNENDING UNION ONLY WHEN THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL ARE IN THEIR LAND AND THE TEMPLE STANDS, NOT DURING THE TIME OF EXILE. HE ANSWERS: It is written, "his seed BEGGING BREAD," rather than, 'he BEGGING BREAD'. When is THE SEED ejaculated? When the female is united with the male. It may be said that the scripture also reads, "yet I have not seen a just man forsaken," WHICH REFERS TO THE MALE HIMSELF. YOU MAY FURTHER ASK how it is in exile, WHEN A JUST MAN IS FORSAKEN AND NOT UNITED WITH THE NUKVA?

330. HE ANSWERS THAT even during THE TIME OF EXILE, he is attached above TO ZEIR ANPIN, who never forsakes him. THEREFORE, THE SCRIPTURE READS, "YET I HAVE NOT SEEN A JUST MAN FORSAKEN," EVEN IN EXILE. At another time, AS LONG AS THE TEMPLE STANDS, the righteous are never forsaken by the Nukva. He is then attached above TO ZEIR ANPIN and below TO THE NUKVA. We therefore find that at the time of exile, he is attached above TO ZEIR ANPIN, and at another time, he is attached to both sides, above and below, ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA. In either case, he is never left alone.

35. "And He set them in the firmament of heaven"

This paradoxical passage locates "the firmament of heaven" in the "final" or most earthy part of the human body, the genitals. The end is the beginning; the lowest is most high.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our physical world is the lowest of all dimensions. Yet, because the desires implanted within physical human beings are the most intense, the physical world has the power to reveal the greatest amount of spiritual Light. When we transform our most extreme desires from negative to positive, we create Light for all the worlds. Our most powerful instinctive desires are our sexual impulses. When these desires are tamed and directed towards spiritual endeavors-sharing love with your spouse, bringing down positive energy from above, bringing forth new life-the Light aroused is of untold luminance. Thus, the wisdom and strength to utilize our sexual desires for positive purposes is instilled within us.

331. It is written: "And Elohim set them in the firmament of heaven" (Beresheet 1:17). This is the Righteous, NAMELY, YESOD, even though it says, "in the firmament of heaven," AND THE HEAVEN IS ZEIR ANPIN, NOT YESOD. But it is assuredly called "the firmament of heaven," being the final part of the body.

36. "Two firmaments: beginning and end"

This verse expands on the ideas introduced in article number 35. It asserts that the highest, starry firmament of the heavens is identical to the lowest, or 'the river'. Both are endless and eternal.

The Relevance of this Passage

The lowest world is furthest from the Light of the Endless. Thus, it feels the greatest emptiness. This painful void also creates the greatest longing for Light. When this longing and desire is used in a spiritual manner, Light is drawn in equal measure to desire. Thus, the full radiance of Light in the uppermost realm can shine forth in the darkest realm--when desire to receive the Light exists for the purpose of sharing it with others. Then both worlds, the Upper and Lower shine with equal intensity. When we transform negative desires into actions of sharing, we in turn draw the greatest amount of Light into our own lives. The ability to control and transform our most intense longings is awarded to us through the Light of wisdom emanating from these Hebrew words.

332. Come and behold: there are two firmaments, the beginning and the end, created in the same pattern. The beginning is the eighth firmament, where all the stars, great and small, are set. This is the upper, undisclosed firmament, which creates and sustains everything. It is the eighth one, counting from below, the beginning from which everything emerges.

333. The eighth firmament from above follows the same pattern. In it, all the beginnings, all the lights and candles are set. It receives all, because it represents the end. The UPPER eighth firmament is the starting point of everything, that on which all the lights depend. It receives everything FROM ABOVE, and everything emerges from it. Similarly, the LOWER eighth firmament receives the lights from its superiors and it releases the lights into all the worlds.

334. The beginning and the end, THE TWO FIRMAMENTS, are alike, and therefore THE LOWER FIRMAMENT is the river from which water comes out and never stops flowing. The purpose is to pattern the end after the beginning. Therefore, "Elohim set them in the firmament of heaven" (Bereshheet 1:17), THE LOWER FIRMAMENT. They are there to shine on the earth, WHICH IS THE NUKVA AND BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH.

335. Although THE UPPER AND LOWER FIRMAMENTS clearly resemble each other, THERE MUST BE a difference between them. IT BEHOOVES US TO ASK what it is. HE ANSWERS: THE UPPER FIRMAMENT nourishes and sustains the supernal aspects, and THE LOWER FIRMAMENT nourishes and sustains the lower world, THE NUKVA and all the lower aspects OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH.

336. It may be asked, What is the upper world? For the eighth upper, undisclosed firmament is itself the upper world, and is so called, for there are only two worlds, as we have already learned. HOW CAN IT BE SAID, THEN, THAT IT NOURISHES THE UPPER WORLD, WHICH MEANS THAT IT IS BUT ONE ASPECT OF THE UPPER WORLD? HE ANSWERS: THE UPPER FIRMAMENT itself is the upper world, and all the grades issued from it are named after it, NAMELY, THE UPPER WORLD. The one and the other, THE UPPER AND LOWER FIRMAMENTS, are all one. Blessed be He, forever and ever.

37. "The trees of Hashem have their fill"

In this passage the Zohar explains the dual nature of Binah. Although it is female because it is reflective Mind, Binah is also male--that is, active--because it gives understanding. Unlike the dark and sorrowing Malkut, which is located on a lower level of existence, Binah is all Light, and therefore full of gladness.

The Relevance of this Passage

Kabbalistically, the realm of Binah is a cosmic repository of spiritual Light. Touching this realm awakens the full Light of the Creator in our lives, producing great gladness in our hearts and souls. Connection to Binah is established when we make visual connection to the

words that tell of these supernal wonders. Thus, the Light of Gladness and Happiness fills our souls, especially if we meditate to share the Light with others as we peruse these verses.

337. Come and behold, it is written: "The trees of Hashem have their fill; the cedars of Levanon which He has planted" (Tehilim 104:16). What does "Levanon" mean? As has already been explained, IT IS THE SECRET OF BINAH RETURNED TO CHOCHMAH. THE WORD LEVANON CONTAINS THE LETTERS LEV ('HEART'), WHICH HAS A NUMERICAL VALUE OF 32, AND NUN, WHICH HAS A NUMERICAL VALUE OF FIFTY. THUS, THE WORD LEVANON MEANS THERE ARE 32 PATHS OF WISDOM AND FIFTY GATES OF BINAH. They also discussed the verse: "where the birds make their nests" (Ibid. 17). Where does this happen? HE ANSWERS: In Levanon, THE SUPERNAL BINAH OF ARICH ANPIN RETURNED TO CHOCHMAH. These are the two birds mentioned in several places, THAT IS, THE TWO NUKVAS, LEAH AND RACHEL. From them several other birds come out, IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, ASIYAH. But these two birds are supernal IN ATZILUT. They come from Levanon above. This is the secret meaning of the verse: "And Lavan had two daughters" (Beresheet 29:16). THESE ARE THE TWO BIRDS LEAH AND RACHEL. LAVAN IS THE SECRET OF LEVANON, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE MALE, WHILE LEVANON IS THE MALE JOINED WITH THE FEMALE.

338. "...as for the stork, the cypress trees are her house..." (Tehilim 104:17). This refers to the six supernal sons, THE SIX ENDS OF THE WORLD, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD. It has been explained THAT THEY EMERGE FROM THE SUPERNAL WORLD, BINAH, AND ARE CONSIDERED TO BE ITS HOUSE. Why is BINAH called a 'stork'? HE ANSWERS: Because this supernal world, although it is female, NAMELY BINAH, is referred to as male, because when goodness and lights issue, it is from her that it appears and expands. AND, WHATEVER GIVES IS REFERRED TO AS MALE.

339. Because BINAH is a 'stork' (Heb. chasidah), the light of Chesed emanates from Her--the primordial light, about which the scripture reads, "And Elohim said, Let there be light" (Beresheet 1:3). Therefore, it is written: "the cypress trees are her house." "Broshim" ('cypress trees') should be read "Berashim" ('in the heads'), BECAUSE BINAH IS THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, AND HER HOUSE IS HER SIX ENDS, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD. AND THESE ARE IN HER HEAD, THAT IS, IN THE ASPECT OF HEAD AND THE FIRST THREE SFIROT. But the LOWER world, THE NUKVA, lives in the lower beings, AND NOT IN THE HEADS. She is called the 'Law Court of the World'. Sometimes THE LOWER WORLD, THE NUKVA, is named as the upper world, BINAH, by all its names. THIS IS WHEN THE NUKVA RISES AND CLOTHES BINAH.

340. Of this place, THE NUKVA, the scripture says, "And Hashem repented...and it grieved Him at His heart" (Beresheet 6:6). This is because judgments and sadness are from this place. But above, IN BINAH, all is light and full of life. From this we derive that there is no sadness before Hashem; 'before' is precise, INDICATING THE INNER PART, BINAH. ONLY THERE, NO SADNESS ABIDES. IN THE OUTER PLACE, THE NUKVA, THERE IS SADNESS. It is therefore written: "Serve Hashem with gladness: come before His presence with singing" (Tehilim 100:2). The first part corresponds to the supernal world; the second part to the lower world. Happy are the children of Yisrael in this world and in the world to come. Thus, the scripture says, "Happy are you, O Yisrael: Who is like to you? O people saved by Hashem, the shield of your help, and the sword of your excellence..." (Devarim 33:29)

38. The rods

Rabbi Elazar further speculates on the secret meaning of Ya'akov's rods. He reflects on the verse; "If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; and if you scorn, you alone shall bear it." A man benefits from the wisdom of the Torah; if he fails to understand it, it is he who languishes in ignorance; the Torah itself is not diminished at all. Rabbi Aba adds that when Ya'akov in his wisdom separated his flocks from those of Lavan, he created the singular nation of Israel, which was set off from the heathen peoples.

The Relevance of this Passage

The most critical part of spiritual work is learning how to identify and thus separate good from evil; to distinguish the whims of the ego from the longings of the soul. This passage raises our consciousness so that we can begin to differentiate darkness from Light when the temptations of the physical world and the seductive drives of our ego attempt to blur the lines.

341. "And he set the rods..." Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "If you are wise, you are wise for yourself: and if you scorn, you alone shall bear it" (Mishlei 9:12). Come and behold: woe to the wicked of the world, who do not know or look at the words of the Torah. And if they do, as they have no intelligence, the words of the Torah seem empty and useless to them. This is because they themselves are empty of knowledge and intelligence. But all the words of the Torah are high and precious, each of its words is dearer than pearls, "and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it" (Mishlei 8:11).

342. When all those stout-hearted fools see the words of the Torah, they fail to understand and say things of no value. Woe to them, at the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, will exact from them the shame of the Torah, and they will be punished for rebelling against their Master.

343. It is written in the Torah: "For it is not an empty thing for you" (Devarim 32:47), for the whole Torah is full of precious stones and pearls and all the goodness in the world. This is as it is written: "and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." How can they say the Torah is empty?

344. King Solomon said: "If you are wise, you are wise for yourself." When a man is wise in understanding the Torah, he benefits from that wisdom. HIS WISDOM DOES NOT BENEFIT THE TORAH, because he can not add even one letter. It is further written: "and if you scorn, you alone shall bear it," because the value of the Torah shall not be diminished one wit, and his jesting is his alone. He dwells in it, and it causes him to perish from this world and the world to come.

345. Come and behold: when the supernal letters, THE GRADES OF BINAH, are attached to this grade, the ending of all the holy, supernal grades, THE NUKVA, it is filled from them and blessed by the supernal world, BINAH. This grade then waters all the flocks, each according to its worth. Each one of them is watered by Judgment and Mercy.

346. Come and behold, it is written: "And he set the rods." Ya'akov wanted to compose the evening prayer, WHICH THE LEFT SIDE, THE NUKVA, WHICH IS DARK, and to shine on the moon, THE NUKVA OF THE NIGHT, to water her and bless her on all sides, RIGHT AND LEFT. As it is written: "And he set the rods," the judgments OF MALCHUT, and the Gvurot from the supernal Gvurah, THE LEFT COLUMN OF BINAH.

347. When Ya'akov wanted to amend this grade, THE NUKVA, he removed all Judgments and Gvurot from the rods OF WHOSE JUDGMENTS IT IS SAID, "AND MADE THE WHITE APPEAR." He set THE RODS in the gutters, the four gutters WHICH ARE THE FOUR VESSELS OF CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT, abiding underneath, "the well that the princes dug out" (Bemidbar 21:18). THE NUKVA, CALLED 'WELL', IS AMENDED BY CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF BINAH, CALLED 'PRINCES', COMPRISING THE FOUR VESSELS OF CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT CALLED 'GUTTERS'. When it is filled by the higher rivers and sources, THE SFIROT OF BINAH, the water flows from that holy well, and the four VESSELS take it all. They are therefore called 'gutters', where THE ANGELS AND SOULS come to drink.

348. These judgments and Gvurot, WHICH HE REMOVED FROM THE RODS, stand IN THE GUTTERS, so that each will receive its proper share. In the verse, "when the flocks came to drink...and the flocks conceived before the rods," THE TWO USES OF THE WORD 'FLOCK' correspond the ones to the others--THE GRADES WORTHY OF RECEIVING CHASSADIM AND THE GRADES WORTHY OF RECEIVING JUDGMENTS AND GVUROT. He asks: What is the meaning of "heat" in the verse, "that they should conceive (lit. 'heat')"? HE ANSWERS: When THE ANGELS, THE FLOCKS, are crowned by CHASSADIM AND RECEIVE Judgment, they are heated by that Judgment, BECAUSE RECEIVING JUDGMENT IS CALLED 'HEATING'. They then roam the world inspecting the ways of men for either good or evil, IN ORDER TO REWARD OR PUNISH THEM, BECAUSE THEY INCLUDE CHASSADIM AND JUDGMENTS.

349. Come and behold, it is next written: "And the flocks conceived before (lit. 'were heated against') the rods." This is because these rods, JUDGMENTS AND GVUROT, were heated, and they are now in charge of the Judgments in the world. People are judged by them, as it is

written: "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones..." (Daniel 4:14).

350. Rabbi Chiya began the discussion with the verse: "My soul clings to You: Your right hand upholds me" (Tehilim 63:9). We have to study this verse carefully. It reads, "My soul clings to You." David himself always cleaved to the Holy One, blessed be He. He cared not for other, WORLDLY matters, but cleaved to the Holy One, blessed be He, with his heart and soul. Because his only wish was to cleave to Him, the Holy One, blessed be He, supported him and never left him, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "YOUR RIGHT HAND UPHOLDS ME." From this we understand that when a man cleaves to the Holy One, blessed be He, He upholds him and never leaves him.

351. Another explanation for: "My soul clings to You." This David does so that his grade may be crowned above. For when his grade is attached to the supernal grades and rises to them, the right, CHASSADIM, embraces him, raises him, and joins him WITH THE RIGHT into a worthy union. This is echoed in the verses, "and Your right hand shall hold me," (Tehilim 139:10) and, "His right hand embraces me" (Shir Hashirim 8:3). Therefore, the scripture reads, "Your right hand upholds me."

352. When he cleaves to the Holy One, blessed be He, it is written: "His left hand is under my head, and His right hand embraces me." This is his union with THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. When he joins HIM in a union, his grade is filled and blessed.

353. When all the gutters are filled on all four sides of the world, all the flocks are given water, each according to its grade, FROM THE FOUR ASPECTS OF CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT. When Ya'akov came to purify this grade, THE NUKVA, he chose the right side, which was worthy of him. The Other Side, which was not worthy, was separated from him, as it is written: "and he put his own flocks apart and put them not to Lavan's cattle." He was "apart," on his own, and did not worship strange Elohim from the other sides. Happy is the portion of Yisrael, of whom it is written: "For you are a holy people to Hashem your Elohim, and Hashem has chosen you..." (Devarim 14:2).

354. Come and behold: Ya'akov, the chosen of the fathers, includes all of them, BECAUSE THE CENTRAL COLUMN, YA'AKOV, INCLUDES THE RIGHT AND LEFT COLUMNS, AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. He includes them all and thus strives to shine upon the moon, THE NUKVA, since it is for Ya'akov to compose the evening service, THE NUKVA.

355. He made all the preparations correctly and installed all the holy aspects with his aspect OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. He thus separated his share from that of the other nations OF THE LEFT. Those were the holy, supernal grades of high holiness; the others were the grades defiled with the fifth of impurity.

356. We have already explained that the verse, "and he put his own flocks apart," means that he established for the faith, THE NUKVA, alone, according to the verse: "For you are a holy people to the Hashem your Elohim and Hashem has chosen you" (Devarim 14:2). "...and put them not to Lavan's cattle..." because he did not share his lot and portion with them.

357. Therefore Ya'akov, the chosen among the fathers, established the mystery of faith and separated his lot and portion from that of other nations. Of this the scripture reads, "But you that did cleave to Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4).

358. Rabbi Aba said: Happy is the portion of Yisrael who are superior to the heathen nations, because their grade is high AND THEY RECEIVE THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM BELOW. The grades of the heathen nations are below, BECAUSE THEY DRAW THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM ABOVE. The first, those of the right, are on the side of Holiness. The second, those on the left, on the side of Defilement.

359. After the destruction of the Temple, it is written: "He has drawn back His right hand from before the enemy" (Eichah 2:3). It is also written: "save with Your right hand, and answer me" (Tehilim 60:7), because as the left becomes stronger, the impure are strengthened. This will continue until the Holy One, blessed be He, rebuilds the Temple and establishes and amends the world properly. Then everything shall be set aright again, and the side of Defilement will pass from the world. We have learned this from the verses,

"and...I will cause the...unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zecharyah 13:2, and, "He will destroy death for ever" (Yeshayah 25:8).

360. The Holy One, blessed be He, alone shall remain, as it is written: "And the idols shall utterly be abolished," (Yeshayah 2:18) and, "Hashem alone shall be exalted on that day," (Yeshayah 2:17) because "there was no strange El with him" (Devarim 32:12). For the force of defilement will be annihilated from the world, and there will be no one left above and below except the Holy One, blessed be He. And the children of Yisrael, His Holy Nation which serves Him, shall be called 'holy', as it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Tzion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, every one in Jerusalem that is written to life" (Yeshayah 4:3). Then there will be one King above and below, and one people to serve Him, as it is written: "And who is like Your people Yisrael, a singular nation on earth" (I Divrei Hayamim 17:21).

39. "Hashem lives; and blessed is my rock"

Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yesa assert that the Holy Spirit attaches itself to travelers such as themselves, especially when they discuss Torah. On the road, Rabbi Yitzchak speculates on the verse "The Creator lives; and blessed is my rock." For the Righteous, the Lord is a living presence. When united with the Malchut of Zeir Anpin, the Eternal Female or Rock, blessings of abundance flow.

The Relevance of this Passage

When two sages are said to be traveling, it refers to the spiritual travels of their souls in the Upper Worlds. Our constant physical trek in this material existence, directly influences and guides the journey of our souls in the Upper World. Thus, our travels through the darkened corridors of life can be divinely illuminated when we connect to the Light of the Torah. This is accomplished through the study of the spiritual wisdom of the Torah-The Kabbalah-and by the application of its wisdom to our lives. For instance, when we are busy helping others, the Light of the Creator will in turn help and attend to us. The consciousness to think of others before ourselves is stirred within us through these passages.

361. Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yesa were walking along the road. Rabbi Yesa said: The Shechinah is with us, BECAUSE SHE ATTACHES HERSELF TO TRAVELERS ON THE ROAD TO PROTECT THEM. Let us study the words of the Torah, for whoever studies the Torah and shines in her draws the Shechinah nearer, AS HE DRAWS ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE TORAH. THEN ZEIR ANPIN AND HIS FEMALE, THE SHECHNAH, WILL BE JOINTLY CONNECTED TO THEM.

362. Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion with the verse: "Hashem lives; and blessed is my rock; and let the Elohim of my salvation be exalted" (Tehilim 18:47). This verse contains a mystery. It is written: "Hashem lives". Do I not know that the Holy One, blessed be He, lives? HE ANSWERS: Even the righteous, YESOD, is referred to as "living (Heb. chay)," BECAUSE THE RIGHTEOUS DRAWS THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, CALLED THE 'LIGHT OF CHAYAH', AND IS THEREFORE CALLED "CHAY." "Living" refers to the righteous above and below-his ZEIR ANPIN, ABOVE, AND HIS YESOD, BELOW, ARE BOTH REFERRED TO AS "LIVING". The Holy One, blessed be He, above, ZEIR ANPIN, is called "living," AS IT IS WRITTEN: "HASHEM LIVES." And the righteous below is called "living," NAMELY, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "And Bnayahu the son of Yehoyada, the son of a living man" (II Shmuel. 23:20), WHICH ALLUDES TO YESOD. Why is THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, called "living?" Because He is Righteous, BECAUSE HE INCLUDES THE ASPECT OF THE RIGHTEOUS, YESOD, AS WELL, and the righteous is called "the life of the worlds." The phrase, "and blessed is my rock," has a similar meaning. These are all one because the living and the blessed are never separated. THE LIVING MEANS THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, AND THE BLESSED REFERS TO THE ILLUMINATION OF CHASSADIM. THEY HAVE TO BE CLOTHED BY EACH OTHER BECAUSE CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM IS DARKNESS. "HASHEM LIVES; AND BLESSED IS MY ROCK," ALLUDES TO CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM TOGETHER; "MY ROCK" IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. When "HASHEM LIVES; AND BLESSED BE MY ROCK" are joined together, THE ROCK becomes a well of living water. The water flows from the inside OF THE WELL, NAMELY, FROM THE LIVING AND THE BLESSED, and fills THE ROCK, WHICH IS THE WELL.

363. The verse, "and let the Elohim of my salvation be exalted," refers to the supernal world, BINAH, which is exalted and uplifted. Everything is issued from it, and every spring that fills the well IS DERIVED FROM IT. THE NUKVA is blessed from there and shines upon all those beneath ATZILUT. When everyone is filled WITH PLENTY from her, then "the Elohim of my salvation be exalted," BECAUSE IT IS EXALTED AND UPLIFTED BY THE WEALTH IT SHOWERS ON THE LOWER BEINGES.

40. "He withdraws not his eyes from the righteous"

As the rabbis travel, the discussion continues. Quoting scripture, Rabbi Yesa asserts that the wicked will perish and the righteous will prevail. They meet a man with a child on his shoulders, fleeing the wicked. The man says people can achieve merit by giving him alms. The rabbis give him alms and food to eat.

The Relevance of this Passage

Actions of charity have the power to remove decrees of death against us. Often, before a judgment is executed against us, the Light will send us an opportunity to share and truly go outside of ourselves so that we can sweeten the judgment. The Evil Inclination, however, blinds us to these opportunities and we remain in our selfish, uncaring ways. The wisdom and foresight to recognize opportunities to give charity is aroused in our consciousness. Moreover, the strength to take the initiative and perform charitable contributions is also stirred within our souls. We just have to listen to the whispers arising from words of this portion.

364. Rabbi Yesa opened the discussion with the verse: "He withdraws not His eyes from the Righteous: but with kings on He throne the establishes them for ever, and they are exalted" (Iyov 36:7). Come and behold: when the wicked lose their power and perish from the world, the Righteous then rules the world. This is the meaning of the verse: "He preserves not the life of the wicked: but gives to the poor their right" (Ibid. 6), THAT IS, THE WICKED WILL PERISH FROM THE WORLD. It is then written: "He withdraws not His eyes from the Righteous," which is similar to the verse, "The eyes of Hashem are towards the Righteous" (Tehilim 34:16).

365. The verse, "but with kings on the throne," refers to the ruling kings, settled upon the throne; "He establishes them for ever" means that they sit upon their throne firmly; and "they are exalted" in order to rule the world and so that the throne shall be established on its supports. Another explanation for the phrase, "and they are exalted," is that they take the throne, THE NUKVA, place it up high, IN THE PLACE OF BINAH, and put it in its proper place.

366. While they were walking, they saw a man with a child riding on his shoulders. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Surely this man is Jewish and has come to help people attain merit, THAT IS, HE IS COMING TO RECEIVE CHARITY AND ALLOW PEOPLE TO MERIT THE WORLD TO COME. Rabbi Yesa said: Let us be the first to merit by him.

367. When he reached them, Rabbi Yesa asked: Where is YOUR bag of food? RABBI YESA SAW THAT THE MAN CARRIED NOTHING SAVE THE CHILD ON HIS SHOULDERS. He replied: I HAVE NOTHING, so that people can achieve merit BY GIVING ALMS TO ME. I had two sons, but the army came into town and took them captive. Now I am walking to afford people the opportunity to earn merit BY GIVING RANSOM MONEY. And they did, by giving him ALMS AND food TO EAT.

41. "My offering, the provision of my sacrifices made by fire"

The man the Rabbis meet on the road enlightens them to the hidden benefits of giving charity.

The Relevance of this Passage

The wisdom and insight to recognize opportunities for sharing, combined with the motivation to give beyond our comfort zones is instilled within the reader. We must, however, be cognizant of the importance of concealed blessings. When one gives to receive honor and acclaim for his philanthropy, it is not considered true sharing. Thus, the prudence to give anonymously is also awakened in our souls.

368. The Jew then opened the discussion with the verse: "My offering, the provision of my sacrifices made by fire" (Bemidbar 28:2). The daily sacrifice of the Holy One, blessed be He, sustains the world and gives nourishment above and below. Because there is stirring below AS A RESULT OF THE DAILY OFFERING, THE POURING OF PLENTY is bestirred above, and all are adequately sustained.

369. "My offering, the provision of my sacrifices" corresponds with the verse, "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk" (Shir Hashirim 5:1); THEY BOTH ALLUDE TO SUSTENANCE. The words "made by fire," like, "Eat, O friends" (Ibid.) ALLUDE TO NOURISHMENT. The Holy One, blessed be He, provides that nourishment from above to pour down sustenance to the lower world from that nourishment ABOVE. How much more blessed is a man who gives food TO THE POOR, to sustain his soul; the Holy One, blessed be He, blesses him and showers on him supernal nourishment, and the world is blessed for him.

370. Rabbi Yitzchak said: HE EXPLAINED this mystery very well indeed. Rabbi Yesa replied: Surely this is why it has been said that a man should refrain from contempt toward any one, BECAUSE THOUGH AT FIRST THEY THOUGHT HIM BOORISH AND WERE CLOSE TO SHOWING HIM DISRESPECT, I twice attained merit through this man.

371. The man discoursed on the following verse, as discussed by Rabbi Elazar: "My offering, the provisions of my sacrifices made by fire." "...an offering..." is the secret of the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA. The particle 'et' BEFORE "MY OFFERING" REFERS TO THE NUKVA. "...my offering (Heb. korbani)..." is derived from proximity (Heb. kirvah) and attachment. IT ATTACHES AND CONNECTS THE NUKVA WITH ZEIR ANPIN. "...the provision..." is the nourishment flowing from above, bestirred from below BY THE DAILY OFFERING. "...made by fire..." comes to include the other angels that are nourished here, each according to his rank. "...for a sweet savour to me..." is the desire and union caused by the secret of the supernal world, BINAH.

372. "...shall you observe to offer to Me in their due season..." (Bemidbar 28:2). HE ASKS: What is their season? HE ANSWERS: THE time when Avraham awoke to carry out the wishes OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, as it is written: "And Avraham rose early in the morning" (Beresheet 22:3); THE TIME OF THE MORNING OFFERING; the time when Yitzchak was bound to the altar; was at sunset, THE TIME FOR THE EVENTIDE DAILY OFFERING. Rabbi Yesa asked: Why, if there are two seasons, is it written "in their season" in the singular, instead of in the plural, SEEING AS THERE ARE TWO SEASONS? He replied: At the time OF THE OFFERING, fire was included within water, and water within fire, THE ATTRIBUTE OF AVRAHAM, WATER, WAS INCLUDED WITHIN THE ATTRIBUTE OF YITZCHAK, FIRE, AND VICE VERSA. It is therefore written: "in their season," in the singular, FOR THEY BECAME ONE.

373. Come and behold, of no offering is it written: "observe," as it is here in the phrase, "shall you observe to offer to Me." This is because "observe" is the secret of "keep," THE NUKVA, which needs to be summoned up TO ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "shall you observe to offer to Me," TO OFFER THE NUKVA "in their season," by right and left OF ZEIR ANPIN. These were explained above to be Avraham and Yitzchak. All this is in accordance with the supernal mystery.

374. Rabbi Yesa said: Had I come only to hear these words, it was worth my while. Happy are the children of Yisrael in this world and in the world to come. Of this, the scripture says: "Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever; they shall be the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified" (Yeshayah 60:21).

42. The images

In this verse, the rabbis comment wryly on the low nature of Lavan's idols or "images." Lavan communicated with the statues representing his gods, and thus was able to make black magic. Rachel took these images when she and Ya'akov fled, and hid them under her skirts in order to cure her father of idolatry and also to prevent him from successful pursuit.

The Relevance of this Passage

The negative forces who dwell in our midst have the power to help us achieve many objectives in life, but there is a price to be paid at a later date. The rewards are short-lived and they leave a residue that creates chaos and turmoil somewhere in our lives. Idols do not refer only to statues depicting Gods. Anything that is ego-based--such as money, power, prestige and material possessions--is considered to be an Idol if it holds sway over our thoughts and behavior. Through the spiritual power of Rachel and Ya'akov, we are now rising above the temptations and trappings of physical existence in order to discover the true and eternal treasures of life.

375. "And Lavan went to shear his sheep..." (Beresheet 31:19). Rabbi Yosi asked: What are the images? HE REPLIED: They pertain to idolatry. They were called Terafim in offensive language, after the place of the toref, A WOMAN'S PUDENDA. How do we know they pertained to idolatry? From the verses: "yet why have you stolen my Elohim" (Ibid. 30), and "Anyone with whom you find your Elohim" (Ibid. 32). Lavan was the greatest sorcerer in the world, and by means OF THE IMAGES he knew whatever he needed to know.

376. Rabbi Chiya said that the images were created through magic; Rabbi Yosi said that it was by means of divination. Rabbi Yehuda said: They are made only at certain times. They were called Terafim, because one must know when to shape them and when to wait, as it is written: "stay (Heb. heref) now your hand" (II Shmuel 24:16). BECAUSE ONE HAS TO RELAX ONE'S HAND AT CERTAIN HOURS, THEY ARE CALLED TERAFIM.

377. When the craftsman makes it, a man who knows the moments and hours, WHO KNOWS WHEN TO STRIKE AND WHEN TO STAY, stands by him, telling him when to act and when to rest. There is no other action that needs holding off AT A CERTAIN HOUR as that of THE IMAGES. The image constantly speaks and gives advice on how to harm a man's soul.

378. Rachel feared lest the images would give counsel on how to harm Ya'akov. She placed them under her to show disrespect to the idolatry, so that they would not be able to speak. For when one prepares them to talk he sweeps and cleans before them, to show them respect. But now it is written: "and she sat upon them" (Beresheet 31:34), BECAUSE SHE SHAMED THEM INTO NOT TALKING. THE IMAGES were male and female, and much prayer was needed to encourage them to speak. Because THE IMAGES WERE NOT IN HIS POSSESSION, Lavan was held for three days, as he did not know Ya'akov had fled. As it is written: "And it was told Lavan on the third day that Ya'akov was fled."

379. Rabbi Yehuda said that he prepared himself in two ways: by gathering together all the magic he had and all the weapons he had in order to destroy YA'AKOV, as it is written: "An Arammian was going to destroy my father" (Devarim 26:5). When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that he wanted to destroy Ya'akov, it is written: "Take heed that you speak not to Ya'akov either good or bad." This is because, "It is in the power of my hand to hurt you" (Beresheet 31:29). HE ASKS: What made him so sure of himself? HE ANSWERS: He trusted the magic means he had.

380. Come and behold: Lavan covered in one day the same distance that Ya'akov needed seven days to walk. He did this to destroy YA'AKOV, first because Ya'akov fled, and second, because of the images, WHICH WERE STOLEN FROM HIM. And although Rachel did this to wean her father from idolatry, she was punished in spite of her good intentions by not bringing up Binyamin or spending even a single hour in this world with him, due to her father's sorrow.

381. Rabbi Yitzchak said: All the reproof Ya'akov administered to Lavan caused him to repent and acknowledge the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "see, Elohim is witness between me and you" (Beresheet 31:50), THUS MENTIONING THE NAME OF ELOHIM. Yet come and behold. It is written: "The Elohim of Avraham, and the Elohim of Nahor judge between us," because he returned to his evil ways, saying "the Elohim of Avraham," WHO IS HOLY, and then mentioning "the Elohim of Nahor," WHO IS IDOLATROUS.

382. "And Ya'akov swore by the Fear of his father Ya'akov". HE ASKS: Why did Yitzchak swear by the Fear of Yitzchak and not by the Elohim of Avraham?" HE ANSWERS: Because he did not want to lean heavily on the right, AVRAHAM, and draw it to Lavan. HE THEREFORE

DID NOT SWEAR BY THE ELOHIM OF AVRAHAM, THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT. Moreover, a man should not swear by a lofty place at all times, even though he is telling the truth.

383. Rabbi Yosi said: Assuredly, Ya'akov swore to further emphasize his oath, NAMELY, HE MEANT TO STRENGTHEN HIS OATH BY MENTIONING THE FEAR OF HIS FATHER YITZCHAK. This ought to be so. Ya'akov also studied it carefully, and said: Lavan already mentioned the Elohim of Avraham, but not my father YITZCHAK. I shall complete it. Immediately, "Ya'akov swore by the Fear of his father Yitzchak." Another explanation is that he meant to be included within Judgment, to be firm against Lavan.

43. "and angels of Elohim met him"

This last passage of the section reiterates some of the first principles of Kabbalah: the existence in all things of an eternal male and female. This reflects the underlying duality of God's creation--which paradoxically also contains the idea of an eternal reality where 'all is one'.

The Relevance of this Passage

The terms "male" and "female" are code words denoting two basic traits of humanity, desire to share and the desire to receive, respectively. Balancing these two traits is critical if we are to achieve fulfillment and Light in our lives. The wisdom to manage our sharing and receiving attributes is stimulated within us so that we can reconcile and unify these opposite qualities for the purpose of reuniting with the Light of the Creator.

384. "And Ya'akov went on his way, and angels of Elohim met him..." (Beresheet 32:2). Rabbi Aba began with the verse: "male and female He created them" (Beresheet 5:2). How much it behooves us to look into the words of the Torah, THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Woe to all the hard hearted and blindfolded, WHO CLEAVE TO THE LEFT COLUMN, BLOCKED FROM CHOCHMAH, WHICH IS 'EYES', AND FROM BINAH, CALLED 'HEART'. For the Torah, WHICH IS OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, calls to them: "Come, eat of my bread (WHICH IS DRAWN FROM THE RIGHT COLUMN OF THE TORAH), and drink of the wine which I have mingled (WHICH IS DRAWN FROM THE LEFT COLUMN OF THE TORAH)" (Mishlei 9:5). "Whoever is simple, WHOEVER CLINGS TO THE LEFT, let him turn in here: as for him that lacks understanding, she says to him" (Mishlei 9:4). But there is no one to pay attention to her.

385. Come and behold: "MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM," for it contains deep mysteries. It alludes inwardly TO THE MALE AND FEMALE and outwardly TO ADAM AND CHAVAH. THIS MEANS THAT THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE INNER MALE AND FEMALE, IN GREATNESS, AND A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE OUTER MALE AND FEMALE, IN SMALLNESS. It may be understood in this INNER manner, and that OUTER manner. One way to understand this is that the sun and moon, MALE AND FEMALE, are bound as one, about which it is written: "He created them," and "The sun and moon stood still in her habitation" (Chavakuk 3:11). THEY ARE THE SECRET OF THE INNER MALE AND FEMALE. It is also understood FROM THIS VERSE that Adam and Chavah were created AND COME from the union OF THE SUPERNAL, OUTER MALE AND FEMALE. Once they were joined as one, Elohim "blessed them" (Beresheet 5:2). This is because blessing dwells only where male and female are found.

386. Come and behold: when Ya'akov turned to go toward Charan, he was unmarried. It is written: "and he lighted on a certain place" (Beresheet 28:11). Then he was answered only in a dream. After he was married and came to all the tribes, the supernal camps met him and entreated him, as it is written: "and angels of Elohim met (also: 'entreated') him." Now they came to meet him, NAMELY, TO ENTREAT HIM. First he WAS BEGGING, as it is written: "and he lighted (Heb. vayifga) on a certain place." Now they BEGGED, AS IT IS WRITTEN "and angels of Elohim met (Heb. vayifgeu) him."

387. The reason is that Ya'akov and the tribes were given water from the great sea, THE PLENTY OF THE NUKVA AT TIME OF GREATNESS, THEN CALLED THE 'GREAT SEA'. THEY THEREFORE ENTREATED HIM TO DRAW PLENTY ON THEM. Also, at first, he saw them at night in a dream, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND HE DREAMED...AND BEHOLD THE ANGELS OF ELOHIM ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON IT." Now he saw them with his eyes during the

daytime, as it is written: "And when Ya'akov saw them, he said: This is Elohim's camp" (Beresheet 32:2).

388. HE ASKS: How did he recognize them TO BE ANGELS OF ELOHIM? HE ANSWERS: He saw they were the same angels as in his dream. He therefore called them "Machanayim (lit. 'two camps')," THAT IS, AFTER THE VERSE, "AND BEHOLD THE ANGELS OF ELOHIM ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON IT," WHOM HE SAW IN HIS DREAM. Those who were seen above and below FORMED TWO CAMPS.

389. HE ASKS: Why were THE ANGELS now revealed to him to entreat him? HE ANSWERS: The Shechinah went to take Ya'akov his house, SO AS TO HAVE THE WHOLE HOUSEHOLD OF YA'AKOV. THE SHECHINAH waited for Binyamin to take the house together with Ya'akov properly, NAMELY, WITH ALL THE TWELVE TRIBES. THE ANGELS WERE THEN REVEALED TO HIM, TO COMPLETE HIM. Then scripture reads, "And Ya'akov shall return, and be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid" (Yirmeyah 46:27).

Blessed be Hashem forever and ever. Amen and amen.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah)

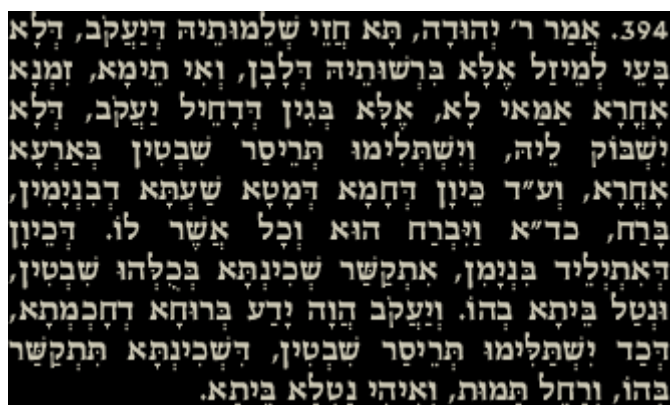
390. "And Ya'akov went on his way, and angels of Elohim met him." Mishen: The shields of the ministers are standing upright, and the bright blade of the revolving sword is appointed over all the armies and camps.

391. That bright, revolving sword is a red sword, about which it is written: "The sword of Hashem is filled with blood" (Yeshayah 34:6). On this sword the revolving OF THE ANGELS WHO ARE now men, now women, depends. From this ASPECT several other aspects of grades are derived.

392. From the side of the Tree of Life come those who are joined by the union of the bond. These holy ones are always filled by the dew of the heaven. THEY ARE CALLED THE 'DEW OF HEAVEN'. The name of Elohim is perfected through them. By the four winds of the world, THE MOCHIN WERE MADE for the legs of the throne. They are all pearls, limbs and pillars, and are never divided from that name. They are tied to Ya'akov, who chose them as his portion, and was perfected with this name. They all issued from Ya'akov.

393. When Ya'akov went on his way, the four sides, the four corners of the world, surrounded and guarded him. Only for a short time did the supernal place stir in order to maintain the tree below. Then "And Ya'akov said, when he saw them 'this is a camp (Heb. machaneh) of Elohim'" then "he called the place Machanaim." (Beresheet 32:3).

394. FROM HERE UNTIL THE END OF THE PORTION HAS BEEN EXPLAINED ABOVE, PARAGRAPHS 246-251.



394. אָמַר ר' יְהוּדָה, תָּא חֲזִי שְׁלֻמוֹתֶיהָ דְיַעֲקֹב, הֲלֵא
בְּעֵי לְמִיזַל אֵלָא בְּרִשׁוֹתֶיהָ דְלִבָּן, וְאִי תִימָא, זְמַנָּא
אַחְרָא אֲמַאי לֹא, אֵלָא בְּגִין דְרַחֵיל יַעֲקֹב, הֲלֵא
יִשְׁבּוֹק לִיָּהּ, וְיִשְׁתַּלְיִמוּ תְרִיסַר שְׁבַטִין בְּאַרְעָא
אַחְרָא, וְע"ד כִּיּוֹן דְחָמָא דְמִטָּא שְׁעָתָא דְבְנִימִין,
בְּרַח, כְּד"א וַיְבָרַח הוּא וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ. דְכִיּוֹן
דְאַתְלִיד בְּנִימִין, אֲתַקְשַׁר שְׁכִינְתָא בְּכֻלְהוּ שְׁבַטִין,
וְנָטַל בֵּיתָא בְּהוּ. וְיַעֲקֹב הוּא יָדַע בְּרוּחָא דְחַכְמָתָא,
דְכַד יִשְׁתַּלְיִמוּ תְרִיסַר שְׁבַטִין, דְשְׁכִינְתָא תַתְקַשַׁר
בְּהוּ, וְרַחַל תָּמוּת, וְאִיהִי נָטַלָא בֵּיתָא.

395.

395. ותא חזי, הכי אולימנא, עלמא תתאה, אתחזי ליה ליעקב, כמה דאתחזי ליה למשה, אלא דלא יכילת, עד דהוו י"ב שבטין בביתא, לאתקשרא בהו. וכדין, אתדחיית רחל, ונטלת איהי ביתא, בכלהו שבטין, והות עקרא דביתא, וכדין מושיבי עקרת הבית, אמר יעקב, הא מטא זמנא דישתלימו י"ב שבטין, וודאי עלמא דלעילא ייחות ליה לביתא, ואתקשרא בהו, ומסכנתא דא אתדחייתא קמיה, אי תימות הבא, לא אפוק מבאן לעלמין. ולא עוד, אלא בארעא דא, לא אתחזי לאשלמא ביתא, בגין כך, ויהי כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף, עד לא ישתלימו שבטין.

396.

396. שמע רבי שמעון, אמר, ודאי כל מלוי דרבי יהודה שמיר, ודא סליק על בלא. ואי תימא, אמאי לא אזל ליה לארחה מיד. אלא, כל זמנא דרחל לא מתעברא מבנימן, אתעכב תמן, כיון דמטא זמנא דבנימן. ערק, ולא בעא רשותא, בגין דלא יתעכב תמן, ואתחבר יעקב בכלהו שבטין, באתר דאצטריך.

End of Sitrei Torah ?

VOLUME 05 - Vayishlach

1. "And Ya'akov sent messengers"

Rabbi Yehuda begins with a discussion of the Good Inclination and the Evil Inclination, two angels that constantly abide by man. When man is virtuous, the Good Inclination gains dominion over the Evil Inclination, and the right side prevails over the left. Rabbi Elazar then speaks of the Shechinah and the legions of holy angels who protected David from the King of Gat, and Ya'akov when he was delivered from Lavan. In the ensuing dialogue, the rabbis analyze when and why Ya'akov was "left alone" by the angels and how he managed to prevail over Esav's minister. Finally, Rabbi Shimon explains Ya'akov's actions in sending a band of angels to Esav in order to bring about a reconciliation, in fulfillment of the verse, "Better is one lightly esteemed..."

The Relevance of this Passage

When we know that a specific action is positive and in our best interests, another voice inside inevitably talks us out of it. When we know that a particular behavior or action is negative, something impels us to engage in it anyway, even though we don't really want to. These are the Good and Evil Inclinations at work. We must recognize these two urges as distinct voices battling for control over our behavior. The moment we recognize the Evil Inclination as our true enemy, we can begin to remove its influence over us. The spiritual forces arising from this section reveal this metaphysical truth, endowing us with the strength to resist and overcome our negative tendencies.

1. "And Ya'akov sent messengers..." (Bereshheet 32:4). Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse: "For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways" (Tehilim 91:11). This verse has already been explained by the friends. When man is born, the Evil Inclination enters with him and constantly denounces him, as it is written, "sin crouches at the door" (Bereshheet 4:7). What is meant by "sin crouches"? It refers to the Evil Inclination. "...AT THE DOOR" MEANS AT THE OPENING OF THE WOMB--AT A PERSON'S BIRTH.

2. David also called THE EVIL INCLINATION BY THE NAME 'sin', as it is written, "and my sin is ever before me" (Tehilim 51:5). This is because it tempts man every day to sin before his Master. The Evil Inclination never leaves man, from the day of his birth. The Good Inclination comes to man only when he seeks purity.

3. And when does man seek purity? On his thirteenth birthday, man joins with the Good Inclination on the right and the Evil Inclination on the left. They are literally two appointed angels found constantly with man.

4. When man seeks to be purified, the Evil Inclination is humbled before him, and the right rules over the left. And both--THE GOOD INCLINATION AND THE EVIL INCLINATION--watch over man whichever way he travels. This is the essence of the verse: "For He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you all your ways" (Tehilim 91:11).

5. Rabbi Elazar applies this verse to Ya'akov. As the Holy One, blessed be He, surrounded Ya'akov with legions of angels, because he came complete with the supernal tribes, who were in a state of perfection. As it is written: "And Ya'akov continued on his way, and angels of Elohim met him" (Bereshheet 32:2). It has been explained that after being saved from Lavan, and departing from him, the Shechinah joined Ya'akov, and legions of saintly angels surrounded him. At that point "Ya'akov said when he saw them" (Ibid. 3). From these angels, he sent a group to Esav. This is the meaning of the verse: "And Ya'akov sent messengers (also angels)." Surely these were real angels.

6. Rabbi Yitzchak said: It is written, "The angel of Hashem encamps round about those who fear Him, and he delivers them" (Tehilim 34:8). This verse has already been explained. But in another place, it is written, "For He shall give His angels charge over you," NAMELY, many angels, whereas here ONLY one is mentioned, as it is written, "The angel of Hashem encamps." HE ANSWERS: The verse, "For He shall give His angels charge over you," refers to angels in general, but THE VERSE, "The angel of Hashem," refers to the Shechinah, as it is written: "And the angel of Hashem appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a

bush" (Shemot 3:2). JUST AS IT REFERS TO THE SHECHINAH IN THE FIRST VERSE, SO THE ANGEL MENTIONED HERE ALSO POINTS TO THE SHECHINAH. And so, "the angel of Hashem encamps round about those who fear Him," to encircle them in every direction so as to deliver them. And when the Shechinah resides inside man, all the holy hosts come there.

7. Come and behold. When King David was saved from Achish, King of Gat, he said: "THE ANGEL OF HASHEM ENCAMPS..." For the Shechinah surrounded him and saved him from Achish, his people, and those who attacked him. As it is written, "Vayitholel (Eng. 'feigned himself mad') in their hands" (I Shmuel 21:14). HE ASKS: Why is it written "Vayitholel" rather than 'Vayishtage'a', as it is written, "you have brought this fellow to play the mad man (Heb. lehishtage'a) in my presence?" (I Shmuel 21:16).

8. HE ANSWERS: THIS VERSE refers to what David said earlier. As it is written: "For I was envious of the Holelim ('madmen')..." (Tehilim 73:3). So the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: Upon your life, you shall be in need of that yet. And when he came to the house of Achish and was attacked, it is written, "He feigned himself mad in their hands," like those Holelim ('madmen') he first envied WHEN HE SAID, "FOR I WAS ENVIOUS OF THE MADMEN." Only then did the Shechinah come and protect him. She dwelt there, around David.

9. You may ask, if the Shechinah resides only in Her own place, which is the Holy Land, WHY WAS THE SHECHINAH UPON HIM IN GAT, WHICH IS OUTSIDE THE HOLY LAND? HE ANSWERS: She certainly does not dwell outside the land of Yisrael for people to draw PLENTY from Her, but can dwell OUTSIDE to rescue men. Thus, when Ya'akov arrived from the house of Lavan, all the holy camps encircled him and did not leave him alone.

10. Rabbi Chizkiyah asked: If this is so, why is it written, "And Ya'akov remained alone" (Beresheet 32:35)? WHERE WERE THE LEGIONS OF ANGELS WHO ENCIRCLED HIM AND CAME WITH HIM? Rabbi Yehuda replied: Because he led himself into danger BY REMAINING ALONE AT NIGHT and saw clearly the danger he was in, the angels deserted him, FOR THEY CAME TO GUARD HIM ONLY FROM UNSEEN DANGERS. Then, BEFORE ENTERING INTO DANGER, he stated: "I am unworthy of the least of all the mercies and all the truth, which You have shown Your servant" (Ibid. 11). WITH THIS, he referred to the holy camps OF ANGELS WHO USUALLY ENCIRCLED HIM, BUT HAD left him BECAUSE HE HAD LED HIMSELF TO A VISIBLE DANGER.

11. Rabbi Yitzchak said: THEREFORE, THE ANGELS left him alone with the officer appointed for Esav, who arrived with heavenly approval. At just that time, the others left to sing before the Holy One, blessed be He, as was required at that precise moment. Later, they returned to him. This is the meaning of the verse, "I am unworthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth...and now I have become two camps." The camp of the Shechinah and his own household, however, CONSIST OF ONE CAMP, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "THIS IS ELOHIM'S CAMP" (IBID. 3). THEREFORE, WHY IS IT WRITTEN "two camps"? IT IS TO TEACH THAT he was perfect in both aspects; from the white and red, DENOTING CHASSADIM AND CHOCHMAH, FROM RIGHT AND LEFT. HENCE HE SAYS, "TWO CAMPS."

12. Rabbi Elazar said: We have learned, night was under the control of Esav, MEANING THE LEFT SIDE WITHOUT THE RIGHT. At that time, it is written, "Let there be lights (Heb. me'orot)" (Beresheet 1:14), written without the letter Vav, BEING WEDNESDAY EVE, WHICH COULD NOT GIVE LIGHT WITHOUT CHASSADIM. For this reason, "Ya'akov remained alone," as Ya'akov, representing the sun, DENOTING ZEIR ANPIN, remained alone WITHOUT THE NUKVA, as the moon, THE NUKVA was concealed from the sun, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'YA'AKOV'. Yet, the Holy One, blessed be He, continued to guard Ya'akov enough so that Esav's officer could not overcome him, as it is written: "He saw that he did not prevail against him" (Beresheet 32:25).

13. HE EXPLAINED WHY HE COULD NOT PREVAIL AGAINST HIM. THE ANGEL looked to the right OF YA'AKOV and saw Avraham, THE PERFECTION OF THE RIGHT COLUMN; he looked to the left OF YA'AKOV and saw Yitzchak, THE PERFECTION OF THE LEFT COLUMN. He looked at the body OF YA'AKOV and saw it was comprised of parts of both THE RIGHT AND LEFT SIDES, BEING THE PERFECTION OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. SINCE THE OTHER SIDE CAN HAVE NO HOLD ON PERFECTION, ONLY ON IMPERFECTION, HE COULD NOT OVERCOME HIM. Then, "he touched the hollow of his thigh," the one pillar nearest to the body, but somewhat removed from it. THUS, IT POSSESSES AN ASPECT OF IMPERFECTION AND THE ANGEL SEIZED IT, AND "THE HOLLOW OF YA'AKOV'S THIGH WAS PUT OUT OF JOINT."

14. For this reason it is written, "The angel of Hashem encamps round about those who fear Him, and he delivers them." He circled him on all sides in order to save him FROM THE OFFICER OF ESAV. And when the Shechinah resided with him, numerous camps of angels accompanied him. From these angels, Ya'akov sent some to Esav.

15. "And Ya'akov sent messengers." Rabbi Aba asks: What motivated Ya'akov TO SEND MESSENGERS to Esav? Would it not have been better to refrain from sending any to him? HE ANSWERS: Ya'akov said, I know that Esav reveres the father's honor and has never troubled him. As long as I know that my father is alive, so I do not fear Esav. So as long as my father is alive I wish to appease him. Thus, he immediately HASTENED, "and Ya'akov sent messengers before him."

16. "And Ya'akov sent messengers." Rabbi Shimon began the discussion with the verse: "Better is one lightly esteemed who owns a servant, than one who pranks himself but lacks bread" (Mishlei 12:9). This verse refers to the Evil Inclination, who constantly accuses man. The Evil Inclination causes man to become haughty and proud, encouraging man to curl his hair until the Evil Inclination towers over him and drags him to Gehenom.

17. "Better is one lightly esteemed..." means one who does not follow the Evil Inclination, and does not act haughtily but humbles his spirit, heart, and will before the Holy One, blessed be He. Then the Evil Inclination becomes his servant, as it cannot control him. ON THE CONTRARY, the person controls it, as it is written: "Yet you may rule over him" (Beresheet 4:7).

18. "...than one who pranks himself..." is as we said, that he puts on airs, curls his hair, and acts haughtily, "but lacks bread." THIS MEANS a lack of faith, as it is written: "to offer the bread of his Elohim" (Vayikra 21:17), and "the bread of their Elohim they do offer" (Ibid. 6). BREAD IS THE SHECHINAH IN BOTH VERSES. FAITH IS THE SHECHINAH, SO LACKING BREAD MEANS LACKING FAITH.

19. Another interpretation of, "Better is one lightly esteemed..." is that it refers to Ya'akov, who humbled himself before Esav so that Esav should later become his servant. By controlling him, he fulfilled the meaning of the verse: "Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you" (Beresheet 27:29). It was not yet time FOR YA'AKOV TO RULE OVER ESAV. Ya'akov left this to happen at a later time, for he was lowly then. Later, however, the one who pranks himself will become his servant, and then he will "lack bread." THIS REFERS TO ESAV, who will become YA'AKOV'S servant, who was given "plenty of corn and wine" (Ibid. 28).

20. Come and behold: Ya'akov knew that he needed him now. Therefore, he appeared as if he was lightly esteemed. By doing so, he showed more wisdom and guile than he had ever shown against Esav. Had Esav been aware of this wisdom, he would have killed himself rather than coming to this. However, Ya'akov did all this with wisdom, and about him Chanah said, "The adversaries of Hashem shall be broken in pieces...and He shall give strength to his king" (I Shmuel 2:10).

2. "I have sojourned with Lavan"

Rabbi Yehuda begins a discussion of Ya'akov's message to Esav, "I have sojourned with Lavan..." interpreting Ya'akov's words as threatening to Esav, who desired to destroy Ya'akov. There follows a discussion of Lavan, the universally feared magician and sorcerer who was powerless against Ya'akov, just as Bila'am was powerless when he tried to destroy the children of Israel with the same magical arts. The reason for their failure, we're told, is that the power of sorcery is subservient to the children of Israel and God. Finally, Rabbi Yosi interprets Ya'akov's message to Lavan as indicating that Ya'akov humbled himself in order to divert Esav's attention from Ya'akov's true blessings, so that Esav would not harbor envy and hate for him.

The Relevance of this Passage

The path of the Torah and the power of the Zohar empower us to rise above unseen mystical powers. The ego, however, is like a leg iron that anchors us to this physical dimension and its influences. Humility is a key trait that can unlock the shackles. This passage arouses

humility, enabling us to avert the effects of negative cosmic forces. We elevate into the sphere of the supernal wisdoms, which protect and bless us in all our endeavors.

21. "And he commanded them, saying: 'Thus shall you speak to my lord Esav. Your servant Ya'akov says thus, I have sojourned with Lavan, and stayed there until now'" (Beresheet 32:5). At once Ya'akov introduced himself as Esav's servant, so that Esav would not take heed of the blessings that his father bestowed on him. Ya'akov put them aside for the end of days.

22. Rabbi Yehuda asked: What did Ya'akov have in mind when he sent Esav a message reading, "I HAVE SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN?" Did this message accomplish anything regarding his mission to Esav? HE ANSWERS: A rumor circulated that no one had ever escaped the clutches of Lavan of Aram, as he was well versed in sorcery and wizardry. He was also the father of Beor, who in turn was the father of Bila'am. As it is written: "Bila'am the son of Beor the sorcerer" (Yehoshua 13:22). Yet although Lavan was the greatest practitioner of sorcery and wizardry, he could not overcome Ya'akov, whom he attempted to annihilate in several ways, as it is written: "An Arammian wanted to destroy my father" (Devarim 26:5). AND SO HE SENT HIM THE MESSAGE, "I HAVE SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN," TO MAKE HIM AWARE OF HIS POWER.

23. Rabbi Aba said: Everyone was aware that Lavan was the best at sorcery and wizardry, and he could use sorcery to do away with anyone he wished. All that Bila'am knew came from Lavan. Regarding Bila'am, it is written: "for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed" (Bemidbar 22:6). Because everyone feared Lavan and his sorcery, the first words that Ya'akov sent Esav were, "I have sojourned with Lavan." In case Esav thought it was for a short period, perhaps a month or a year, Ya'akov advised, "and stayed there until now"--twenty years did I stay with him.

24. You may say that he gained nothing, BUT HE SAID TO HIM, "and I have oxen and asses" (Beresheet 32: 6). These are sentences of judgment, THAT IS, DEMONS. When these two collaborate, they cooperate to harm the world, MEANING IT IS NOT THEIR NATURE TO INFLICT DAMAGE EXCEPT WHEN THEY ARE JOINED. For this reason, it is written, "You shall not plow with an ox and an ass together" (Devarim 22:10). FOR THIS CAUSES THESE TWO DEMONS, NAMELY THE OX AND THE ASS, TO BE JOINED, AND TO INFLICT DAMAGE ON THE WORLD.

25. THE VERSE, "flocks, and menservants, and women servants," refers to lower crowns OF THE KLIPOT, which the Holy One, blessed be He, slew in Egypt. They are called "the firstborn of cattle" (Shemot 12:29), "the firstborn of the captive" (Ibid.), and "the firstborn of the maidservant" (Shemot 11:5). Esav took fright and came toward him; he feared Ya'akov as much as Ya'akov feared him.

26. THIS IS LIKE THE STORY OF a man who was walking along the road when he heard a robber was lurking along the way. When another man approached him, he asked: Where are you from? The man replied that he was from an army brigade. He said: Stay away from me. I have a snake that will kill anyone who approaches me. That man returned to the chief of the brigade, and said: There is a man coming who has a snake that bites and kills anyone who approaches him.

27. The chief heard and was frightened. He said: It is best to go meet and appease him. When the traveler saw the chief, HE WAS AFRAID. He said: Woe is me. Now the chief will kill me. He began to bow and kneel before him. The chief then said: If he really had a snake that kills, he would not have bowed before me. Thus the chief regained his composure, and said: Since he bows so much before me, I shall spare him.

28. This is why Ya'akov said, "I have sojourned with Lavan, and stayed there until now." I lingered with him these twenty years, and I bring with me a snake, which kills people.' Esav heard this and said, 'Woe to me, who shall stand before him, for now Ya'akov shall kill me with his mouth.' HE THOUGHT THAT BECAUSE HE OVERPOWERED LAVAN, BILA'AM'S GRANDFATHER, HIS STRENGTH WAS SURELY AS GREAT AS THAT OF BILA'AM, OF WHOM IT IS SAID, "FOR I KNOW THAT HE WHOM YOU BLESS IS BLESSED, AND HE WHOM YOU CURSE IS CURSED," AND HE CAN KILL WITH HIS MOUTH.' He then came out to meet him, to appease him.

29. Once he saw him, it is written: "Then Ya'akov was greatly afraid and distressed" (Beresheet 32:8). When he approached him, he began to bow and prostrate himself before him, as it is written: "and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother" (Beresheet 33:3). Esav said: 'If he had so much power, he would not have bowed before me.' He then began to become haughty again.

30. Come and behold: it is written of Bila'am, "And Elohim came to Bila'am at night" (Bemidbar 22:20). Of Lavan, the verse says, "And Elohim came to Lavan the Arammian in a dream by night, and said to him, Take heed that you speak not to Ya'akov..." (Beresheet 31:24). THIS SHOWS US THAT LAVAN WAS AS GREAT AS BILA'AM. HE ASKS: Why is it written, "that you speak not," rather than 'that you harm not?' HE ANSWERS: Lavan did not chase Ya'akov with an army of men to wage war against him, for the power of Ya'akov and his sons is greater than that of Lavan. But he chased him to kill him with his mouth and destroy everything, as it is written, "An Arammian wanted to destroy my father." This is why it says, "that you speak not," and not, 'that you harm not'. It is also written, "It is in the power of my hand to do." How did he know he had the power? From that which "Elohim of your father spoke to me last night..."

31. This is the testimony that the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded to pronounce, as it is written: "And you shall speak and say before Hashem your Elohim, an Arammian wanted to destroy my father." "And you shall speak" is similar to the verses, "You shall not bear false witness" (Shemot 20:13), AND ALSO, "and has testified...against his brother" (Devarim 19:18).

32. It is written of Bila'am that "he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments" (Bemidbar 24:1), as was his wont, being a diviner. Of Lavan TOO, the scripture says: "I have learnt by signs" (Beresheet 30:27), which means that he consulted magic and sorcery TO LEARN of Ya'akov's plans. When he wanted to destroy Ya'akov, he planned to do it by enchantment and sorcery, but the Holy One, blessed be He, did not permit him to do so. RATHER, HE SAID TO HIM: "THAT YOU SPEAK NOT."

33. This is the meaning of what Bila'am, LAVAN'S grandson, said: "Surely there is no enchantment in Ya'akov, nor divination in Yisrael" (Bemidbar 23:23). For who could prevail against them when my grandfather wished to destroy their father with divination and enchantment but could not, not having obtained permission to curse FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, as it is written: "Surely there is no enchantment in Ya'akov, nor divination in Yisrael."

34. Lavan used ten kinds of divination and enchantments from the illumination of the lower crowns, but could not prevail against Ya'akov. In connection with this, it is written: "and you have changed my wages ten times" (Beresheet 31:41). Lavan used all these tools against him, but could not harm him, as it is written: "and changed my wages ten times; but Elohim did not allow him to hurt me" (Ibid. 7). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "times (Heb. monim)?" HE ANSWERS: It was translated into "kinds (Heb. minim)." It is also written: "the demons, after whom they have gone astray (Heb. zonim)" (Vayikra 17:7). "Times" are literally 'kinds' (Aramaic zinin), the ten kinds of sorcery and divination of the lower crowns OF THE KLIPOT. LAVAN employed all of these against him.

35. These ten kinds are: "a diviner, that uses divinations, a soothsayer, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer" (Devarim 18:10-11). There are ten in all, WITH THE DIVINATIONS, IT SEEMS, COUNTED AS TWO KINDS, SINCE IT IS WRITTEN IN THE PLURAL.

36. Rabbi Yosi said: Enchantment and divination are two kinds with the same level of strength. When Bila'am came to hurt Yisrael, he used divination, as it is written: "with divinations in their hand" (Bemidbar 22:7). Lavan used enchantment against Ya'akov, but neither succeeded. This is the meaning of the verse, "Surely there is no enchantment in Ya'akov, nor divination in Yisrael." The words, "there is no enchantment in Ya'akov," refer to the days of Lavan, and "divination in Yisrael" refers to the latter days of Bila'am.

37. Bila'am said to Balak: Come and behold. Who can prevail over them, seeing that all the divination and witchcraft in our crowns are adorned by the illumination of the upper Malchut, and he, ZEIR ANPIN, is bound to them, YISRAEL, as it is written: "Hashem his Elohim is with

him, and the trumpet blast of a king is among them" (Bemidbar 23:21). THEREFORE, WE CAN NOT USE OUR WITCHCRAFT TO HARM THEM.

38. Rabbi Yehuda said: Heaven forbid that Bila'am would have any knowledge of the upper holiness. HE DISAGREES WITH WHAT WAS SAID--THAT BILA'AM KNEW THAT HIS DIVINATION CAME FROM THE MALCHUT OF HOLINESS. This is because the Holy One, blessed be He, desires no other people or tongue to make use of His glory, but His holy children alone, THAT IS, THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL, WHO ARE CALLED 'CHILDREN TO HASHEM'. He said: "you shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy" (Vayikra 11:44), WHICH MEANS THAT THOSE who are holy shall use holy things. And only the children of Yisrael are holy, as it is written: "For you are a holy people" (Devarim 14:2); you, and no other people, are holy.

39. Those who are unholy find that defilement awaits them. Of them, the scripture says: "he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; outside the camp shall his habitation be" (Vayikra 13:46), THAT IS, AWAY FROM HOLINESS. The impure touches on the impure, as it is written: "and shall cry, unclean, unclean" (Ibid. 45), WHICH MEANS THAT whoever is unclean cries to the unclean; one seeks out one's own kind.

40. IN COMMENTING ON RABBI YEHUDA'S OBSERVATION THAT ONE SEEKS OUT ONE'S OWN KIND, Rabbi Yitzchak said: Is it becoming for Ya'akov, who was holy, to say that he was defiled by Lavan and his magic? Could it be possibly be considered a credit to him TO SAY, "I HAVE SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN?" Despite what Rabbi Yehuda said, THAT EVERYTHING FOLLOWS ITS OWN KIND, Rabbi Yosi gave another explanation for the difficulty in that verse. It is written: "I am Esav your firstborn" (Beresheet 27:19). HERE, WE SHOULD ASK, is it becoming to a righteous man such as Ya'akov to change his name to that of an impure one? The explanation is that under the "I," there is a tonal pause. BELOW THE "I" IS WRITTEN THE (TONE) PASHTA, WHEREAS BELOW "ESAV, YOUR FIRST BORN," IS FOUND THE (TONE) ZAKEF KATON, WHOSE TONE SEPARATES THE WORD "I" FROM "ESAV YOUR FIRSTBORN." What he actually said was "I am who I am, though Esav is your firstborn," as has already been explained.

41. Here also IT IS WRITTEN: "I have oxen and asses," that is, do not pay attention to the blessing my father bestowed on me, TO THINK that it was fulfilled in me. He blessed me: "be lord over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you" (Beresheet 27:29). Hence, I SAY TO YOU, "to my master Esav; Your servant Ya'akov." He blessed me with "plenty of corn and wine," yet I have no stock of these; "I have oxen, and asses, flocks and menservants," as a shepherd in the field. He blessed me with "the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth," yet instead I "have sojourned with Lavan," a sojourner without even a house, let alone "the fatness of the earth." THE LAST WAS NOT FULFILLED IN ME, AS I HAVE NO LAND. I HAVE ONLY SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN. HE SAID all this so that Esav would not be jealous of him, on account of the blessings he received, and bring accusations against him.

42. Rabbi Aba said: It is written that Ya'akov was "a plain man, dwelling in tents" (Beresheet 25:27). HE WAS CALLED "a plain man," because his abode was in two supernal temples, BINAH AND MALCHUT, THE SECRET OF THE TENT OF RACHEL AND THE TENT OF LEAH. He reconciles both sides, WHICH MEANT THAT HE BALANCED AND PERFECTED THE RIGHT AND REFT COLUMNS. Do not conclude FROM THE VERSE, "I HAVE SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN," that he was contaminated by the divination OF LAVAN. But in light of Rabbi Yehuda's observation THAT ONE SEEKS OUT ONE'S OWN KIND, ACCORDING TO THE QUESTION OF RABBI YITZCHAK, THE EXPLANATION FOR, "I HAVE SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN," is that he was wholeheartedly THANKFUL for the grace and truth shown him by the Holy One, blessed be He. For everybody knows that although no one can be saved from Lavan's accusations, the Holy One, blessed be He, rescued me from his hands when Lavan wanted to destroy me. THIS IS WHAT HE MEANT BY THE VERSE, "I HAVE SOJOURNED WITH LAVAN." FURTHERMORE, he said all this so that Esav would not envy him his blessings, but rather think that they were not fulfilled in him. Thus, Esav would not harbor any hate for him--AS RABBI YOSI EXPLAINED. Of this, the scripture says: "for the ways of Hashem are right" (Hoshea 14:10), and, "You shall be perfect with Hashem your Elohim" (Devarim 18:13).

3. The prayers of the righteous

The rabbis teach us that the combined prayers of the righteous are more powerful than those of any individual. Although Ya'akov was spiritually complete--he embodied all three Columns--he was afraid of Esav because he did not consider himself worthy of a miracle, and because he desired to reserve his merits for the benefit of his descendants. Thus, Ya'akov fulfills and reinforces the verse, "Happy is the man who fears always..."

After Rabbi Shimon describes Ya'akov's role as the firmest support among the Patriarchs who sustain the world, he turns to the subject of the years which Ya'akov, Yosef, and Avraham conceded to King David. David, we learn, had no life portion of his own because he, like Yitzchak, was of the side of darkness. Rabbi Yosi then discourses on the models for prayer supplied by both David and Ya'akov. Prayer, we learn, is divisible into two parts, corresponding to the lower grade of Malchut, and the higher, inner grade of Binah.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our prayers receive the assistance of the righteous by virtue of this passage, so that our spiritual requests reach the highest realm of the Upper Worlds. Humility before the Light of The Creator is also awakened within us, further supporting our prayers. Finally, the wisdom of David and Ya'akov, and their insights into the divine structure of prayer, provide our own prayers with additional power and guidance to ensure that they reach their proper destination.

43. "And the messengers returned to Ya'akov, saying: 'We came to your brother Esav, and he is also coming to meet you, and four hundred men with him'" (Beresheet 32:7). HE ASKS: After saying, "We came to your brother," do we not know they referred to Esav, as he had no other brothers? HE ANSWERS: "We came to your brother" MEANS THAT he did not repent and walk the path of righteousness, as may be thought, but remained the evil Esav as before. "...and he is also coming to meet you..." does not mean, as you may say, by himself, but rather he has "four hundred men with him."

44. Why was all this specified? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, always longs for the prayers of the righteous and adorns Himself with them. As we have already said, the angel in charge of the prayers of the children of Yisrael, whose name is Sandalfon, receives all their prayers and weaves them into a crown for the Life of the Worlds. The Holy One, blessed be He, desires the prayers of the righteous all the more; they become a crown with which to adorn the Holy One, blessed be He. You may wonder why Ya'akov was fearful, since camps of holy angels accompanied him. He was fearful because the righteous do not rely on their merit, but on their prayers and supplications before their Master.

45. Come and behold: Rabbi Shimon said that the prayer of the congregation rises before the Holy One, blessed be He, and He is adorned by that prayer because it ascends in several ways: ONE ASKING FOR CHASSADIM, ANOTHER FOR GVUROT, AND THE THIRD FOR MERCY. IT consists of several sides, THE RIGHT SIDE, THE LEFT, AND THE MIDDLE, AS CHASSADIM ARE DRAWN FROM THE RIGHT, GVUROT FROM THE LEFT, AND MERCY FROM THE MIDDLE. Because it comprises several aspects, it is woven into a wreath and put on the head of the righteous One, the Life of the Worlds--THAT IS, YESOD, WHICH GIVES SALVATION TO THE NUKVA AND FROM HER, TO THE WHOLE CONGREGATION. But a solitary prayer does not include all the sides; rather, it contains only one aspect. ONE CAN ONLY ASK FOR CHASSADIM, GVUROT, OR MERCY. Therefore, the solitary prayer is not prepared and accepted as is that of the congregation; IT IS NOT INCLUDED WITHIN ALL THE THREE COLUMNS AS IS THE PRAYER OF THE CONGREGATION. Come and behold: Ya'akov included all THREE COLUMNS, BEING THE CHARIOT OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH INCLUDES BOTH. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, desired his prayer PERFECTED BY ALL THREE COLUMNS. It is therefore written, "Then Ya'akov was greatly afraid and distressed." THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, DID ALL THAT TO ENCOURAGE YA'AKOV TO PRAY, FOR HE CRAVED HIS PRAYER.

46. Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse: "Happy is the man who fears always: but he who hardens his heart shall fall into evil" (Mishlei 28:14). Happy are the children of Yisrael, whom the Holy One, blessed be He, desires and to whom He gave the Torah of Truth with which to attain eternal life. For whoever is occupied with the study of the Torah receives supernal life from the Holy One, blessed be He, and is ushered into the life of the world to

come, as it is written: "for He is your life, and the length of your days" (Devarim 30:20), and, "and through this word you shall prolong your days" (Devarim 32:47)--for it is life in this world and life in the World to Come.

47. Rabbi Elazar said: Whoever studies the Torah for its own sake does not die by the hand of the Evil Inclination, WHICH IS THE ANGEL OF DEATH, because he holds onto the Tree of Life and does not relax his grip. Therefore, the bodies of the righteous, who are occupied in the study of the Torah, are not defiled AFTER DEATH, because the Spirit of Defilement does not dwell with them.

48. HE ASKS: Why was Ya'akov, who was the Tree of Life, afraid OF ESAV even though THE OTHER SIDE cannot rule over him, since THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SAID TO HIM, "And, behold, I am with you" (Bereshheet 28:15), and since "angels of Elohim met him"? With all of these camps of holy angels, why was he afraid?

49. HE ANSWERS: It is all true THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO BE AFRAID, but Ya'akov did not want to rely on a miracle from the Holy One, blessed be He, because he thought he was unworthy of such a miracle. Why? Because he was of no service to his father and mother, did not study the Torah DURING THE 22 YEARS HE SPENT WITH LAVAN, and married two sisters. And although it was settled THAT YA'AKOV DID NOT SIN AT ALL IN THAT, nevertheless, it behooves a man to be always afraid and ask in his prayer before the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "Happy is the man who fears always." This has already been explained.

50. Come and behold: the prayer of the patriarchs sustained the world. Upon their merit the people in the world survive and receive support. The merit of the fathers is never ever forgotten, because it supports the worlds above and below. The support from Ya'akov is more whole than that of the others, and because of this, when trouble comes to the children of Ya'akov, the Holy One, blessed be He, sees the image of Ya'akov before Him and takes pity upon the world, as it is written: "Then will I remember my covenant with Ya'akov" (Vayikra 26:42). The word Ya'akov is WRITTEN with a superfluous Vav, because it is the very image of Ya'akov.

51. Come and behold: whoever looked at Ya'akov beheld the shining mirror, ZEIR ANPIN. We learned that the beauty of Ya'akov was like the beauty of Adam. Rabbi Yesa said: I heard that whoever beholds Ya'akov in his dream, wrapped in his clothes, has his life prolonged.

52. Rabbi Shimon said: We have already learned that before King David entered the world, he had no life at all, except for the seventy years given him by Adam. So King David lived seventy years, and Adam lived a thousand years less seventy years. So Adam and David existed within the first millennium AFTER THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

53. He began the discussion with the verse: "He asked life of you, and you did give it Him; length of days for ever and ever" (Tehilim 21:5). "He asked life of you" refers to King David, for when the Holy One, blessed be He, created The Garden of Eden and put the soul of King David in it, He looked at it and saw it had no life of its own. It thus stood before Him all day long. When He created Adam, He said: Here is life for David. From Adam came the seventy years that King David lived in the world.

54. Another explanation is that the fathers each gave him years from their own lives. Avraham gave him from his own life, as did Ya'akov and Yosef. Yitzchak did not give him anything, because King David belonged to the same side as he did.

55. Avraham surely gave King David five of his years, for he lived only 175 of his 180 years, five years less than his due, LIKE YITZCHAK. Ya'akov could have lived as long as Avraham, 175 YEARS, but he lived only 147, 28 years less than his due. Thus, Avraham and Ya'akov gave King David 33 years of life. Yosef lived only 110 years, instead of 147, which is 37 years less than Ya'akov. TOGETHER WITH THE 33 YEARS FROM AVRAHAM AND YA'AKOV, King David received a total of seventy years for his existence, and he lived all these years which the patriarchs left him.

56. You may wonder why Yitzchak did not leave him any of his years, as did AVRAHAM, YA'AKOV, AND YOSEF. HE ANSWERS: Because YITZCHAK represented darkness, THAT IS, THE LEFT COLUMN, WHICH IS DARK BEFORE IT IS INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT. David

also came from the side of darkness, NAMELY, FROM THE LEFT SIDE, and whoever is in darkness has no light or life at all. David, therefore, had no life. But AVRAHAM, YA'AKOV, AND YOSEF, BEING OF THE RIGHT, did have light and shone it on King David. From them, he had to illuminate and receive life, WHICH MEANS THAT HE HAD TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT, for there is no life on the side of darkness, THE LEFT. Thus, Yitzchak did not join the reckoning.

57. Why, you may ask, did Yosef GIVE HIM MORE LIFE than the others? YOSEF GAVE HIM 37 YEARS, WHILE THE OTHERS GAVE HIM A TOTAL OF 33. HE ANSWERS: Yosef, by himself, was THE EQUIVALENT of all the others, because he was called 'Righteous', NAMELY YESOD, WHICH INCLUDES ALL THE SFIROT. He shines on the moon, THE NUKVA, more than everybody else, and therefore gave King David a greater share of life than all the others, as it is written: "And Elohim set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth" (Beresheet 1:17).

58. Come and behold: Ya'akov's prayer protected him from Esav, AND NOT HIS MERIT, because he wished to keep it in reserve for his descendants and not spend it to serve his own needs against Esav. He therefore prayed to the Holy One, blessed be He, and did not rely upon his merit for his rescue.

59. "...and said: If Esav come to the one camp, and smite it, then the camp which is left shall escape" (Beresheet 32:9). Come and behold: it is written, "and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two camps." HE ASKS: Why did he divide them into two camps? HE ANSWERS: Because, "If Esav comes to the one camp, and smite it, then the camp which is left shall escape." ONE MAY ASK, CAN NOT ESAV SMITE BOTH CAMPS? WHEREFROM COMES THE CERTAINTY THAT ONE CAMP SHALL SURVIVE?

60. HE REPLIS: Come and behold. The Shechinah did not stray from the tents of Leah and Rachel. Ya'akov said: I know that the Holy One, blessed be He, protects them. SO, "he put the handmaids and their children foremost" (Ibid. 2), saying that if Esav will smite, he will smite these, but I am not afraid for the children OF THE LADIES, because the Shechinah is with them. ACCORDING TO THIS, "FOREMOST" MEANS THE FIRST TO ENCOUNTER DANGER. Thus, HE SAID: "then the camp which is left shall escape," BECAUSE THE SHECHINAH HOVERS ABOUT THEM. After the preparations, he prayed FOR THE HANDMAIDS AND THEIR CHILDREN, saying, "and Ya'akov said, Elohim of my father Avraham, and Elohim of my father Yitzchak, Hashem who did say to me, Return to your country, and to your kindred, and I will deal well with you" (Ibid. 10).

61. Rabbi Yosi began the discussion with the verse: "A prayer of the poor, when he faints, and pours out his complaint before Hashem" (Tehilim 102:1). This verse has been explained several times. Yet King David said this when he watched and contemplated the ways of the poor, while fleeing from his father-in-law, KING SHAUL. Then did he say, "A prayer of the poor." This is the prayer the poor say to the Holy One, blessed be He. It is the first TO BE RECEIVED among all the prayers in the world.

62. It is here written, "A prayer of the poor," and elsewhere, "A prayer of Moshe the man of Elohim" (Tehilim 90:1). HE ASKS about the difference between them. HE ANSWERS that PRAYER OF THE POOR is the hand Tefilin, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. THE NUKVA IS CALLED 'POOR', BECAUSE SHE HAS NOTHING OF HERSELF AND RECEIVES EVERYTHING FROM ZEIR ANPIN. THAT PRAYER OF MOSHE is the head Tefilin, ZEIR ANPIN. There should be no separation between the prayer of the poor and the prayer of Moshe, THE NUKVA AND ZEIR ANPIN, BECAUSE THEY SHOULD ALWAYS BE UNITED. Both are considered as one.

63. The prayer of the poor is therefore the first TO BE RECEIVED into the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He. It is received before all other prayers in the world, as it is written: "For he has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted" (Tehilim 22:25). Come and behold: the prayer of the poor is the hand Tefilin, THAT IS, THE NUKVAH, WHICH IS THE PRAYER OF the poor who are deep in poverty, as one who has nothing of his own.

64. Another explanation is that the prayer ALLUDES TO Moshe, ZEIR ANPIN; "the poor" to David, THE NUKVA; "when he faints" refers to the moon, THE NUKVA, when it is concealed and the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, is gone from her. "...before Hashem," ZEIR ANPIN, he "pours out his complaint," in order to be joined with the sun, ZEIR ANPIN.

65. Come and behold: the prayer of every man is considered prayer, but when the prayer of the poor comes before the Holy One, blessed be He, it breaks down gates and doors to be received and shown into His presence. This is the meaning of the verse: "And it shall come to pass, when he cries to me, that I will hear; for I am gracious" (Shemot 22:26), and "I will surely hear his cry" (Ibid. 22). He "pours out his complaint before Hashem," NAMELY, as one who complains about the judgments of the Holy One, blessed be He.

66. Rabbi Elazar said: The prayer of the righteous causes joy to the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, which adorns itself WITH THE PRAYER before the Holy One, blessed be He. The Holy One, blessed be He, loves it better than THE PRAYER OF THE POOR. The Holy One, blessed be He, desires the prayer of the righteous when they pray in time of need, because they know HOW to appease their Master.

67. It is written that Ya'akov PRAYED, "Elohim of my father Avraham, and Elohim of my father Yitzchak, Hashem who did say to me...". He joined everything together into one knot, saying, "Elohim of my father Avraham," who is of the right and, "Elohim of my father Yitzchak," who is of the left, "who did say to me," NAMELY, TO HIMSELF, WHO REPRESENTS THE BALANCING CENTRAL COLUMN. It depends ON THE CENTRAL COLUMN to adorn His place between AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, RIGHT AND LEFT. HE THEREFORE SAID TO HIM, "Return to your country, and to your kindred, and I will deal well with you."

68. "I am unworthy of the least of all the mercies." HE ASKS: What made YA'AKOV say, "I AM UNWORTHY...", together with, "RETURN TO YOUR COUNTRY, AND TO YOUR KINDRED, AND I WILL DEAL WELL WITH YOU"? HE ANSWERS: Ya'akov said, You promised to deal well with me, and I know that whatever You do has conditions, THAT YOUR WILL SHALL BE DONE, yet I have no merit, because "I am unworthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which You have shown Your servant." THERE IS NO NEED, THEN, TO KEEP YOUR PROMISE. Whatever You did for me until now was not for my merits, but because of YOUR GOODNESS. All those mercies and truths were BECAUSE OF YOUR GOODNESS, for when I first crossed THE RIVER JORDAN, when I fled Esav, I was alone, and You gave me mercies and truths so that now I cross the river with two camps, THAT IS, the two camps he divided.

69. Up to this point, Ya'akov recited the praises of his Master. Then he asked for what he needed. This teaches people that it behooves man to first praise his Master, and only then to pray for himself. This is what Ya'akov did. He first praised his Master, and when he finished, he asked for what he needed.

70. This is the meaning of the verse: "Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esav: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children." THIS MEANS THAT AFTER PRAISING HIS MASTER, HE BEGAN TO PRAY. IT IS UNDERSTOOD from this that when one prays, one's words should be precise. HE SAID: "Deliver me, I pray You," WHICH APPEARS AS IF IT SHOULD SUFFICE, BECAUSE HE ONLY NEEDED DELIVERANCE. YET HE SAID TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE: Lest You say that You already rescued me from Lavan, I add, "from the hand of my brother." It may be said that other relatives are also referred to as brothers, AS IN WHAT LAVAN SAID TO YA'AKOV, "BECAUSE YOU ARE MY BROTHER, SHOULD YOU THEREFORE SERVE ME FOR NOTHING?" (BERESHEET 29:15). HE THEN EXPLAINED, saying, "from the hand of Esav." The reason is that it behooves us to explain ourselves fully. HE THEREFORE CONTINUED BY SAYING: In case You ask why I need DELIVERY, "I fear him, lest he come and smite me." ALL THIS HE SAID to explain and fully clarify things above, so there would be no misunderstanding.

71. "And You did say, I will surely do you good..." (Beresheet 32:13). HE ASKS: What is meant by "And You?" HE ANSWERS: It is the same as in the verse, "and You do preserve them all" (Nechemyah 9:6), WHICH ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA, CALLED 'YOU'. Here also, "And You did say," ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA.

72. Come and behold: King David said, "Let the words of my mouth...be acceptable in Your sight" (Tehilim 19:15). This refers to explicit things, while the phrase, "and the meditation of my heart," refers to undisclosed things that can not be expressed by mouth. They are the meditation of the heart, which can not be explained.

73. Thus, there should BE a matter that is explained by mouth--AS IN "THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH"--and a matter which depends upon the heart AND IS NOT EXPLICIT--THAT IS, "THE

MEDITATION OF MY HEART"--for it is all a mystery. One corresponds to the lower grade, THE NUKVA, and the other to the upper grade, BINAH. That which is expressed BY MOUTH corresponds to the lower grade, which needs to be expressed, THE SECRET OF THE DISCLOSED WORLD. That which depends on the heart corresponds to the inner grade, BINAH, THE HIDDEN WORLD. And everything is one, THAT IS, THERE IS NEED OF BOTH. He therefore said: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight."

74. Ya'akov spoke in the same manner. He first explained the matter fully, and then vaguely talked of what depends on the meditation of the heart, which needs no explanation, as it is written: "and make your seed like the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude" (Beresheet 32:13). This matter depends on the meditation of the heart and does not require explanation. It should be thus, as we said, that both must be joined together into a complete union. Happy are the righteous who know how to properly arrange the praises of their Master, and AFTERWARD say their prayers. The scripture therefore reads, "and said to Me, you are My servant, Yisrael, in whom I will be glorified" (Yeshayah 49:3).

4. "And Ya'akov was left alone"

Rabbi Chiya leads a discussion on the evil spirits that gain influence as a result of the diminution of the moon. These spirits assail people when they are sleeping--since this is a time when the soul leaves the body--and cause people to defile themselves. Thus, we learn, it is incumbent on man to purify himself and follow the paths of the Torah.

The rabbis also warn us not to travel a lonely road by ourselves or to go out at night when there are no people about, especially without the light of the moon. At these times, evil spirits--those with whom Bila'am was associated--are at large.

The Relevance of this Passage

Discord and turmoil in our lives can be traced to negative influences and evil forces that dwell in our midst. Our negative behavior creates openings for destructive entities, but the Light of this passage seals these openings shut. Moreover, the spiritual energy purifies our soul, raises our consciousness, and inspires us to eliminate self-destructive impulses that create the cracks and crevices through which dark forces enter our lives.

75. "And Ya'akov was left alone" (Beresheet 32:25). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling" (Tehilim 91:10). Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He performed in each day the work appropriate for that day, as has been explained. It has been said that on the fourth day He created the lights, but the moon was created lacking, because it is a light that diminishes itself. For that reason, the word "lights" is spelled without the letter Vav, which leaves room for the spirits, demons, storm winds, devils, and all the Spirits of Defilement to exercise sway.

76. They all come to hover about the world and seduce MEN. They occupy deserted places, infertile fields NOT FIT FOR SOWING, and wasted deserts. They are all from the Side of Defilement. We have learned that the Spirit of Defilement comes from the corrupt serpent, WHICH IS LILIT. It is a very spirit of uncleanness that is appointed in the world to seduce people to it to him. Thus, the Evil Inclination gains mastery over the world.

77. It is appointed over people and dwells among them. It uses witchcraft and stealth to turn them from the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, just as it seduced Adam and brought death to the world. So does it seduce men and cause them to be defiled.

78. Whoever wishes to be defiled draws upon himself that Spirit of Defilement and cleaves to it. Numerous SPIRITS OF DEFILEMENT await to defile him and make him unclean. They corrupt him in this world and in the world to come, as has already been explained.

79. When a man strives to be purified, however, the Spirit of Defilement is subdued and loses its sway over him. Then, it is written: "No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling." Rabbi Yosi said: "No evil shall befall you," refers to Lilit and, "nor shall any plague come near your dwelling," refers to the other harmful demons. This has already been explained.

80. Rabbi Elazar said: Man has been warned not to venture out alone at night, especially when the moon was created lacking, AND DOES NOT FULLY SHINE. It has been explained that the Spirit of Defilement, an evil spirit, governs at that time. HE ASKS: Who is this evil spirit? HE ANSWERS: It is the evil serpent, and "the plague" is the rider of the serpent, SAMAEL. THUS, evil and plague are as one.

81. And yet we have learned that plague also refers to the plagues of those born to Adam. For all those years when Adam did not approach his wife, spirits of Defilement would come, conceive from him, and bear him offsprings called the 'plagues of the sons of men'.

82. We learned that when man dreams, he has no control over his body; the body is silent, and the Spirit of Defilement comes to rest on him. Sometimes, impure female spirits come and draw him to them. Then they conceive from him and bear spirits and demons, who sometimes look like men but without hair on their heads.

83. A man should protect himself from them with all his might. He should walk the paths of the Torah to avoid being defiled by them. For there is no one who sleeps in his bed at night who does not taste death. His soul leaves him, and when the body is left without the sacred soul, the Spirit of Defilement comes and hovers about him, and he becomes unclean. Thus, a man should not pass his hands over his eyes in the morning, because the Spirit of Defilement dwells on them.

84. Come and behold: though he was beloved by the Holy One, blessed be He, NEVERTHELESS since he, Ya'akov, was alone, another spirit came to join him.

85. Rabbi Shimon said: Come and behold. It is written about the wicked Bila'am, "and he went shefi ('to a steep place')" (Bemidbar 23:3). What does shefi mean? It means 'alone', as in the verse, "an adder (Heb. shefifon) in the path" (Beresheet 49:17). THAT IS, Bila'am walks alone as does a snake that lurks in byways and paths. What is the purpose of this? To draw upon himself the Spirit of Defilement, for he who walks alone at certain times, even in town, in certain places, draws upon himself the Defiled Spirit.

86. Thus, a man should walk alone on the road and in the city only where other people are about. And a man should not walk alone at night, because no other people are present. For the same reason, "...his body shall not remain all night upon the tree." The spiritless corpse should not be left during the night. This is why the wicked Bila'am was walking along like a snake.

5. "And there wrestled a man with him"

Rabbi Shimon explains the difference between dust and earth. Dust is barren and less important than the earth, from which arises all the goodness of the world. When Rabbi Yehuda questions him about the meaning of the verse, "He raises the poor out of the dust..." Rabbi Shimon explains that dust also signifies humility, and the moon, when she is not united with Zeir Anpin. He then applies this metaphor to the children of Israel, who are ruled by dust in Exile. This dust resembles night. When light appears and shines, however, the children of Israel shall obtain power and the Kingdom of Glory.

The Relevance of this Passage

Without the Light of The Creator, man remains dark, barren, and as spiritually worthless as dust on the ground--because, like the moon, man has no Light of his own. Just as the moon derives its light from the sun, we receive our Light and spiritual sustenance from the realm of Zeir Anpin [the Upper Worlds]. When imbued with this Light, we receive divine fruits of goodness through our marriage partners, our children, and all of life's endeavors.

87. "And there wrestled a man with him." HE ASKS: What does "wrestled (Heb. yeavek)" mean? Rabbi Shimon replied: HE CAME TO HIM from the dust (Heb. avak), AS SHALL BE EXPLAINED. Dust is of lesser importance than earth. HE ASKS: What is the difference between dust and earth? HE ANSWERS: Dust is the residue of fire, THAT IS, WHAT IS LEFT FROM A FIRE IS CALLED 'DUST'. It never produces fruits. From earth, however, all fruits grow, as it comprises everything above and below.

88. Rabbi Yehuda said: If this is so, AND EARTH IS OF SUCH CONSEQUENCE, then what is THE MEANING OF THE VERSE, "He raises the poor out of the dust (lit. 'earth')" (I Shmuel 2:8)? He replied: Literally, IT MEANS HUMILITY. In such a way He raises the poor out of the earth--because THE NUKVA, CALLED 'EARTH', has nothing of her own, BUT RECEIVES EVERYTHING FROM ZEIR ANPIN. Then out of the earth, WHICH POSSESSES NOTHING AS LONG AS IT IS NOT UNITED WITH ZEIR ANPIN, come the poor, who possess nothing. But out of earth, AT THE TIME OF UNION WITH ZEIR ANPIN, come all the fruits and goodness of the world. All that is done in the world is made from the earth, as it is written: "all are of the earth, and all return to earth" (Kohelet 3:20). We have learned that all is of the earth, even the wheel of the sun, but dust never produces fruits and plants. Therefore, "there wrestled a man," SAMAEL, who came out of the dust, HIS NUKVA, and rides upon it to accuse Ya'akov.

89. "...until the breaking of the day..." is the time when his power goes away and disappears, as will occur in the future. For the exile resembles the night; NAMELY, IT IS DARK, a time when the dust rules over Yisrael, and the people are thrown to the earth until light appears and daylight shines. Then Yisrael will have power and will be given the Kingdom, for they will be high saints, as it is written: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Daniel 7:27).

6. "Let me go, for the day breaks"

Rabbi Yehuda begins this discussion by quoting the verse, "who is she that looks out like the dawn..." to describe the process of raising the children of Israel out of Exile. This redemption, we're told, shall be accomplished gradually, as an illumination that increases measure by measure. This is matched by a decrease in the illumination and strength of Esav, until Esav is completely destroyed. After the children of Israel are raised from Exile, they will wonder with sorrow at all they endured, just as at daybreak, Ya'akov was filled with pain and sorrow for what he suffered in his struggle with Esav.

The Relevance of this Passage

Spiritual development arouses goodness and Light in our lives, but not through the pursuit of fulfillment or the search for happiness. Rather, it is achieved through the work of confronting our internal demons and negative traits. These dark forces are like a curtain dimming and blocking the Light. As the negative forces are diminished and the curtain gradually opens, the Light of Creation illuminates our lives. This process is hastened by these verses.

90. "And he said: 'Let me go, for the day breaks'. And he said: 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me'" (Bereshheet 32:27). Rabbi Yehuda quoted the verse: "Who is she that looks out like the dawn, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Shir Hashirim 6:10). Although this verse has been taught, "Who is she that looks," refers to Yisrael, at the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise them and bring them out of exile. He will first open a tiny, very thin aperture of light for them. Then HE WILL OPEN FOR THEM a slightly larger opening, until the Holy One, blessed be He, opens wide the supernal gates of the four directions of the world.

91. Everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, does to the children of Yisrael and the righteous among them is done in this way, TO ACHIEVE REDEMPTION LITTLE BY LITTLE instead of all at once. THIS IS SIMILAR TO a person who always dwells in the dark. To give him light, first we should shine upon him a small light, thin as a needle, and then a slightly stronger one, and so on until full light shines upon him.

92. This is true for Yisrael, as it is written, "Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you be increased" (Shemot 23:30). It is also true for a man who is recuperating. He does recover all at once, but becomes well little by little. This is not so for Esav, for he received illumination at one time, and it was lost to him little by little, and will continue until Yisrael become stronger and wipe him from this world and the world to come. Because AT FIRST, light shone on him instantly, he was completely destroyed. However, the light of Yisrael shines brighter, little by little, until they are strong. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, will shine on them forever.

93. Everyone asked about them, as it is written: "Who is she that looks out like the dawn?" THE DAWN (HEB. SHACHAR, FROM SHACHOR, MEANING 'BLACK') refers to the early morning, NAMELY, TO THE DARKNESS THAT GROWS STRONGER BEFORE MORNING LIGHT. It is the thinnest light MENTIONED. Then, "fair as the moon," because the light of the moon is stronger than that of dawn. Then, she is "clear as the sun," whose light is stronger even than that of the moon. And finally, she is as "terrible as an army with banners," WHICH MEANS that her light has reached full strength.

94. Come and behold: in the early morning, it is dark and the light is concealed. Then, the morning begins to light up. It shines little by little until the light reaches its full strength. Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, will shine on the Congregation of Yisrael. First He will shine like the dawn, which is black, then "fair as the moon," and later, "clear as the sun." Eventually He will shine "terrible as an army with banners."

95. Come and behold: IT IS LITERALLY WRITTEN that "dawn has gone up," rather than 'day breaks'. This is because when dawn comes, the minister OF ESAV grows stronger and attacks Ya'akov. This act enables Esav to recover and grow stronger.

96. But as the darkness of dawn emerges, the light comes and Ya'akov becomes stronger, for it is his time to shine, as it is written: "And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he limped upon his thigh" (Beresheet 32:32). Thus, "the sun rose upon him," because it was the time to shine.

97. The verse, "and he limped upon his thigh," alludes to the fact that as long as Yisrael are in exile, they suffer pain, sorrow, and evil mishaps. However, as soon as day breaks after they have rested, they will look back with sorrow in their hearts on all the afflictions and pain they have suffered, and they will wonder about them. Therefore THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "the sun rose upon him," NAMELY, THE SUN of the time of rest, when "he limped upon his thigh," WHICH MEANS THAT he was filled with pain and sorrow for what he had suffered.

98. When dawn rose, YA'AKOV grew stronger and seized him, for the strength OF THE ANGEL failed, since he is only powerful at night, while Ya'akov rules during the day. Therefore it is written, "And he said, 'Let me go, for the day breaks'," and I am in your hands. This we have already learned.

7. The sinew of the vein

Rabbi Chiya opens a discussion on the significance of the sinew of Ya'akov's thigh, which we can now identify as the sciatic nerve. Had the sinew not failed Ya'akov on the night he struggled with Esav's minister, Ya'akov would have prevailed over Esav's power completely, both on high and here below. Rabbi Shimon then explains that because the energy of Ya'akov's thigh was broken; the strength of the upholders of the Torah was diminished. As a result, none of the prophets, except Moses, were able to retain their faculties unimpaired when receiving divine messages. Thus, it is incumbent on the children of Israel to preserve the sinew of the thigh vein. The dark side controls the sciatic nerve in all creatures, including cows, so that none may be defiled by eating or benefiting from it in other ways. In addition, we learn, the children of Israel are responsible for preserving the power of the Torah by supporting those who toil in it.

The Relevance of this Passage

The sciatic nerve affects the lower back and extends down through the thigh, which supports and upholds the body. The thigh corresponds to the students of a righteous sage who support their master, or to benefactors who financially assist those who engage in Torah study and the revelation of spiritual Light. When the dark side seeks to penetrate an individual, it will often attack supporting elements that are not as strong as the person himself. The Evil Inclination will strike first at our vulnerabilities and weaknesses. These verses fortify our defenses. In addition, we arouse great spiritual Light to strengthen those who support the righteous in their endeavor to reveal the Light of the Torah to all the world.

99. "Therefore the children of Yisrael eat not of the sinew of the vein... because he touched the hollow of Ya'akov's thigh in the sinew of the vein." It is forbidden to enjoy it or even to give it to a dog. HE ASKS: Why is it called the 'sinew of the vein' (Heb. nashe)? HE

ANSWERS: The sinew SEDUCES (Heb. menasheh) men from serving their Master. There lies the Evil Inclination.

100. When the angel wrestled with Ya'akov, he could not find a weak place in his body through which to overcome Ya'akov, because the parts of his body were all strong and without weakness--AND THE KLIPAH TAKES HOLD ONLY IN A PLACE OF WANT AND WEAKNESS. What did he do then? "...he touched the hollow of his thigh," the sinew of the vein, his own kind, that is, the Evil Inclination which is his own kind. And there is the place OF THE EVIL INCLINATION, from where it comes to harm people.

101. For that reason the Torah reads, "Therefore the children of Yisrael eat not of the sinew of the vein." The friends said that a man's body parts allude to higher places. IF THE MEMBER is good, IT DRAWS goodness; if it be evil, IT DRAWS evil. Thus, each ANIMAL member WE EAT strengthens the CORRESPONDING member OF THE MAN WHO EATS IT. Assuredly, the sinew of the vein strengthens the Evil Inclination, which is its own kind, and therefore the children of Yisrael do not eat it. But the heathen nations may eat it, as they are of the side and kind of their angel Samael, for it strengthens their hearts.

102. Man has 248 members in his body corresponding to the 248 positive commandments in the Torah and to the 248 angels, with whom the Shechinah is clothed, named after their Master.

103. There are 365 sinews, corresponding to 365 prohibitory precepts, AND THE SINEW OF THE VEIN IS ONE OF THEM. They correspond to the 365 days of the year, THAT IS, TOGETHER WITH THE TEN PENITENTIARY DAYS, the ninth of Av being one of them. It corresponds to THE ANGEL Samael, who is one of the 365 angels RULING OVER THE 365 DAYS OF THE YEAR. THE NINTH OF AV IS ONE OF THE DAYS OF THE YEAR, AND THE SINEW OF THE VEIN IS ONE OF THE 365 SINEWS. BOTH BELONG TO THE SAME CATEGORY. Thus, the Torah reads, "Therefore the children of Yisrael eat not of the sinew of the vein." The particle "Et" ('the') here includes the ninth of Av, when it is forbidden to eat and drink, BEING IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS THE SINEW OF THE VEIN.

104. The Holy One, blessed be He, saw it all, and there is a hint to Ya'akov IN THE VERSE: "And there wrestled a man with him," all the days of the year and with all of Ya'akov's members, but found NO PLACE TO HOLD ON TO but the sinew of the vein. Immediately, Ya'akov's strength diminished. Among the day of the year, he found the Ninth of Av, when SAMAEEL was stronger, and we were sentenced, and the Temple destroyed. He who eats on the ninth of Av, eats as if of the sinew of the vein. Rabbi Chiya says: Had the strength of Ya'akov's THIGH not weakened, Ya'akov would have prevailed, and Esav's power would have been broken above and below.

105. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion with the verse: "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Hashem, And when I saw it, I fell upon my face" (Yechezkel 1:28). We have already studied this verse, yet come and behold: it is written, "And there arose not a prophet since in Yisrael like Moshe" (Devarim 34:10). HE ASKS: What is the difference between Moshe and the other prophets? HE ANSWERS: Moshe looked into a clear mirror, ZEIR ANPIN; the other prophets beheld only a clouded mirror, THE NUKVA. Moshe heard the prophecy standing, and his power was strengthened. He understood the matter thoroughly, as it is written: "manifestly, and not in dark speeches" (Bemidbar 12:8). The other prophets fell upon their faces AT THE TIME OF PROPHECY, and became weak because they could not understand it clearly. This was because "he touched the hollow of Ya'akov's thigh," "and he limped upon his thigh."

106. No prophet knew what the Holy One, blessed be He, was destined to do to Esav, except the prophet Ovadyah, who was a proselyte from the side of Esav. He understood clearly what pertained to Esav, yet his strength did not diminish, AS RECORDED IN THE BOOK OF OVADYAH.

107. This is why the other prophets were weakened and could not perceive and grasp the prophecy as they ought. The reason is that "he touched the hollow of Ya'akov's thigh in the sinew of the vein." He drew and sucked away the power of the thigh. The power of the thigh broke, leaving him limping on his thigh and all the prophets in the world limited in their

conception and understanding. Come and behold: all the prophets except Moshe did not understand things clearly.

108. There is no one to support the students of the Torah, to give them MONEY for their needs in their pockets and thereby strengthen them. The Torah is forgotten with every generation and its power is daily diminished because the students of the Torah have no support. THE SECRET OF, "HE LIMPED UPON HIS THIGH," IS THAT NO ONE GIVES SUPPORT AND STRENGTH FOR THE STUDENTS OF THE TORAH, AND THEY ARE UNABLE TO CONTINUE TO STUDY IT. THEREFORE, the evil kingdom grows stronger every day. Behold what this sin causes when no one supports the Torah, ZEIR ANPIN, properly. The supports OF ZEIR ANPIN are weakened--THAT IS, NETZACH AND HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'SUPPORTS'--and as a result, he who has no legs or thighs, on which to stand THE PRIMORDIAL SERPENT, is thereby strengthened.

109. He began the discussion with the verse: "And Hashem Elohim said to the serpent, because you have done this, you are cursed above all cattle...upon your belly shall you go" (Bereshheet 3:14). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of, "upon your belly shall you go"? HE ANSWERS: Its supports were broken. Its legs were cut off and it had nothing to stand on. Thus, when the children of Yisrael do not support the Torah, THAT IS, PROVIDE FOR THOSE WHO ARE OCCUPIED IN ITS STUDY, they strengthen THE SERPENT by giving it legs on which to stand. FOR THE OTHER SIDE IS BUILT ON LACKIN HOLINESS.

110. Come and behold: how much deceit and crookedness did that rider of the serpent, SAMAEL, employ against Ya'akov that night. He knew well the verse, "The voice is Ya'akov's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esav" (Bereshheet 27:22), WHICH MEANS THAT if the voice of Ya'akov, THE VOICE OF THE TORAH, is interrupted, POWER IS TRANSFERRED TO the hands of Esav. He therefore searched on every side to harm Ya'akov and stop the voice OF HIS TORAH.

111. He found him strong IN EVERY RESPECT; HE SAW THAT his arms on this and that side, CHESED AND GVURAH CALLED 'AVRAHAM' AND 'YITZCHAK', are strong; HE SAW the body, THE SECRET OF YA'AKOV, WHO CONNECTS THE TWO ARMS, strengthened between them. He saw the power of his Torah strong IN EVERY RESPECT and was afraid lest he would not prevail against him. What did he do? At once, "he touched the hollow of his thigh," THE SUPPORTS OF THE TORAH. He employed cunning against him, saying: Now that the supports of the Torah are broken, the Torah can no longer be strong, and their father's words shall be fulfilled: "The voice is Ya'akov's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esav," and, "and it shall come to pass when you shall have the dominance, that you shall break his yoke from off your neck" (Bereshheet 27:40).

112. He acted craftily against Ya'akov, for in order to break the power of the Torah, Esav grew stronger. When he saw he could not hurt the Torah, he weakened those who supported ITS STUDENTS. For when there is no support to be found for THE STUDENTS OF the Torah, there will be none of "Ya'akov's voice, but the hands" will be "the hands of Esav."

113. When Ya'akov saw this, he struck and overpowered him at dawn, until he blessed him and confirmed to him the blessings, saying: "Your name shall be called no more Ya'akov, but Yisrael" (Bereshheet 32:29). THIS MEANS: YOUR NAME IS NO LONGER Ya'akov, which indicates deceit--AS IT IS WRITTEN, "FOR HE HAS SUPPLANTED (HEB. YA'AKVENI) ME THESE TWO TIMES" (BERESHEET 27:36)--BUT YISRAEL, WHICH MEANS with pride and might, for no one can prevail against you. FOR THE NAME YISRAEL INDICATES PRIDE AND AUTHORITY, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "FOR YOU HAVE CONTENDED (HEB. SARITA) WITH ELOHIM AND WITH MEN, AND HAVE PREVAILED."

114. Come and behold: the serpent releases many armies to all sides. They abide in the world among men. It is incumbent upon us, then, to maintain the sinew of the vein, because although the rider of the serpent, SAMAEL, approached it, it has not lost its color and is still intact.

115. It behooves us to increase the power OF HOLINESS in the world and to show that "you have contended with Elohim and with men, and have prevailed." When he sees that THE SINEW OF THE VEIN is intact, AS LIGHT IS DRAWN ON IT TO PRESERVE IT, and the place is not consumed, THAT IS, IF PEOPLE REFRAIN FROM EATING IT, then the power and vigor OF

SAMAEL is broken, and he is unable to harm the children of Ya'akov. Thus, the inhabitants of the world can not eat the sinew of the vein and enjoy it.

116. Rabbi Yesa Saba explained that the verse, "touched the hollow of Ya'akov's thigh," is similar to the verse, "Whoever touches the dead body of any man that has died" (Bemidbar 19:13). Both refer to impurity, because SAMAEL has defiled that place, THE SINEW OF THE VEIN, and no enjoyment may be derived from an unholy place, particularly if the Side of Defilement, SAMAEL, has touched the place. The Torah does not add more than, "for he touched," as in, "he touched the hollow of his thigh," which is similar to, "And whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean" (Ibid. 22). HENCE, WE LEARN THAT SAMAEL DEFILED THIS PLACE BY TOUCHING IT. Blessed be the Merciful One who gave the Torah to Yisrael, to merit this world and the world to come, as it is written, "Length of days in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and honor" (Mishlei 3:16).

8. "...and bowed to the ground"

Rabbi Elazar asks a question regarding the title verse and its implication that Ya'akov bowed to Esav, who was of the side of another god, This leads to a reinterpretation of the verse, revealing that Ya'akov actually offered praise to God when kneeling before Esav. Similarly, the blessed greeting that King David sent Naval, a sorcerer spoken of in the books of the Prophets, is also often misconstrued. This blessing was not addressed to Naval, as Naval thought, but rather to God. Through the Light of the Zohar, we learn that both Ya'akov and David were righteous, and all their deeds were for the glory of their Creator.

The Relevance of this Passage

A literal reading of Biblical scripture completely falsifies the spiritual truth and inner meaning of the stories. Thus, we must refrain from passing judgment in life until we discern the true meaning that is always concealed beneath the surface. The wisdom and discretion to restrain judgment are imbued into our awareness. We also receive the will power to direct our own consciousness towards The Creator when temptations and dark forces confront us in life.

117. "And he passed before them, and bowed to the ground seven times." Rabbi Elazar quoted the verse: "for you shall worship no other El: for Hashem, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous El" (Shemot 34:14). HE ASKS: How could Ya'akov, the greatest of the patriarchs, the one chosen to be the perfect portion of the Holy One, blessed be He, and the one very close to Him, bow before this evil Esav, who stands on the side of another El? For bowing to him is the same as bowing to another El! You may find the answer by referring to the saying that when the fox is in the ascendent, bow to him. THERE IS A PARABLE DESCRIBING A TIME WHEN THE FOX REIGNS OVER THE ANIMALS. ALTHOUGH THE FOX IS THE SMALLEST OF THE BEASTS, EVERYONE BOWS BEFORE IT. AND HERE TOO YOU MIGHT SAY THAT YA'AKOV BOWED TO ESAV BECAUSE THE HOUR WAS FAVORABLE FOR HIM. This, however, is not so, for Esav is considered as another El, and Ya'akov would never bow to that side and portion.

118. HE ANSWERS: It is written, "and thus shall you say to him: A hearty greeting (lit. 'to the living One')! Peace be both to you, and peace to your house, and peace to all that you have" (I Shmuel 25:6). HE ASKS: If it is forbidden to give the first greeting to wicked people, why did David said this to THE WICKED Naval? HE SAID: He said this to the Holy One, blessed be He, in order to connect Naval with the Living One, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. THUS THE VERSE, "TO THE LIVING ONE," WAS ADDRESSED TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, AND NOT TO NAVAL, although Naval thought it was addressed to him.

119. Similarly, "Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head" (Beresheet 47:31). HE ASKS: Did he bow to his son? No, he bowed to the place where the Shechinah rested; SHE WAS AT THE HEAD OF THE BED, FOR THE SHECHINAH IS FOUND NEAR THE HEAD OF THE ILL. Here, too, "HE passed over before them," which means that the supernal Shechinah went before him. This is the supernal guardian, who kept him. When Ya'akov saw Her walking in front of him, he said, "it is time to bow before the Holy One, blessed be He," who went before him.

120. He knelt and bowed seven times, "until he came near to his brother." It is not written, 'He bowed himself before Esav', but when he saw the Holy One, blessed be He, walking in front of him, he bowed before Him. This indicated that he was not paying respect or worshipping someone else. All was done appropriately. Happy are the righteous, whose every

deed is for the glory of their Master, so as not to deviate right or left FROM THE STRAIGHT AND MIDDLE PATH.

9. "...and embraced him, and fell on his neck"

There are many methods by which Scripture conveys obscure allusions. Rabbi Yitzchak offers the example of the title verse in conjunction with "But the wicked are like the troubled sea." This, we learn, contains an indication that the seed of Esav would destroy one of the two Temples. Rabbi Aba then expounds Ya'akov's eventual prevailing over Esav. His success was granted by the world above, without whose permission no power can be exerted in the physical realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our egos perpetrate the illusion that we are in full control of our lives, when in reality we are subject to dark forces created by our own self-involved behavior. This deception keeps us ignorant of the Negative Inclination, and of the spiritual tools that can eradicate it. Only the Light of The Creator can enlighten and strengthen us in the struggle to overthrow our dark side. Alone, we remain convinced that we are captains of our fate, until chaos strikes and leaves us stunned, vulnerable, and broken. The Light of this passage internalizes these spiritual truths, deepening our connection to the mystical power of the Zohar, and drawing Divine assistance from worlds on high.

121. "And Esav ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck" (lit. 'necks') (Beresheet 33:4). The word "neck" is written without the letter Yud. It is written, "and kissed him: and they wept." Rabbi Yitzchak said: "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot be still, and whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Yeshayah 57:20). This verse has already been explained. How many deep mysteries are there in the words of the Torah! They are different from each other, yet all is one.

122. "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot be still." This verse refers to Esav, all of whose deeds were sinful and wicked. He was not sincere in his approach to Ya'akov. He fell upon his neck, namely, the one neck--FOR THE LETTER YUD IS MISSING (WHICH IMPLIES THE PLURAL FORM, 'NECKS')--of Jerusalem, which is the neck of the world. THE SCRIPTURE READS, "And fell on his neck," and not, 'on his necks', WITH A YUD, for the Temple was destroyed twice, first by Babylonians and then by the seed of Esav. The result is that Esav besieged and destroyed Jerusalem only once. Therefore it is written, "and fell on his neck," in the singular, WITHOUT A YUD, WHICH MEANS HE DESTROYED IT ONLY ONCE.

123. The word FOR, "and kissed him," is written with dots above THE LETTERS, WHICH INDICATES that he did not kiss him willingly. We learned that the verse, "the kisses of an enemy are importunate," (Mishlei 27:6) refers to Bila'am, who blessed Yisrael unwillingly. Here, too, "the kisses of an enemy are importunate," refers to Esav.

124. Rabbi Yosi said: It is written, "Arise, Hashem; save me, my Elohim: for You have smitten all my enemies upon Your cheek; You have broken the teeth of the wicked" (Tehilim 3:8). We have already learned that "broken" (Heb. shibarta) may be read as 'lengthened' (Heb. shirbavta). THIS WAS SAID OF ESAV, whose teeth were lengthened because he planned to bite him.

125. They therefore wept, the one and the other. Come and behold: Esav was so disposed to harm Ya'akov that even when KISSING HIM, he thought to denounce him and bring evil on him in the future. Therefore, "they wept," the one because he thought he might not be saved from him, and the other because his father was still alive and he could not KILL HIM.

126. Rabbi Aba said: Assuredly Esav's anger was weakened when he saw Ya'akov, because Esav's minister agreed with him, ACCEPTING AND AFFIRMING THE BLESSINGS. Thus, Esav could not vent his anger, because everything in this world depends on the world above, and whatever is agreed upon above is also accepted below. And so there is no government below until power is given from above. Moreover, everything is interdependent, FOR WHATEVER IS DONE IN THIS WORLD DEPENDS ON WHAT IS DONE UP HIGH.

10. "Let my lord, I pray you, pass over before his servant"

Rabbi Elazar explains the title quotation as Ya'akov's wish to save his blessings for future generations in their struggle against the nations of the world. Ya'akov rejected partnership with Esav and accepted subjugation, we are told, knowing that in the world to come, he would rule over the "mount of Esav."

The Relevance of this Passage

Our tendency is to sacrifice tomorrow's rewards for immediate ego gratification. This tendency derives from our Evil Inclination, which seeks to influence us in all our endeavors. When we succumb to urges from this dark side, our Evil Inclination creates a partnership with us, tainting and defiling all our efforts. Impatience is a powerful form of reactive, self-indulgent behavior and usually underlies our decisions to accept this partnership. Patience is divine and it is nurtured in us as we read this section.

127. "Let my lord, I pray you, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on slowly" (Beresheet 33:14). According to Rabbi Elazar, this agrees with what we have already said. Ya'akov did not wish to avail himself at this time of the first blessings his father bestowed on him. Not one had yet been fulfilled, because he was reserving them to the end of days, when his descendants would need TO UTILIZE THEM in the fight against the other nations of the world.

128. Thus, when Esav said, "Let us take our journey, and let us go" (Beresheet 33:12), "Let us divide the world between us and rule over it together," YA'AKOV replied, "Let my lord, I pray you, pass over before his servant," MEANING, let Esav be the first to exercise his dominion over the world. "Let my lord...pass" IS AN INDICATION OF PRIORITY, as in: "and their king passes on before them, and Hashem at the head of them" (Michah 2:13). YA'AKOV SAID TO HIM: You can be the first to rule over the world, "and I will lead on slowly," and raise myself for the world to come and for the end of days, the days that pass slowly.

129. "According to the pace of the cattle (also: 'work')." HE ASKS: What is meant by the work? HE ANSWERS: It is the dim mirror, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, through which all work in the world is done. "...that goes before me..." REFERS TO THE NUKVA, always means before Hashem, ZEIR ANPIN; "according to the pace of the children" alludes to the secret of the Cherubs, to point at the secret of the faith, THE NUKVA, to whom Ya'akov cleaved.

130. "Until I come to my lord, to Se'ir..." YA'AKOV SAID TO HIM: I shall suffer your exile and subjugation until my time to rule over the mount of Esav is come. As it is written: "And liberators shall ascend upon Mount Tzion to judge the mountain of Esav; and the kingdom shall be Hashem's" (Ovadyah 1:21).

11. "...and built him a house"

Rabbi Chiya leads a discussion on God's creation of the House of the World. This highly metaphorical discourse describes the process of creation. From the midst of the House, we're told, a tree, visible only by day, reaches up into heaven and the House is watered by this tree. When night falls and the doors of the House are closed, a flame erupts out of the darkness. While a myriad on either side chant praises and hymns, a herald ascends to make proclamations. Then Zeir Anpin [The dimension of Light in the Upper World] enters and the House is lit by six lights of Mercy, from which flow the rivers that water all the animals of the field. God builds and perfects this House as long as the energy of prayer ascends from below in proper form. The discussion then turns to God's nightly protection of "the city" from the Other Side, and His guarding of the Sanctuary from the primordial serpent. Rabbi Elazar then concludes the discussion by explaining the complete perfection of Ya'akov both above and below.

The Relevance of this Passage

Using the language of metaphor, the Zohar draws upon mystical power of the Hebrew letters to connect us to the primordial forces of Creation, which sustain and protect the world. Through this passage, we draw the energy of creation into our lives, for renewal, healing, and protection.

131. "And Ya'akov journeyed to Sukkot, and built him a house, and made booths (Heb. Sukkot) for his cattle; therefore the name of the place is called Sukot" (Bereshheet 33:17). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "A Ma'alot poem for Solomon. Unless Hashem builds the house...unless Hashem keeps the city..." (Tehilim 127:1). Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, ZEIR ANPIN, desired to create the world, MEANING TO BUILD THE FACE OF THE NUKVA, CALLED 'WORK', He released a knot from the rough spark. It flashed in the darkness, remained up high, and then descended below. That darkness shone in a hundred ways in the thinnest paths and broadest WAYS, which became the House of the World.

132. That house is the center of everything, WHICH MEANS IT IS IN THE CENTRAL COLUMN OF ALL ROADS AND PATHS. THE NUKVA has many doors and hallways around the high and holy places, where the birds of the sky nest, each according to its species. In the center, there is a huge tree, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN THAT PURS PLENTY UPON THE HOUSE. It has many branches and fruits for everyone. The tree reaches to the clouds of heaven and is hidden behind three mountains. Underneath these three mountains it comes out, rises upwards, and descends.

133. This house, THE NUKVA, RECEIVED TWO TYPES OF LIGHTS FROM ZEIR ANPIN: (1) It is watered by him, NAMELY THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, REFERRED TO AS WATERING. (2) ZEIR ANPIN stores within THE HOUSE many unidentified supernal treasures THAT WERE LIGHTS OF CHASSADIM. By this, the house is constructed and built. The tree, ZEIR ANPIN, is visible during the day and hidden at night, while the house, THE NUKVA, rules by night and is hidden by day.

134. When darkness falls, THE NUKVA is in power AND she is bound to it, SHE RULES BECAUSE SHE LACKS CHASSADIM, AND SHINES WITH CHOCHMAH. All her doors are closed on all sides, WHICH MEANS THAT ALL THE LIGHTS ARE FROZEN AND THERE IS NO OPENING THROUGH WHICH ANY LIGHT CAN BE REVEALED. Many spirits OF RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE soar in the air, desirous to know, NAMELY, RECEIVE CHOCHMAH, and enter THE NUKVA. They come among the birds to receive testimony, and then roam and see whatever they can see.

135. THE CLOSING OF ALL OPENINGS CONTINUES until the darkness is stirred, to which THE NUKVA is bound, and one flame is produced, which strikes open the doors and cleaves rocks with heavy hammers (THE KLIPOT). The flame moves up and down, and strikes the world. Sounds are heard above and below.

136. A crier then ascends, attaches himself to the air, and proclaims. The air comes from the pillar of cloud of the inner altar, and, when it emerges, it spreads out in all directions, with thousands on its left side and myriads on its right. Then the crier stands firm and proclaims in a strong voice. Many chant songs and render homage. Two doors are open, one on the south FOR THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM and the other on the north FOR THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH.

137. This house, THE NUKVA, ascends and attaches itself TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT SIDES OF ZEIR ANPIN, while hymns are sung and praises offered on high. Then ZEIR ANPIN silently enters and the house is lit up by six lights OF CHASSADIM-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD which spread splendor in every direction, CHASSADIM INCLUDED IN CHOCHMAH. Rivers flow from it, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH INCLUDED IN CHASSADIM, to water the animals of the field, as it is written: "they give drink to every wild beast: the wild asses quench their thirst" (Tehilim 104:11). They sing until the day rises. When daylight breaks, the stars, signs, and their followers all begin to sing praises and chants, as it is written: "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy" (Iyov 38:7).

138. Come and behold: IT IS WRITTEN, "Unless Hashem builds the house, they who build it labor in vain (Tehilim 127:1). Hashem is the Supernal King, ZEIR ANPIN, who is constantly building and perfecting the house. When does He bestow plenty on it? When worship is raised with proper attention, from below.

139. "Unless Hashem keeps the city." When does this happen? This occurs at nightfall, when armed parties FROM THE OTHER SIDE hover and roam the world; when the gates are closed and guarded on all sides. The doors remain shut lest an uncircumcised and unclean person approaches THE SANCTUARY, as it is written: "for henceforth there shall no more come into

you the uncircumcised and the unclean" (Yeshayah 52:1). For in the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will remove them from the face of the earth.

140. HE ASKS: Who are the uncircumcised, and who are the unclean? HE ANSWERS: They are all one, the same one who seduced Adam and his wife. Adam and his wife followed him, THE PRIMORDIAL SERPENT, and brought death to the whole world. He defiles the house, THE NUKVA, until the Holy One, blessed be He, shall remove him from the world, THE NUKVA. Therefore "unless Hashem keeps the city" ASSUREDLY "THE WATCHMAN STAYS AWAKE IN VAIN."

141. "And Ya'akov journeyed to Sukkot." He journeyed TO BINAH, to receive the portion of the faith, THE NUKVA. As it is written, "So Esav returned that day on his way to Se'ir," and "And Ya'akov journeyed to Sukot." Each traveled to his own side, Esav to the side of Se'ir, which is a foreign woman, a strange El; Ya'akov to Sukkot, the supernal faith, WHICH IS BINAH.

142. "And built him a house," has a similar meaning to the verse, "house of Ya'akov," (Yeshayah 2:5) WHICH REFERS TO THE NUKVA. According to Rabbi Elazar, this is because he composed the evening service, THE NUKVA, as was befitting to Her, and he "made booths for his cattle," namely, other booths (Heb. sukkot) to keep them; this is his own portion.

143. "And Ya'akov came to Shalem (lit. 'whole')," because he was then whole in every respect, BOTH IN CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM, as has been explained. It is written: "In Shalem also is his tabernacle (Heb. sukko)" (Tehilim 76:3). This verse has been explained. It pertains to the mystery OF ATTAINING PERFECTION THROUGH THE CENTRAL COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'YA'AKOV' AND TO "SUKKO," WHICH IS THE NUKVA. When he was whole, Faith joined him WHICH IS THE NUKVA, and when he was adorned in the place worthy of him, MEANING THE CENTRAL COLUMN, the tabernacle, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, was adorned with him, AND THEN, "IN SHALEM ASLO IS HIS TABERANACLE" APPLIED TO HER AS WELL because he was perfected by the fathers and his sons. He was then considered whole, perfected above and below, whole in heaven and whole on earth. HE EXPLAINS, he is whole above IN ZEIR ANPIN, for he comprises the fathers, BEING the glory of Yisrael, ENCOMPASSING AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, BEING CHESED AND GVURAH, and below IN THE NUKVA through his Holy Sons, THE TWELVE TRIBES WHO ARE THE CHARIOT OF THE NUKVA. THUS, he is perfected in heaven, IN ZEIR ANPIN, FOR WHICH REASON IT SAYS, "AND YA'AKOV CAME TO SHALEM." And he was perfected on earth, IN THE NUKVA, OF WHICH IT IS now SAID, "In Shalem also is his tabernacle."

12. "You shall not plow with an ox and an ass together"

An ox and an ass together represents the unification of the defiled spirits of the Other Side against man. This is applied to the struggle between Shimon and Chamor, a conflict in which Shimon--who was under the astrological sign of the ox--fought Chamor, of the side of the ass, to prevent the two from joining. We learn that Shimon first brought the blood of circumcision on the males and slew them, just as God did to the Egyptians (who represent asses) through Moshe, when Yosef (the ox) was removed from them. In the final Exile, we're told, Ya'akov and Yosef will rise against Esav and prevail.

The Relevance of this Passage

Unity is recognized as the supreme power in our world. United evil can easily defeat disunited good. Therefore, the only way to defeat unified evil is through the unification of the good and the righteous. Through the cleansing power of circumcision, this passage creates disunity and separation within the unseen evil forces lurking in our midst.

144. Next, it is written, "And Dinah the daughter of Leah went out." This has already been explained by the friends. Come and behold: innumerable grades are divided above. SOME BELONG TO HOLINESS AND OTHERS TO THE OTHER SIDE, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "ELOHIM MADE THE ONE AS WELL AS THE OTHER." (KHOELET 7:14). Each is different from the other, SOME PERTAINING TO CHESED AND SOME TO JUDGMENTS. There are different kinds of animals trying to gain mastery over each other and devour prey, each according to its kind.

145. From the side of the Defiled Spirit many grades divide. All of them harbor enmity TOWARD HOLINESS, the ones against the others, as it is written, "You shall not plow with an ox and an ass together," (Devarim 22:10) for when they are together, they ruin the world.

146. Come and behold: all that the grades of defilement crave is to damage the holy grades. They all lurk in wait to damage the holy Ya'akov. First a serpent bit him, as it is written, "he touched the hollow of his thigh," WHICH REFERS TO THE MINISTER OF ESAV WHO RIDES A SERPENT. Then an ass bit him, THAT IS, SHCHEM THE SON OF CHAMOR (LIT. 'ASS'), THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE KLIPAH.

147. When THE SERPENT BIT HIM, he himself stood against him. When THAT ASS BIT HIM, Shimon and Levi, who come from the side of strict Judgment, fought the ass, charging on all sides until he surrendered before them, as it is written: "And they slew Chamor and Shchem his son with the edge of the sword" (Beresheet 34:26). Shimon, whose astrological sign was Taurus (ox), GVURAH, AND THE LEFT SIDE OF HOLINESS, attacked Chamor, THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE KLIPAH, and was hostile towards him to prevent THE OX AND ASS OF THE KLIPAH from joining. Shimon is his adversary, AND NOT YA'AKOV.

148. They all brought accusations against Ya'akov, but he was delivered from them, and later, he ruled over them. Then came the ox, YOSEF, who perfected himself among the asses, THE EGYPTIANS HE RULED OVER. They were all of the side of THE KLIPAH OF an ass. HE EXPLAINED: Yosef is an ox, and the Egyptians are asses, of whom the scripture says: "whose flesh is as the flesh of asses" (Yechezkel 23:20).

149. Therefore, the sons of Ya'akov later fell among the asses, THE EGYPTIANS, because an ox joined them, YOSEF, THROUGH WHOM AN OX AND AN ASS WERE JOINED TOGETHER. And they bit Yisrael's flesh and marrow, AS IT IS THE NATURE OF THE ASS TO BITE AND BREAK BONES, until Levi was again aroused to scatter the asses, THAT IS, HE SEPARATED THE OX FROM THE ASS in order to subdue them. He broke their strength and removed the ox from there, as it is written: "And Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him" (Shemot 13:19), MOSHE BEING A LEVITE AND YOSEF THE OX THAT JOINED THEM.

150. Come and behold: on the first occasion, when Shimon came TO FIGHT with Chamor, he brought blood upon them, the blood of circumcision. Then they "slew all the males" (Beresheet 34:25). The Holy One, blessed be He, did the same by the Levite, Moshe, to the asses, the Egyptians. First He brought upon them THE PLAGUE OF blood, and then, "Hashem slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt" (Shemot 13:15). Regarding Chamor, THE FATHER OF SHCHEM, it is written: "and all their wealth, and all their little ones," (Beresheet 34:29) and their animals, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "THEIR SHEEP, AND THEIR OXEN, AND THEIR ASSES, AND THAT WHICH WAS IN THE CITY AND THAT WHICH WAS IN THE FIELD." Regarding the other asses, THE EGYPTIANS, it is written: "jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and garments," (Shemot 12:35) WHICH CORRESPONDS TO THE WEALTH HERE. It is also written: "And a mixed multitude went up also with them," (Ibid. 38) WHICH CORRESPONDS TO THE "LITTLE ONES" MENTIONED, the "flocks and herds" (Ibid.) THAT CORRESPOND TO, "THEIR SHEEP AND THEIR OXEN."

151. Shimon rose against Chamor ('ass'), THE FATHER OF SHCHEM, WHO WAS NOT JOINED WITH AN OX. Levi rose against all the asses, EVEN THOSE JOINED WITH AN OX, LIKE THE EGYPTIANS. They all came to join Ya'akov and prepared to bite him, but he withstood and subdued them through his sons.

152. HE ASKS: Now IN THE LAST EXILE that Esav is biting him and his sons, who shall rise against him? HE REPLIES: Ya'akov and Yosef WILL RISE AGAINST HIM, the one on this side and the other on that side, YA'AKOV ON THE RIGHT AND YOSEF ON THE LEFT, as it is written: "And the house of Ya'akov shall be fire, and the house of Yosef flame, and the house of Esav for stubble" (Ovadyah 1:18).

153. "And the terror of Elohim was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Ya'akov" (Beresheet 35:5). Rabbi Yosi said: They all gathered to fight them, but while they were girding their weapons, they took fright and dropped them. Therefore, they did not chase the sons of Ya'akov.

13. "Put away the strange Elohim"

While walking, Rabbi Chizkiyah questions Rabbi Yehuda as to why the crown of Malcam was considered the crown of an idol and "an abomination," and why it was permitted to be set on David's head. After Rabbi Yehuda explains that the image of the idol on the crown was broken, thus making it permissible for wear. Rabbi Yitzchak proceeds to interpret the title verse. He reveals that Ya'akov hid the idolatrous gold and silver images so that his people could not derive any benefit from these representations of false deities. There follows a discussion of man's responsibility to thank and praise God for His miracles and His goodness. This is why Ya'akov alone prepared the altar at Bet-El--although his sons were with him, Ya'akov alone suffered the tribulations that run throughout his story, making him worthy and deserving of the task.

The Relevance of this Passage

It is a man's natural tendency to worship his own ego and credit himself for all of his accomplishments. This is true idol worshipping. The concept of praising and thanking God is a code denoting the need for true appreciation and awareness of the existence of the Creator's beneficence. Appreciation is for our own benefit and not in any way for the Creator, who has no need or desire for praise and thanks. Appreciation and awareness are spiritual forces that help to protect all that we have received from negative entities. The goal of an evil entity is to lower our guard and make us vulnerable. When there is no consciousness of the Creator's role in our good fortune, dark forces can loot us of our spiritual Light. This manifests physically as the loss of blessing, whether in relationships, health, or financial prosperity. This passage stirs appreciation for the Creator within us. This gratitude is derived through Ya'akov, who recognized and warned his children about the idols in their midst.

154. "Put away the strange Elohim" (Beresheet 35:2) that they took from Shchem, vessels of silver and gold, upon which were engraved the images of their deities. Rabbi Yehuda said these were the images of strange Elohim made of silver and gold, AND NOT VESSELS WITH THEIR IMAGES. Ya'akov hid them there, so that they would not derive benefit from idolatry. A man should never derive benefit from it.

155. As Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Chizkiyah were walking along the road, Rabbi Chizkiyah asked: Why is it written, "And he took the crown of Malkam from off his head and its weight was a talent of gold, with the precious stones; and it was set on David's head" (II Shmuel 12:30)? We have learned that Milkom was the abominable idol of the children of Amon, as it is written, "the crown of Malkam." Why, therefore, was it set on David's head, and why it is called 'abomination'? While other deities of the heathen nations are called the 'Elohim of the people', 'other Elohim', 'strange El', 'another Elohim', and the like, only Malkam is called an 'abomination'.

156. He answers that the Holy One, blessed be He, calls all the deities of the idolatrous nations, NOT ONLY MALKAM, by this name, as it is written: "and you have seen their abominations, and their idols" (Devarim 29:16). What of the verse, "And he took the crown of Malkam" the idol Milkom? HE ASKS: HOW COULD DAVID SET IT ON HIS HEAD? Assuredly, IT WAS THE CROWN OF AN IDOL, but before Itai the Gittite became a proselyte, THAT IS, WHILE HE WAS STILL A HEATHEN, he broke Milkom's heathen crown, destroying the image engraved on it. He thereby made it permissible for use. THEN DAVID put it on his head. Come and behold: the abomination of the children of Amon was a serpent deeply engraved on the crown. It was therefore called an 'abomination', WHICH MEANS filth. THIS IS THE SECOND ANSWER FOR THE QUESTION THAT RABBI CHIZKIYAH ASKED RABBI YEHUDA: WHY IS THIS IDOL CALLED AN ABOMINATION?

157. Rabbi Yitzchak said that the verse, "Put away the strange Elohim that are among you," refers to other women who, WHEN TAKEN CAPTIVE, brought with them all their jewels. Thus, it is written, "And they gave to Ya'akov all the strange Elohim," which are the women and all their jewels, and their deities of silver and gold. "And Ya'akov hid them," THE GOLD AND SILVER, so that his people would derive no benefit whatsoever from them, the aspects of idolatry.

158. Come and behold: how much Ya'akov was a perfected man, and how he cleaved to the Holy One, blessed be He. It is written: "and let us arise, and go up to Bet-El; and I will make

there an altar to El, who answers me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way on which I went" (Beresheet 35:3). At once, "they gave to Ya'akov" (Ibid. 4). From this, we learn that it is incumbent on man to praise the Holy One, blessed be He, and give thanks to Him for all the miracles and goodness He did by him. This is the meaning of the verse: "and was with me in the way on which I went."

159. Come and behold: first it is written, "and let us arise, and go up to Bet-El" IN THE PLURAL, because he counted his sons with him; then it is written, "and I will make there an altar" IN THE SINGULAR, and not 'and we will make', because he excluded his sons from this act. Why? Because it was for him alone to do it. Ya'akov surely composed the evening prayer, THE CORRECTION OF THE NUKVA, and built the altar, THE CORRECTION OF THE NUKVA. It was for him to do, NOT FOR HIS SONS, for his children were not born until after he had fled from his brother and had gone through the troubles that followed, as it is written, "and was with me in the way on which I went." Thus, he did not include them in PREPARING THE ALTAR, BUT SAID, "AND I WILL MAKE THERE AN ALTAR," INSTEAD OF 'WE WILL MAKE'.

160. Rabbi Elazar said: From this we learn that whoever received a miracle should give thanks, and whoever ate bread should say grace, and not the person who ate nothing. YA'AKOV THEN SAID, "I WILL MAKE AN ALTAR," AND NOT 'WE WILL MAKE'.

14. "And he built there an altar"

The Zohar tells us that Ya'akov is beginning a very difficult spiritual journey, which involves enjoining the two worlds of Zeir Anpin and Malchut. Here, Ya'akov is coming full circle-- completing his journey and thereby unifying Zeir Anpin and Malchut.

The Relevance of this Passage

Passion and enthusiasm for spiritual wisdom and growth are easily aroused when one begins to walk the spiritual path. However, when the inevitable obstacles surface to test our commitment and shed light on our negative qualities so that we can confront and extract them from our nature, we lose the fire and most of us fail to complete journey. It's much easier to start a new search elsewhere and feel new passion again, than it is to confront the dark side of our nature and complete our journey. Constant seeking, however, will not enjoin the two spiritual worlds; thus it delivers short-lived passion, and fails to provide long term fulfillment. The Evil Inclination will always stand by us and help rationalize and justify our quitting and giving up. In response, the Zohar verses herein give us the energy and will power to complete our path and finish what we start, so that we can achieve true and eternal contentment.

161. "And he built there an altar" (Beresheet 35:7). Come and behold: it is written that "he built there an altar," but not that he offered libations and sacrifices. This is because he completed the grade worthy of perfection, "an altar to Hashem," means, he fixed the lower grade, THE NUKVA, and attached it to the upper grade, ZEIR ANPIN. Thus, "And he built there an altar" is the lower grade, THE NUKVA; "to Hashem" is the upper grade, ZEIR ANPIN; "and called the place El Bet-El," WHICH IS the name HE GAVE THE NUKVA, is that of the supernal BINAH. For when THE NUKVA shone FROM ZEIR ANPIN, the daughter, THE NUKVA, became like her mother, BINAH. THEREFORE, YA'AKOV NAMED HER EL, AFTER HER MOTHER. AND ALL IS ONE.

162. "Because there the Elohim was (lit. 'were') revealed to him." THIS VERSE SIGNIFIES THAT ANGELS "WERE REVEALED," IN THE PLURAL AND NOT IN THE SINGULAR. WHY DID HE CALL THE ALTAR "EL BET-EL"? BECAUSE they are found only with the Shechinah. These seventy angels are always with Her, and seventy thrones stand around the Shechinah. WHEREVER ANGELS ARE FOUND, THE SHECHINAH IS REVEALED. Therefore, THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "because there the Elohim were revealed to him," in an open place, THE NUKVA, as it is written: "And, behold, Hashem stood above it," (Beresheet 28:13) NAMELY, UPON THE LADDER, WHICH IS THE NUKVA.

15. "And Elohim went up from him"

Here Rabbi Shimon discusses Ya'akov's unique and privileged position as revealed by the title quotation. Because Ya'akov encompasses all the patriarchs, he is a holy Chariot to Zeir Anpin by himself. Indeed, his perfection was completed by the name 'Israel', which the Shechinah

bestowed upon him. We learn of the great good fortune of the children of Israel, who alone among nations have God to receive their prayers and petitions.

The Relevance of this Passage

A reading of this section helps elevate us to experience some of the perfection embodied by the patriarchs, inspiring us to follow the path of righteousness and summon down more Light.

163. "And Elohim went up from him in the place where He talked with him" (Beresheet 35:13). Rabbi Shimon said: Here we learn that Ya'akov, together with the other patriarchs, became a holy Chariot TO HASHEM. Come and behold: Ya'akov is a supernal, holy Chariot TO ZEIR ANPIN, shining on the moon, THE NUKVA. He is a Chariot by himself, BECAUSE HE INCLUDES THE PATRIARCHS, CHESED AND GVURAH, AS TIFERET INCLUDES THEM BOTH. This is the meaning of the verse, "And Elohim went up from him," AS SOMEONE ALIGHTING FROM HIS CHARIOT.

164. He began the discussion with the verse: "For what nation is there so great that has Elohim so near to them, as Hashem our Elohim is in all things that we call upon Him for" (Devarim 4:4). Come and behold: how fond the Holy One, blessed be He, is of Yisrael, for no nation or tongue among all the heathen people in the world will have Elohim to receive their prayers, as the Holy One, blessed be He, will in the future receive the prayers and petitions of Yisrael in their hour of need, when they pray for the sake of their grade alone, THE SHECHINAH, THAT IS, WHENEVER THEIR PRAYER IS FOR THE PERFECTING OF THE SHECHINAH.

165. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, called Ya'akov by the name Yisrael, NAMELY, THAT IS THE SHECHINAH DID, as it is written: "your name shall not be called any more Ya'akov, but Yisrael shall be your name: and he called his name." Who gave him that name? The Shechinah did, as in, "and He called to Moshe," WRITTEN WITH A SMALL ALEPH, WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH. IT IS ALSO WRITTEN, "And Elohim said to him," (Beresheet 35:10) WHICH IS A NAME FOR THE SHECHINAH.

166. We explained that after he achieved perfection he was raised in his grade, and was perfected by that name. Therefore, "and He called his name Yisrael," has already been explained.

16. Ya'akov - Yisrael

Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Elazar discuss the issue of Ya'akov's two names, Ya'akov and Yisrael. Rabbi Elazar explains why Ya'akov is only sometimes called Yisrael, while after Avram's renaming, he is always referred to as Avraham. Avraham's original name was imperfect, whereas Ya'akov's name denoted a higher level of spirituality.

The Relevance of this Passage

The name is a link between the body and soul.

We connect to our name and soul, which helps us fulfill our mission in this world.

167. As Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Yosi were walking together, Rabbi Yosi said: What you said is true, that Ya'akov is the most perfect of the fathers. He includes all sides, NAMELY, RIGHT AND LEFT. For that reason, he was called Yisrael, as it is written: "your name shall not be called any more Ya'akov, but Yisrael shall be your name, and He called his name Yisrael" (Beresheet 35:10). Why then, HE INSISTED, does the Holy One, blessed be He, repeatedly call him Ya'akov as he was commonly called before? What then is the meaning of, "your name shall not be called any more Ya'akov"?

168. He replies: You have spoken well. THIS IS A GOOD QUESTION. He then quoted the verse: "Hashem shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up ardor like a man of war" (Yeshayah 42:13), which has already been explained. Yet come and behold: it is written, "as a mighty man" instead of 'a mighty man', and "like a man of war" instead of 'a man of war'.

169. HE EXPLAINS: We learned that Hashem refers uniformly to Mercy, and the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, is Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, as it is written, "I am Hashem: that is My name" (Yeshayah 42:8). Yet we see that He is sometimes called Elohim, which everywhere alludes to Judgment. Whenever there are many righteous in the world, His name is Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei and He is called Mercy. But when the wicked multiply in the world, His name is Elohim, and He is thus called. When Ya'akov is not among his enemies or in a foreign country, he is called Yisrael, but when he is among foes or out of Yisrael, he is called Ya'akov.

170. He said to him: The matter is not fully explained, because it is written, "shall not be called any more," yet we do call him Ya'akov when he is among enemies or in a foreign land. Come and study the verse: "And Ya'akov dwelt in the land in which his father had sojourned, in the land of Cna'an" (Beresheet 37:1). He was not in a foreign land, but HE IS NEVERTHELESS CALLED YA'AKOV.

171. He replied: I said, in the beginning, that just as the Holy One, blessed be He, is sometimes called Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei and sometimes Elohim, ACCORDING TO THE GRADE, so Ya'akov is sometimes called Yisrael and sometimes Ya'akov, all according to certain grades. And the words, "shall not be called any more Ya'akov," MEAN THAT he will not have this name only, YA'AKOV, BUT TWO NAMES, YA'AKOV AND YISRAEL, ACCORDING TO HIS GRADE.

172. He said: So it was with Avraham, about whom it is written, "Neither shall your name any more be called Avram, but your name shall be Avraham" (Beresheet 17:5). YET THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE WILL BE CALLED BY TWO NAMES: AVRAM AND AVRAHAM, BUT RATHER ONLY AVRAHAM. He answers: The scripture says, "but YOUR NAME SHALL BE (HEB. VEHAYAH) AVRAHAM," therefore only this name remained. Yet here the word "vehayah" is not used. Rather, it reads, "but Yisrael shall be (Heb. yih'yeh) your name." It does not read, 'Yisrael shall be (Heb. vehayah) your name'. ACCORDING TO THIS, it is sufficient to call him Yisrael on only one occasion, TO FULFILL THE VERSE, WHICH READS, "BUT YISRAEL SHALL BE YOUR NAME." This is all the more true because although he is sometimes called Ya'akov, there are other times he is called Yisrael. When his sons are adorned with priests and Levites, he will be called by the name YISRAEL for all times.

17. Every beginning is difficult

Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Elazar discuss the idea that the beginning of any manifestation involves strain and death, which is later followed by relief and ease. Thus, Rachel's death after the birth of Benyamin was a necessary sacrifice in order that the Shechinah could resume Her proper place. Similarly, on Rosh Hashanah the world passes under severe Judgment, followed by relief, forgiveness, and atonement on Yom Kippur. The reason for this, Rabbi Elazar explains, is that beginning is from the left side, which brings harsh Judgment until the right side is aroused and provides relief. However, for idolaters the reverse is true. God shall first treat them gently and then later He will destroy them.

The Relevance of this Passage

Each new beginning in our lives represents the seed of all that will follow. The birth of a child, the outset of a new business enterprise, the start of a marriage--these are all examples of beginnings. Through the mystical words of the sages appearing in this ancient text, we help infuse our beginnings with extraordinary Light and positive energy, so that the seed of all that comes afterward is healthy and strong. We derive the strength to endure through the strains and obstacles of beginnings, and to accelerate the arrival of relief and fruition.

173. While they were walking, Rabbi Yosi said to Rabbi Elazar: We learned that when Rachel died, THE SHECHINAH, who needed the twelve tribes to achieve perfection, took Her house. HE ASKS: Why did Rachel die at that time? WAS THIS CONNECTED TO HER DEATH? He replied: The reason was to enable the Shechinah to be properly crowned and become "a joyful mother of children" (Tehilim 113:9). With BINYAMIN, THE SHECHINAH began to take the house and achieve perfection. HE IS OF THE ASPECT OF YESOD OF THE TWELVE TRIBES, AND IS THEREFORE THE FIRST TO PERFECT THE SHECHINAH. Therefore, THE STANDARD OF Binyamin is always facing west--AS YESOD IS CONSIDERED TO BE OF THE WEST--and not any other side.

174. With BINYAMIN, the Shechinah begins to achieve perfection through of the twelve tribes. Through him, the Kingdom of Heaven begins to manifest itself on earth, AS THE FIRST KING IN YISRAEL, SHAUL, WAS HIS DESCENDANT. It is a mystery that every manifestation begins with difficulties and contains the sentence of death, but the difficulties are later resolved.

175. When THE SHECHINAH desired to be perfected and take over the house, WITH THE TWELVE TRIBES COMPLETED, judgment was exacted from Rachel AND SHE DIED. Later, She prepared to assume Her proper place. Similarly, when the kingdom wished to establish itself on earth, it started with judgment against Shaul, who was THEN KILLED ON THE MOUNTAINS OF GILBOA, according to his deeds. Only after this judgment was exacted from Shaul the kingdom established and settled ON DAVID.

176. Come and behold: all beginnings are hard, but are followed by relief. Thus, on Rosh Hashanah everyone in the world is judged according to his own actions. Then comes relief and forgiveness and atonement ON YOM KIPPUR. THIS IS FOLLOWED BY THE SUKKOT ('THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES'). The reason is that every beginning has the aspect of the left, whose judgment is severe, but later the right is aroused, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "HIS LEFT HAND IS UNDER MY HEAD," AND THEN, "HIS RIGHT HAND EMBRACES ME" (SHIR HASHIRIM 2:6). Then relief comes.

177. THE REVERSE IS TRUE FOR THE IDOLATROUS PEOPLE OF THE WORLD. In the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will deal with them gently at first, but afterward with severe Judgment. This is the meaning of the verse: "Hashem shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up ardor like a man of war." First comes "Hashem," the Merciful; then He comes "as a mighty man," not a REAL mighty man; and later, "like a man of war," not a REAL man of war. Finally, Judgment will be given against them, and He will destroy them, as it is written: "He shall cry, indeed, roar, He shall show Himself mighty against His foes" (Yeshayah 42:13), and "Then shall Hashem go out, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle" (Zecharyah 14:3), and "Who is this that comes from Edom, with crimsoned garments from Bozra..." (Yeshayah 63:1)

178. "And it came to pass, as her soul was departing, for she died, that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Binyamin" (Bereshheet 35:18). Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse: "Hashem is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble: He knows them that trust in Him" (Nachum 1:7). Happy is the lot of one who is strengthened by the Holy One, blessed be He, because the stronghold of the Holy One, blessed be He, is indeed a stronghold, as it is written: "Hashem is good," as in, "good to all" (Tehilim 145:9); "a stronghold" of salvations, as it is written, "he is the saving strength of His anointed" (Tehilim 28:8). "...in the day of trouble..." is when trouble comes, and the other nations attack Yisrael.

18. "If you faint in the day of adversity"

The rabbis show us that it is incumbent upon man to walk the path of righteousness and to hold tightly to the Torah. This way, we're told, the Evil Inclination becomes our Advocate rather than our Accuser, and rises to vouch for us before God. The sacrifice of the he-goat on Yom Kippur follows this principle. The sacrifice engages the Evil Inclination so that he will ascend and deliver favorable testimony to God. This principle, we learn, is seen in the example of Rachel's death, which was a punishment for Ya'akov. Because Ya'akov did not fulfill his vow to God, and because he uttered a "causeless curse" when he said to Lavan, "Anyone with whom you find your Elohim," the Evil Inclination accused Rachel during a time of danger, and she perished.

The Relevance of this Passage

Spiritual Light gleams on this page, cleansing us of curses we have uttered in the past. A portion of this Light is given to the Evil Inclination, so that his words of praise replace his condemnation in the supernal courts protecting us from Judgments caused by our own negative deeds.

179. Come and behold. HE ASKS: In the verse, "If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small" (Mishlei 24:10), what is the meaning of "you faint?" HE REPLIS: A man

whose hands do not firmly hold on to the Holy One, blessed be He, to receive strength from Him. A man can be strengthened by stronger association with the Torah, for whoever is strengthened by the Torah holds more firmly to the Tree of Life, thereby giving power and strength to the Congregation of Yisrael, THE SHECHINAH.

180. But if he relaxes his hold on the Torah, then he faints, and if he is faint in his hold on the Torah, then "in the day of adversity," his "strength is small." When trouble comes, he presses the Shechinah, which is the power of the world.

181. Another explanation of the phrase, "your strength is small," is that when a man is faint in his hold on the Torah and walks a crooked path, many enemies wait to oppress him in a day of adversity. Even his own soul, his power and strength, become his foes and enemy. HE EXPLAINED THE WORDS, "YOUR STRENGTH IS SMALL (HEB. TZAR)," AS "YOUR STRENGTH IS AN ENEMY (HEB. TZAR)," WHICH REFERS TO HIS SOUL, WHICH REFLECTS A MAN'S STRENGTH.

182. Rabbi Aba said that when a man walks the path of the Torah and his ways are duly straight, many advocates stand ready to speak well of him. He opened the discussion with the verse: "If there be an angel over him, an intercessor, one among a thousand, to vouch for a man's uprightness, then He is gracious to him, and says: Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Iyov 33:23-24). We should study these verses carefully. Is not all revealed before the Holy One, blessed be He? Does He need an angel to announce before Him good and evil?

183. HE ANSWERS: ALTHOUGH HE KNOWS EVERYTHING, He surely requires AN ANGEL TO AROUSE MERCY, because when a man has good intercessors who remind the Holy One, blessed be He, of his merits, and no one who speaks of his sins, then "He is gracious to him, and says: Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom."

184. Come and behold: this verse clarifies the matter. It is written, "If there be an angel over him," which should be sufficient. Yet it continues, "an intercessor, one among a thousand." WE SHOULD THEREFORE FIND OUT who he is. HE SAID: This is the angel whose duty it is to be on the left side of man, as it is written: "A thousand shall fall at your side" (Tehilim 91:7). We know this to be the left side from the following words, "and ten thousand at your right hand," (Ibid.) WHICH MEANS THAT "AT YOUR SIDE," WHICH WAS WRITTEN EARLIER, REFERS TO THE LEFT SIDE.

185. The "one among a thousand" is the Evil Inclination, one of the thousand DEMONS of the left side. He ascends to receive permission TO COME DOWN AND KILL. But when a man walks the path of Righteousness, the Evil Inclination becomes his servant, as it is written: "Better is one lightly esteemed who owns a servant" (Mishlei 12:9). He then ascends and becomes his advocate, recalling his merits before the Holy One, blessed be He, and the Holy One, blessed be He, says: "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom."

186. With all that, the Evil Inclination does not return empty handed. Another man is delivered to him, one whose soul he may take because this man's sins are already known. HE IS CHARGED FOR THEM and is held ransom for the man who escaped. This is the meaning of the sentence, "I have found a ransom," to redeem him.

187. Another explanation of the words, "I have found a ransom," is that THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SAYS TO THE ANGEL: The merit you mentioned shall be THAT MAN'S ransom. It will redeem him from dying and going down to Gehenom. Therefore, it behooves a man to walk the path of Truth, so that his accuser shall turn into his advocate.

188. Similarly, the children of Yisrael employ such means on Yom Kippur, by giving THE EVIL INCLINATION, SAMAEL, a goat, NAMELY, A SCAPEGOAT, and thus engaging it until it becomes their servant and ascends to testify before the Holy One, blessed be He, as their intercessor. Solomon said of the Evil Inclination, "If your enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Mishlei 25:21).

189. Therefore, "on a day of adversity," when man's hold on the Torah is faint, it is as if he brings the Holy One, blessed be He, to HEAR THE ACCUSATIONS OF the Evil Inclination, who becomes his persecutor. THEN, IT IS A DAY OF ADVERSITY, WHEN "your strength is small," (Heb. tzar kochechah) WHICH CONSISTS OF THE WORD tzar koach koh. THIS MAKES SMALL

THE POWER (KOACH) OF THE SHECHINAH, REFERRED TO AS KOH, because THE EVIL INCLINATION approaches the presence of THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, to accuse, and the strength OF THE SHECHINAH is diminished BECAUSE OF IT.

190. Come and behold: "Hashem is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble." HE ASKS: What is this "day of trouble?" HE ANSWERS: The time when Esav came to accuse Ya'akov. "He knows them that trust in Him" is when Judgment was severe upon him AND RACHEL DIED, AS WILL BE EXPLAINED.

191. Come and behold: the Accuser is upon man only at a time of danger. Come and see, because Ya'akov was late COMPLETING his vow, which he made before the Holy One, blessed be He, the Accuser exacted Judgment from him and demanded justice at the time when Rachel was in danger. He said to the Holy One, blessed be He: Ya'akov did not fulfill his vow. Although he has wealth and many sons, and lacks nothing, he did not fulfill his vow made before You, and yet You have exacted no punishment. Immediately, "Rachel travailed and was in hard labor," (Beresheet 35:16) because this was the severe judgment that the Angel of Death exacted from him.

192. HE ASKS: Why was Ya'akov punished in this manner? HE REPLIES: This is in accordance with the verse, "If you have nothing with which to pay, why should he take away your bed from under you" (Mishlei 22:27). Therefore Rachel died; this was the judgment exacted by the Angel of Death.

193. Come and behold: what did YA'AKOV do when Esav came? "And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Yosef last of all" (Beresheet 33:2). What prompted him to do so? He was afraid for Rachel, lest that wicked man should behold her beauty and attack him because of it.

194. It is also written, "Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves," (Beresheet 33:6) the women before the men. But of Rachel the verse says, "and after came Yosef near and Rachel." Yosef stood before his mother, covering and concealing her. Thus the words, "Yosef is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well," (Beresheet 49:22) whose body grew bigger to protect his mother; "by a well (lit. 'an eye')" refers to that wicked man's eye, THAT MAN WHO MUST NOT CAST AN EYE ON HER.

195. Here, RACHEL was punished by the Evil Inclination, which accused her in a time of danger and punished Ya'akov for his unfulfilled vow. This was harder for Ya'akov than all his previous troubles. We know that RACHEL DIED because of Ya'akov from the words, "Rachel died by me"; (Beresheet 48:7) surely this happened because of me, because I tarried in FULFILLING my vow.

196. Rabbi Yosi said: It is written, "a curse that is causeless shall (lit. 'not'; Heb. lo, Lamed Aleph) come home" (Mishlei 26:2). This has been interpreted as lo (Lamed Vav) - "to him," SO IT WOULD SAY: "A CURSE THAT IS CAUSELESS SHALL COME TO HIM." THIS TEACHES US THAT once a righteous man curses, even if he did not mean TO CURSE, it is received by the Evil Inclination, who uses it to accuse in times of danger.

197. Ya'akov said, "Anyone with whom you find your Elohim, let him not live" (Beresheet 31:32). Although he did not know THAT RACHEL HAD STOLEN THEM, the Satan, who constantly abides among men, heard these words AND USED THEM TO ACCUSE IN A TIME OF DANGER. We therefore learned that a man should never open his mouth for the Satan, because he takes that utterance and uses it to accuse above and below, especially if the utterance came from the mouth of a righteous man or a sage. Rachel was punished for two reasons: BECAUSE YA'AKOV WAS LATE IN FULFILLING HIS VOW, AND BECAUSE OF THE CURSE HE UTTERED.

19. "And it came to pass, as her soul was departing"

Although the soul may depart the body and return during one's lifetime, Rachel's soul did not return and she died. Before she died, she named her last-born child Ben-oni, because of the severe Judgment against her. Ya'akov then renamed his youngest son Benjamin, also to bind him to the right side, just as he attached Rachel to Mercy.

The Relevance of this Passage

This section helps deepen our understanding of the importance of names, and of their influence on our destiny through the attraction or deflection of the Light. We achieve a greater connection to our own name and the particular influences that it radiates.

198. "And it came to pass, as her soul was departing for she died." Rabbi Aba asked: If the words, "as her soul was departing," mean that she died, WHY DOES THE VERSE CONTINUE WITH THE WORDS, "FOR SHE DIED?" HE REPLIED: THE WORDS, "FOR SHE DIED," were necessary TO INDICATE THAT THE SOUL did not return to the body, and she died bodily. THE DEPARTURE OF THE SOUL IS NOT AN INDICATION OF BODILY DEATH, for there are people whose souls departed and later returned to their places. This is the meaning of the verses: "And his spirit returned to him" (I Shmuel 30:12), "And their heart departed" (Bereshheet 42:28), "My soul departed" (Shir Hashirim 5:6), and, "until there was no soul left in him" (I Melachim 17:17). But when RACHEL'S soul departed, it did not return, and she died.

199. "That she called his name Ben-oni," because of the severe Judgment decided against her. Ya'akov, however, turned him to the right, NAMELY, TO CHASSADIM, to bind the west, THE NUKVA, to the right. And though he is Ben-oni (lit. 'the son of sorrow') OF THE NUKVA from the aspect of rigorous Judgment, NEVERTHELESS he is the son of the right, because THE NUKVA became attached to the right. HE THEREFORE CALLED HIM 'BINYAMIN', THE 'SON OF RIGHT', BECAUSE HE ATTACHED RACHEL TO THE RIGHT, TO CHASSADIM.

200. She was buried by the road. Her death and place of burial were known, AND SHE WAS BURIED BY THE ROAD IN AN OPEN PLACE. But the death and burial place of Leah are not recorded, although the four mothers share a secret, as has already been explained.

20. "And Ya'akov set a pillar"

This section explains the significance of the phrase, "to this day," which is attached to the title quotation. While Rabbi Yosi interprets this as a reference to the day when God resurrects the dead, Rabbi Yehuda explains that it is a reference to the day when the children of Yisrael return from exile, in accordance with the oath that God swore to the Shechinah. At that time, the children of Israel will weep for Rachel, as she wept for their exile--and Rachel, Yisrael, and the Shechinah shall rejoice together by the side of the road.

The Relevance of this Passage

A reading of this section accelerates the end of exile for the children of Israel. Moreover, this Light hastens the final Redemption and Resurrection for mankind. On a personal level, this Divine energy helps resurrect areas of our lives that have been disconnected from the Light. We literally gain freedom from the forces of death.

201. "And Ya'akov set a pillar upon her grave." Rabbi Yosi asked: Why DOES THE SCRIPTURE ADD THE WORDS, "TO THIS DAY?" HE REPLIED: Because her burial place will remain uncovered until the day when the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise the dead. Thus, it is said, "to this day," the very day OF RESURRECTION.

202. Rabbi Yehuda said that "to this day" refers to the day when the Shechinah shall repatriate the children of Yisrael from exile to RACHEL'S BURIAL place, as it is written: "And there is hope for your future, says Hashem, and your children shall come back again to their own border" (Yirmeyah 31:16). This is the oath the Holy One, blessed be He, swore TO THE SHECHINAH. And the children of Yisrael, when they return from exile, will stand by Rachel's grave and weep, as she wept for the exile of the children of Yisrael. The scripture therefore reads, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them" (Ibid. 8), and "for your work shall be rewarded" (Ibid. 15). At that time, Rachel will rejoice by the road together with Yisrael and the Shechinah, as has already been explained.

21. "Reuven went...Now the sons of Ya'akov were twelve"

Rabbi Yehuda discusses the power and influence of the Torah for the dead. When the soul of one who labors in the Torah departs this world, it ascends by the Torah's familiar ways, and the Torah preserves the body and guards it against the Judgments of the other world until the day of resurrection. However, when the soul of one who does not labor in the Torah

leaves this world, it does not know the paths to follow. Therefore, it "stumbles" and receives punishment.

This section also provides an explanation of Reuven's questionable actions, as related in the title verse. The discussion of this issue reveals that Reuven did not actually lie with Bilhah; rather, he disarranged the couch in order to prevent the Shechinah from performing her conjugal duty with Ya'akov. Thus, Reuven was punished. He was deprived of his birthright, which was transferred to Yosef, in accordance with God's Wisdom. However, Reuven's merits remained intact and his descendants remained worthy of inclusion among the twelve tribes. Similarly, the actions of Eli's son--recounted in the verse, "Now Eli was very old..."--do not mean that he lay with the women at the entrance to the Temple. Instead, he detained them, preventing them from entering until the other sacrifices had been offered, as was appropriate.

The Relevance of this Passage

The quality of life we create for ourselves in the physical realm mirrors the quality of life awaiting us after our departure from this existence. Our quality of life is determined by our actions and their degree of spiritual development via the path of Torah. This section enlightens us to the power of Torah and the path it offers. The radiating Light helps us clearly see the darkened corridors of this life, in order to avoid traveling darkened byways in the hereafter.

203. "And it came to pass, when Yisrael dwelt in that land, that Reuven went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Yisrael heard of it. Now the sons of Ya'akov were twelve" (Beresheet 35:22-23). Rabbi Elazar said: "when Yisrael dwelt (Heb. shkon) in that land," REFERS TO THE SHECHINAH CALLED 'LAND', for at that time when Leah and Rachel died, THE SHECHINAH became mistress of the house.

204. HE ASKS: Could you possibly think that Reuven lay with Bilhah? HE ANSWERS: As long as Leah and Rachel were ALIVE, the Shechinah hovered over them; once they died, the Shechinah never departed from the house, but dwelt in Bilhah's abode. HE ASKS: Although it was appropriate that the Shechinah should be mistress of the house, THAT IS, BE UNITED WITH YA'AKOV AFTER RACHEL'S DEATH, WHY WAS IT SAID THAT THE SHECHINAH DWELT WITH BILHAH? HE ANSWERS: She would not hover openly about the house if Ya'akov had not formed a union of male and female. Therefore, the Shechinah was to be found in Bilhah's tent, WHERE THERE WAS A UNION OF MALE AND FEMALE.

205. When Reuven saw that Bilhah had inherited his mother's place, he upset YA'AKOV'S bed BY TAKING IT AWAY. As the Shechinah was upon it, it is written as if he "lay with Bilhah." Rabbi Yesa said that he slept on the same bed, thus showing disrespect for the Shechinah. FOR THAT REASON, THE VERSE INTIMATES THAT IT WAS AS IF HE LAY WITH HER. But because HE DID NOT SIN, he was not excluded from the TWELVE tribes. Therefore scripture does the reckoning, SAYING, "NOW THE SONS OF YA'AKOV WERE TWELVE," and then, "Reuven, Ya'akov's first-born," thus appointing him head of all the tribes.

206. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse, "for the ways of Hashem are right, and the just do walk in them: but the transgressors shall stumble in them" (Hoshea 14:10). All the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, are Right and His paths True, but the people in the world do not know or care what they are based upon. "The just do walk in them," because they know the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, and study the Torah. Whoever is occupied in the study of the Torah is familiar with them and treads THE WAYS OF THE TORAH, never deviating right or left.

207. "But the transgressors shall stumble in them." These words refer to the wicked, who do not study the Torah or care for the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, or know where they are going. Because they do not know how to observe, and do not deal with the Torah, they stumble in this world and in the world to come.

208. Come and behold: when a man who studies the Torah passes away, his soul ascends through the roads and ways of the Torah, which are known to those who follow the ways of the Torah in this world. After they die, they tread these paths in the other world.

209. When those who do not study the Torah in this world, those who are not familiar with its roads and ways, leave this world, they do not know which way to go and they stumble. Because they chose ways that are not of the Torah, many judgments are raised against them, and they are punished.

210. Of he who studies the Torah, it is written, "When you lie down, it shall watch over you; when you wake, it shall talk to you" (Mishlei 6:22). "When you lie down" in the grave, the Torah shall watch over you from the Judgment of that world; "when you wake" refers to the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise spirits and souls that will resurrect the dead. Then, "it shall talk to you," being an advocate for the body, so that the bodies who studied the Torah shall rise in a proper manner. These are those who will rise first to everlasting life, as it is written, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life" (Daniel 12:2). Those who deal in everlasting life, the Torah, will awake to everlasting life.

211. Come and behold: the bodies of all the students of the Torah will be preserved, and the Torah shall protect them. The reason is that the Holy One, blessed be He, will arouse a wind, comprised of four winds, CHOCHMAH, BINAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT. That wind appears before those who studied the Torah and revives them to everlasting life.

212. You may say that it is written OF THE DEAD THAT YEchezkel RESURRECTED, "Come from the four winds, O breath (also: 'wind')" (Yechezkel 37:9). Why, then, did they die again, DERIVING NO BENEFIT FROM THAT WIND--WHICH COMPRISES THE FOUR WINDS--BY LIVING FOREVER? HE ANSWERS: Come and behold. When the Holy One, blessed be He, revived the dead through Yechezkel, that wind, although it did include the four winds, did not descend IN THE FIRST PLACE to revive them forever, but only to show how the Holy One, blessed be He, will in the future resurrect in the same way the dead and revive them by that wind included OF FOUR WINDS. And although the bones returned to what they were, the Holy One, blessed be He, only wanted to show the world that He will raise the dead in the future. And when He will, it will be for a perfect existence in this world. The Torah will THEN stand as an advocate before the Holy One, blessed be He, for those who strove in the Torah.

213. Rabbi Shimon said: The Torah and its words, NAMELY, ITS LOGIC, with which man was occupied in this world, stands ALWAYS before the Holy One, blessed be He, uttering speeches and raising voices. It is not silent. At the time OF RESURRECTION, it will talk and speak in accordance with man's devotion to it and his occupation with it in this world. They will therefore rise to complete existence and everlasting life, as we have said. For that reason, "the ways of Hashem are right, and the just do walk in them: but the transgressors shall stumble in them."

214. Rabbi Chiya continued the discussion with the verse: "Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did to all Yisrael; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the Tent of Meeting" (I Shmuel 2: 22). HE ASKS: Could it possibly occur to you that the priests of Hashem would do such a thing? The scripture specifies their sins earlier, as it is written: "for the men dishonored the offering of Hashem" (Ibid. 17); "And the priest's custom with the people was, that, when any man offered..." (Ibid. 13); "Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's lad came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give some roasting meat for the priest..." (Ibid. 15); "No; but you shall give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. Wherefore the sin of the lads was very great before Hashem" (Ibid. 16). And although they took only of what was theirs, the priests', to eat, they were nevertheless punished for treating the offering lightly. FROM THIS WE LEARN THAT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS, AS THEY WERE VERY STRICTLY DEALT WITH. Yet here it is written: "they lay with the women that assembled," AND COMMITTED SUCH A GRAVE OFFENSE.

215. HE ANSWERS: Heaven forbid that they should commit such a transgression, especially in such a holy place, for Yisrael will rise and kill them. But they only detained the women from entering the temple and protested that they must not come in to pray before the offerings were sacrificed. They detained them because their offering held no portion for the priests. This is why THEY DETAINED the women who wanted to enter THE TEMPLE, hence the words, "they lay with the women," that is, held them from entering THE TEMPLE, AS WE HAVE SAID.

216. There is a similar meaning in the words, "and lay with Bilhah" (Beresheet 35: 22). Heaven forbid that he lay with her; he only stopped her from performing her marital duty

with Ya'akov by disarranging the bed. He did this in the presence of the Shechinah, because wherever intercourse is performed according to the law, the Shechinah hovers about and dwells in that place. He who blocks the commandment of intercourse causes the departure of Shechinah from the world. It is therefore written, "you went up to your father's bed; then you did defile it: he went up to my couch," (Beresheet 49:4) and "he lay with Bilhah his father's concubine, and Yisrael heard of it. Now the sons of Ya'akov were twelve," WHICH TEACHES US THAT all of them were counted, and their merit remained intact.

217. Rabbi Elazar asked: Why was he first called Yisrael and then Ya'akov in the verse, "and Yisrael heard of it. Now the sons of Ya'akov were twelve?" HE ANSWERS: When Reuven disarranged the bed, he said, What DOES THIS MEAN? My father had to bring twelve tribes into the world and now he wishes to beget sons. Are we deficient that he desires others IN OUR STEAD? Immediately, he disarranged the bed and intercourse was thwarted. It was CONSIDERED as if he showed contempt toward the Shechinah, who then hovered over the bed. Therefore it is written, "and Yisrael heard of it," for by using this name, he was elevated to the secret twelve GRADES, the twelve rivers of pure balsam.

218. "Now the sons of Ya'akov were twelve." This refers to the twelve tribes by which the Shechinah was perfected. The Torah again enumerated them as it did before REUVEN'S SIN. They are all holy and the Shechinah considered them worthy of beholding the sanctity of their Master. Had Reuven really sinned, he would not have been counted among the tribes.

219. Even so, REUVEN was punished. His birthright was taken from him and given to Yosef, as it is written: "Now the sons of Reuven the firstborn of Yisrael, for he was the firstborn; but since he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Yosef" (I Divrei Hayamim 5:1). Come and behold: "Blessed be the name of Elohim for ever and ever" (Daniel 2:20). His works are all true, His ways just, and His deeds follow the Supernal Wisdom.

220. Come and behold: Everything man does has an effect, for it is written and preserved before the Holy One, blessed be He. When Ya'akov came in to Leah, his heart and desires were with Rachel the whole night, because he thought she was Rachel. From that union, from the first seed and desire, Leah conceived. It was explained that if Ya'akov had known SHE WAS LEAH, BUT NEVERTHELESS THOUGHT OF RACHEL, Reuven would not have been considered to be one OF THE TRIBES. HE WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED A CHANGELING SON. BUT SINCE IT WAS IN THE ABSENCE OF INTENT, the offspring was not given a specific name, but just called 'Reuven' (lit. 'see, a son'.)

221. Nevertheless, everything reverted to its proper place. Because Ya'akov's original desire was for Rachel, the desire reverted to Rachel, since the birthright was returned to Yosef, Rachel's eldest son, the place where the desire was, THAT IS, Rachel. Thus, all was properly settled, because all the works of the Holy One, blessed be He, are true and just.

22. "Who is this coming out of the wilderness"

Smoke that rises from the fat dropping into the fire while Rabbi Yosi cooks, leads to a discussion and interpretation of the title quotation. Rabbi Yosi explains that when the children of Yisrael offered sacrifices, smoke rising straight up meant that the candle that had been lit was indeed worthy of being lit. However, once the Temple was destroyed, joy was replaced by rage in both the Upper and Lower Worlds, and the children of Israel went into exile under the dominion of other gods. As they traveled through the desert, the Shechinah went before them in a cloud of smoke. The Shechinah was attached to all three columns--that is, to Avraham, Yitzchak, Ya'akov, and Yosef, the latter two being of one essence. The reason for the exile, we're told, is "you would not serve The Creator, your Elohim with joyfulness." Thus, the children of Yisrael shall suffer until God rises up to redeem them among the nations.

The Relevance of this Passage

In a spiritual context, the notion of offering sacrifices for the purpose of "lighting the candle worthy of being lit," refers not to the sacrificial slaughter of animals, but to the sacrifice of ego in order to ignite the Light of the soul. The many sacrifices described in Scripture pertain to the various negative traits dwelling within the consciousness of man. Removing these traits is the basis of all spiritual work. Enlightened with this spiritual perspective, these

verses help us sacrifice negative characteristics, allowing the Light of our souls to shine ever more brightly.

222. On a visit to Rabbi Yosi, Rabbi Chizkiyah saw a piece of meat drop FROM HIS POT into the fire. As a result of the dripping of the fat, smoke rose up. He said to him: Had the pillars of smoke from the offering risen from the altar like this smoke, there would have been no wrath upon the world and Yisrael would not have gone into exile from their land.

223. Rabbi Yosi answered by quoting the verse: "Who is this coming out of the wilderness like columns of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?" (Shir Hashirim 3:6) WHAT IS THE MEANING OF, "Who is this coming out?" HE REPLIS: Come and behold. When the children of Yisrael were walking in the desert, the Shechinah went before them. They followed, as it is written, "And Hashem went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go..." (Shemot 13:21). Therefore, it is written: "Thus says Hashem; I remember in your favor, the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, when you did go after me in the wilderness" (Yirmeyah 2:2). THUS, THE SHECHINAH WENT BEFORE THEM, AND THEY FOLLOWED. THIS MEANS THAT THEY RECEIVED FROM HER BACK, AS WILL BE MENTIONED SHORTLY.

224. The Shechinah advanced with all the clouds of glory about Her. When the Shechinah would go, so would the children of Yisrael, as it is written: "And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Yisrael journeyed" (Bemidbar 9:17). When She ascended, the cloud rose high, and all the people of the world saw and asked, "Who is this coming out of the wilderness like columns of smoke?"

225. The cloud in which the Shechinah was seen was made of smoke. Why? Because the light kindled by Avraham and Yitzchak, his son, clung to Her and never left Her. Whenever the fire seized Her, smoke would rise up.

226. Moreover, She was "perfumed with myrrh and frankincense." By "perfumed," it is meant that She was attached to the other two sides, MITIGATING AND ENVELOPING ONE ANOTHER, Avraham's cloud on the right and Yitzchak's cloud on the left. The "powders of the merchant" refers to Ya'akov. THIS MEANS SHE WAS CONNECTED TO THE THREE COLUMNS: "MYRRH" IS THE RIGHT COLUMN, AVRAHAM; "FRANKINCENSE" IS THE LEFT COLUMN, YITZCHAK; AND "ALL THE POWDERS OF THE MERCHANT" IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN THAT CONNECTS BOTH, THIS IS WHY IT IS CALLED A MERCHANT WHO HOLDS BOTH TYPES OF FRAGRANCE IN HIS HANDS.

227. Another explanation is that the "powders of the merchant" refers to Yosef the Righteous, for his coffin (lit. 'ark'), YESOD, traveled by Her. He was called a merchant (Heb. rochel; also: 'talebearer') because he slandered his brothers (Heb. rechilut) before his father. According to another explanation, he was thus called because just as a merchant possesses all kinds of bundles of incense and perfumed herb powders, so Yosef maintained the Torah, for he observed it as all the precepts of the Torah are connected to keeping the Holy Covenant, WHICH HE DID.

228. Another explanation connects the powders with Avraham, Yitzchak, Ya'akov, and Yosef, who had one and the same image. This is the meaning of the verse: "These are the generations of Ya'akov. Yosef" (Beresheet 37:2). Thus, the words, "with all powders of the merchant" refer to the source from which the river is drawn and flows, YESOD, WHICH IS YOSEF. Everything is watered from it and the faces of all are illuminated.

229. Come and behold: when Yisrael dwelt in their land and offered sacrifices, they approached nearer to the Holy One, blessed be He. When the sacrifice was offered and the smoke rose straight, they knew that the smoke from the altar lit the candle worthy of being lit; all faces shone and the candles were burning.

230. Since the Temple was destroyed, not a day passes without wrath and anger, as it is written, "and an El who had indignation every day" (Tehilim 7:12). Joy was banished above and below, and the children of Yisrael went into exile under the dominion of other Elohim. Then, the verse is fulfilled, as it is written: "and there you shall serve other Elohim" (Devarim 28:64).

231. HE ASKS: Why DID YISRAEL DESERVE all this? HE ANSWERS: As it is written, "Because you would not serve Hashem your Elohim with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things" (Ibid. 47-48). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "the abundance of all things?" HE ANSWERS: Here, there is "the abundance of all things," and there, "want of all things."

232. So it shall be until the Holy One, blessed be He, arouses Himself and redeems us from among the nations, as it is written: "that then Hashem your Elohim will turn your captivity, and have compassion upon you, and will return and gather you from all the nations, amongst whom Hashem your Elohim had scattered you. If your outcasts be at the utmost parts of heaven, from there will Hashem your Elohim gather you..." (Devarim 30:3-4).

23. "Now these are the generations of Esav"

This passage explains why Scripture does not enumerate the sons of Esav until after the death of Yitzchak, while Ya'akov's sons are enumerated long before he dies. This, we learn, is because Esav abandoned the true Faith completely, leaving Ya'akov with an enhanced portion, as well as the heritage of his father and his ancestors.

The Relevance of this Passage

Yitzchak, his son Ya'akov, and their succeeding generations, forged the spiritual path that led to the revelation of the Torah, and therefore, they represent its eternal, supernal Light. Esav, however, embodies the force of darkness and eternal death. This section connects us to Light of the Torah, expressed through the patriarchs Yitzchak and Ya'akov.

233. "Now these are the generations of Esav, who is Edom" (Beresheet 36:1). Come and behold: Esav's sons were not counted while Yitzchak was alive, as were the sons of Ya'akov, who were counted before he died. Of Esav it is written: "And Yitzchak expired, and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esav and Ya'akov buried him," followed by "Now these are the generations of Esav, who is Edom." Why WERE THEY NOT COUNTED IN HIS LIFETIME? Because only Ya'akov and his sons are the portion, inheritance, and lot OF YITZCHAK. For that reason, Ya'akov and his sons, who are the portion of the Holy One, blessed be He, were counted. Esav, however, had no portion in the side of the faith. Therefore, his accounts were settled only after Yitzchak died, when his portion was separated FROM HOLINESS into another place.

234. Come and behold: after Yitzchak died and Esav went to his side, it is written: "And Esav took his wives...away from his brother Ya'akov" (Beresheet 36:6). In doing this, he left both capital and profit to Ya'akov, HE RELINQUISHED the bondage of Egypt, WHICH IS THE CAPITAL AND THE PROFIT THEREFROM, THE HERITAGE OF the Land of Yisrael. He sold his share of the cave of the Machpelah and went from the land, the faith, and his portion, thus walking away from AND LEAVING everything.

235. Come and behold: how much Ya'akov's portion was increased in all respects when Esav left him and went to his own lot and portion. Ya'akov thus continued to hold the heritage of his father and his ancestors. And so it is written: "and went into another country away from his brother Ya'akov." HE ASKS: Why is it written, "away from his brother Ya'akov?" HE ANSWERS: Because he did not care for his inheritance or share YA'AKOV'S lot of faith. Happy is the lot of Ya'akov, of whom the verse says, "For Hashem's portion is His people; Ya'akov is the lot of His inheritance" (Devarim 32:9).

24. "And these are the kings"

Rabbi Yesa begins a discussion of the verse, "Behold, I will make you small among nations..." After God created the world, he placed seventy ministers over the seventy nations. These ministers are best described as intelligent supernal influences; they are angelic forces that rule and direct the affairs of the nations on a spiritual level. Of all the ministers, Esav is the most despised before God, as he represents the Side of Defilement. The lower grades, we learn, form a hierarchy and are linked and interlocked by a bond that holds them to their proper side. The Unclean Side diverges into numerous paths and distributes power to the multitudes in the Lower World. The quotation, "These are the kings," refers to the grades of Esav which reigned before there was any king over Yisrael, before the

higher grades were perfected and the kingdom of Heaven was established in its own place, never to be removed.

The Relevance of this Passage

A reading of this section arouses the Light of protection against the powers of darkness. Though unseen, these negative entities are as real as the equally invisible atoms or the force of gravity.

236. "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Yisrael" (Beresheet 36:31). Rabbi Yesa began the discussion with the verse: "Behold, I will make you small among the nations: you are greatly despised" (Ovadyah 1:2). Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He divided the earth into seven regions that correspond to the seventy ministers APPOINTED OVER THE NATIONS. THESE ARE THE SECRET OF THE EXTERIOR--CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT--EACH CONSISTING OF TEN AND THEREBY TOTALING SEVENTY. The Holy One, blessed be He, appointed THE SEVENTY MINISTERS over the seventy nations, each according to its worth, as it is written: "When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Yisrael " (Devarim 32:8).

237. Among all the ministers appointed over the nations, no one is as despised before THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, as Esav's minister, because Esav represents the Side of Defilement, which is despicable before the Holy One, blessed be He. ESAV'S MINISTER was issued from the small grades behind the millstones. From the emptiness of the red sides came THE MINISTER OF ESAV. Therefore it is written, "Behold, I will make you small among the nations: you are greatly despised," which has the same meaning as "upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life" (Beresheet 3:14), 'greatly' resembles the words, "You are cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field" (Ibid.).

238. Come and behold: within the lower grades, there are grades upon grades that are all different than each other. Yet, they are both detached from and attached to each other IN SUCH A WAY THAT Malchut OF EACH OF THE GRADES is separated, yet each Malchut is interconnected to Malchut. THE REASON IS THAT as one enters, another ascends and thus, they are united by a bond.

239. This bond has one level OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN. Each level contains three bonds; AS THE CENTRAL COLUMN CONTAINS ALL THREE COLUMNS; each bond contains one crown, NAMELY, THE CROWN REFERRED TO IN THE VERSE, "THE CROWN WITH WHICH HIS MOTHER CROWNED HIM" (SHIR HASHIRIM 3:11). And in every crown there is a singular force of command.

240. THE FORCE OF COMMAND was assigned by being crowned from above, and assigned to descend until the stars and constellations are attached to it. Every FORCE OF COMMAND IN EACH OF THE THREE CROWNS contains one star and one constellations. Because all the stars are connected to the upper grades, AND THE CONSTELLATIONS TO THE LOWER GRADES, each grade is crowned in certain places, according to its INDIVIDUAL worth.

241. When the grades diverge, they form a disrupting link, until it is connected to its worthy place, and the aspects of the defiled grades of the left side all diverge into several ways and paths of the aspects of the red Gvurot THAT RUN FROM BINAH, THE SECRET OF RED, and because lower Gvurot are counted below by the thousands and myriads, then "Behold, I will make you small among the nations: you are greatly despised."

242. Come and behold: "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom." "...the land..." is the side of Esav's grade, as it is written, "Esav, who is Edom." All THESE KINGS came from the side of the unclean spirit. "...before there reigned any king over the children of Yisrael" refers to these grades OF ESAV, which stand at the lower gates and are the first TO BE PERFECTED. The reason Ya'akov said, "Let my lord, I pray you, pass over before his servant" (Beresheet 33:14), is that Esav's grades are the first to enter AND BE PERFECTED, FOR THE LOWER GRADES ARE CORRECTED FIRST AND THE HIGHER GRADES LATER. They were, therefore, "before there reigned any king over the children of Yisrael," for the time had

not come for the Kingdom of Heaven to rule and join hands with the children of Yisrael. He therefore said, "Let my lord, I pray you, pass over before his servant."

243. After these grades are perfected, the Kingdom of Heaven will be aroused to rule over the lower beings. Its rulership shall start with Binyamin, the youngest of the tribes, NAMELY, WITH SHAUL WHO IS OF THE TRIBE OF BINYAMIN. This is the meaning of the verse, "There is Binyamin, the youngest, ruling them" (Tehilim 68: 28). The Kingdom began to take root in him, later coming into its own place, TO KING DAVID, to be established and never to depart.

25. Ya'akov, Yisrael and Yeshurun

Rabbi Chiya discourses on the names Ya'akov, Yisrael, and Yeshurun, which appear in the verse, "Yet now hear, O Ya'akov My servant..." These names represent three different grades, yet all amount to one. Similarly, the terms, "created," "formed," and "made," which also appear in the verse, represent three different grades, yet all are one. We learn that the children of Israel, to whom God gave the Torah so that they might merit the Holy Land and a portion in the world to come, are fortunate indeed, while the idolaters will one day be destroyed.

The Relevance of this Passage

When the light of the sun passes through a prism, the beam refracts into the seven colors of the spectrum. The colors are many, but they are one. Spiritual Light follows the same profound principle, with each grade of Light offering another frequency of fulfillment. Three "colors" in the Divine spectrum of Light shine through to our souls in this passage through the words, "created," "formed," and "made," and "Ya'akov," "Yisrael," and "Yeshurun." These three help us to merit a portion in the world to come, and connect us to the Divine energy radiating from the Land of Yisrael.

244. Rabbi Chiya continued with the verse: "Yet now hear, O Ya'akov my servant; and Yisrael whom I have chosen: thus says Hashem that made you, and formed you from the womb, who will help you; Fear not O Ya'akov my servant; and you, Yeshurun, whom I have chosen" (Yeshayah 44:1-2). Come and behold: how many times did the Holy One, blessed be He, promise the children of Yisrael that He would cause them to inherit the world to come. For He desired no other nation or tongue for His portion but Yisrael alone. Therefore, the Torah of Truth was given to them, through which to merit and learn the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, and thus inherit the Holy Land. For whoever merits this Holy Land has a portion in the world to come, as it is written: "Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever" (Yeshayah 60:21). This has already been explained.

245. There are three grades IN THE VERSE BEFORE US: First Ya'akov, then Yisrael, and Yeshurun last, AND WE SHOULD KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM. Come and behold: we already explained Ya'akov and Yisrael, though both grades are the same.

246. HE ASKS: Why are Yisrael called by the name of Yeshurun? HE ANSWERS: Yisrael and Yeshurun are one. The meaning of Yeshurun, as it is written, "He should then assemble (Heb. yashor) a row of men" (Iyov 33:27), is that he takes a row from the one side and a row from the other side. Because there are two rows, he is called 'Yeshurun', IN THE PLURAL. Also, Yisrael IS DERIVED FROM 'ROW' (HEB. SHURAH), BEING THE LETTERS OF YASHOR EL, IN THE SINGULAR.

247. Yisrael is pronounced WITH THE LETTER SIN, WHICH ALLUDES TO OFFICIALDOM (HEB. SERARAH), for having command and power over all. Yeshurun IS THUS NAMED after the two parts, the RIGHT AND LEFT sides, the two rows already mentioned. They are all one.

248. He explained that all these names amount to one. "Ya'akov my servant," for he is a servant at times and abides his Master's command and executes His wishes. Also, "Yisrael whom I have chosen," MEANS to dwell on. All is according to a deep mystery. It is thus written: "that created you, O Ya'akov, and He that formed you, O Yisrael" (Yeshayah 43:1), and "Hashem that made you." All these grades are counted as one. Therefore, the verbs: created, formed, and acted are related to them respectively: one grade is over the other and all these grades are one.

249. Happy is the portion of Yisrael that the Holy One, blessed be He, desired them above all the idolatrous nations, of which the scripture says: "They are vanity, the work of delusion: in the time of their punishment they shall perish," (Yirmeyah 10:15) when the Holy One, blessed be He, will wipe them away from the earth, and He will remain alone, as it is written, "and Hashem alone shall be exalted on that day" (Yeshayah 2:11).

26. "Fear not, you worm Ya'akov"

Rabbi Yehuda leads a discussion of the title verse and the regenerative power of the children of Yisrael. There are two explanations for the comparison of the children of Yisrael to the "worm," as well as an explanation of the comparison of the children of Yisrael to clay, which actually signifies glass. Finally, an interpretation of "O men of Israel" reveals it to represent the Tree of Life. Because the children of Yisrael cleave to the Tree of Life, we're told, they shall one day rise from the dust and be established as one nation to serve God.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Tree of Life is a realm of pure Light and energy, devoid of darkness, death and decay. While our world is a domain of constant desire for Light, the Tree of Life reality embodies infinite Light. Standing in the way of our deepest desires, and the endless Light that can fulfill them, is a single curtain--the ego of man. Our darkened world gives us the opportunity to earn and create the Light by striving to remove all aspects and influences of our ego, via Torah. This spiritual commitment is how a man cleaves to the Tree of Life. By helping us eradicate our egos, these verses connect our souls to the Tree of Life reality.

250. Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse: "Fear not, you worm, Ya'akov, O men of Yisrael; I will help you, says Hashem, and your redeemer, the holy One of Yisrael" (Yeshayah 41:14). Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, put all the heathen nations in the world under certain ministers, as we learned, and they all follow their Elohim, as it is written: "For let all people walk each in the name of his Elohim" (Michah 4: 5). They all shed blood, wage war, rob, beat, and fornicate. They mingle with those who cause evil. Thus, their power to harm increases.

251. The children of Yisrael have no might or power to overcome them except through their mouths, THAT IS, PRAYER, as a worm has no might or power, save in its mouth. But by its mouth, it wears through everything. Thus, the children of Yisrael are called "worm."

252. Another EXPLANATION OF, "Fear not, you worm Ya'akov," is that there is no creature like the silkworm, which produces glorious garments that are the raiments of kings. After ITS SPINNING, it produces a seed and dies. Later, from that very seed it lives again. The children of Yisrael are like this worm. Although they die, they are revived and live in the world as before.

253. It is also written: "Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Yisrael" (Yirmeyah 18:6). HE ASKS: What is this clay? HE ANSWERS: It is the material of glass. Although it may break, it is mended and may be used again. IN THE SAME MANNER, ALTHOUGH THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL DIE, THEY ARE RESURRECTED.

254. "O men of Yisrael" is the Tree of Life, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'YISRAEL', because the children of Yisrael cleave to the Tree of Life. As a result, they will be endowed with life and rise from the dust to be established in the world as the one nation that will serve the Holy One, blessed be He. As it is written, "that they may all call upon the name of Hashem, to serve Him with one consent" (Tzefanyah 3:9).

27. Midnight and the morning prayer

After Rabbi Elazar recites the Sh'ma and says his prayers, Rabbi Yitzchak begins a discussion of the proper times to pray. Before commencing a journey, for example, we should first consult God and offer prayer. We should also offer prayers at midnight and in the morning after the sun rises, but not in the darkness of early morning, since this is a time when husband and wife are bound up as one in the secret of union.

The Relevance of this Passage

In truth, prayers are non-material cables that transmit specific spiritual influences to our souls. Different influences are "broadcast" at intervals during the earth's rotation and orbit around the sun. The ancient sages understood these timetables and constructed the appropriate "cables" in the form of prayers. Reading this passage helps align and tune our prayers to their highest frequency, maximizing their strength and effectiveness.

255. Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Yitzchak were walking together when the time arrived for reciting the Sh'ma. Rabbi Elazar stood up, recited the Sh'ma, and said his prayers. Afterwards, Rabbi Yitzchak said to him: We learned that a man should, before going on his way, obtain permission from his Master and say his prayers.

256. He replied: When I started it was not yet time for prayer or for reading the Sh'ma. Now that the sun has risen, I prayed. Still, before I left I beseeched Him and asked for His counsel, although I had not yet recited the MORNING service.

257. I have been delving in the Torah since midnight. When morning broke, it was not yet time to pray, because during the darkness of early morning, the wife and husband converse and are in the secret of union as one. Then, she retires to her abode with her maids, who sit with her THERE. Thus, a man must not interrupt them with another matter, when they are united as one.

258. Now that the sun is shining, the time for prayer has come, as has been explained in connection with the verse, "May they fear with the sun" (Tehilim 72:5). The words "with the sun" MEAN to keep with us the light of the sun IN ORDER to shine on THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED 'FEAR'. For fear, THE NUKVA, should be UNITED with the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, and not separated. As long as there is no daylight, fear is not with the sun. THEREFORE, WHEN THE SUN SHINES, we should unite them. This is the meaning of the verse: "...with the sun."

28. "...who found the Yemim in the wilderness"

As Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Yitzchak travel, they see a mountain with strange creatures circling its peak. Rabbi Elazar assures Rabbi Yitzchak that he need not fear these creatures, since only he who fears his sins has cause to fear, and he begins a discussion of the title verse. The Yemin, we're told, are descendants of Kayin. They are unnatural beings created from the side of evil spirits at the moment when the Sabbath was about to be sanctified. Though they are able to put on bodies once a day, they remain bodiless because they were disowned by both the sixth and the seventh days. Because the Defiled Spirit cleaved to him, we further learn, Ana was able to find these spirits and they taught him of matters pertaining to defilement. But whoever walks in the ways of God may encounter them without fear.

The Relevance of this Passage

We have all felt the influences of the dark forces roaming through this physical dimension. The energy of this particular passage wraps us in the protection of the Light. This spares us harm from evil spirits, while strengthening our resolve to connect more devoutly to the Light in all our endeavors.

259. RABBI ELAZER AND RABBI YITZCHAK continued their travels until they reached a field, where they sat down. They lifted up their heads and saw a mountain with strange creatures circling its peak. When Rabbi Yitzchak became frightened, Rabbi Elazar asked: Why are you afraid? He replied: I see this huge mountain with strange creatures on it, and I am afraid lest they will attack us. He said: Whoever is fearful should be fearful for the sins he committed. Come and behold: these are not the same creatures who used to haunt the mountains.

260. He began the discussion by quoting the verse: "And these are the children of Tziv'on; both Aya and Ana: this is Ana who found the Yemim in the wilderness" (Beresheet 36:24). This verse has already been explained, yet come and behold: these are not those mentioned in the verse, "The Emim dwelt there in times past...but the children of Esav succeeded them" (Devarim 2:10-12).

261. But in the verse, "who found the Yemim in the wilderness," Yemim is spelled defectively, WITHOUT THE LETTER YUD, WHICH IS AN INDICATION OF WANT, because THE

DESCENDANTS OF KAYIN, after he was driven from the face of the earth, are strange creatures, as it is written: "Behold, You have driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from Your face I shall be hid" (Bereshheet 4:14), and "and dwelt in the land of Nod" (Ibid. 16). This has already been explained.

262. KAYIN'S descendants are from the side of spirits, storms, and fiends, for when Shabbat was about to be sanctified AT SUNSET, ghosts that were created from that side roamed about without a body. They were born neither on the sixth nor on the seventh day, BEING BORN AT SUNSET, and thus there is doubt as to which day they were from, as they are disowned by both this DAY and that DAY.

263. They kept on spreading from that side of Kayin, THAT IS, BEING HIS DESCENDANTS, clothed by that side yet without TANGIBLE EXISTENCE. Yemim is THEREFORE spelled without a Yud, for they are disowned by both days, THAT IS, BY BOTH FRIDAY AND SHABBAT, BECAUSE THEY WERE CREATED AT SUNSET. They may be seen by men, THAT IS, DESPITE BEING GHOSTS, ONCE A DAY THEY DON A BODY. ANA found THE SPIRITS CALLED YEMIM, and they taught him how to bring bastards into the world, THAT IS, BY MATING AN ASS AND A HORSE SO THEY WOULD ISSUE A MULE. They haunt the mountains and don a body once a day, then strip themselves AND REMAIN BODILESS.

264. Come and behold: Ana was a bastard from Tziv'on, who came to Ana's mother and begot a bastard. He THEREFORE came from the Defiled Spirit that cleaved to him and enabled him to find THESE SPIRITS, who taught him matters that pertain to The Side of Defilement.

265. Come and behold: these and several others who came out from each other were all from that side, THE LEFT SIDE. They may be seen walking in the desert, a desolate place in which they live. FOR DESTRUCTION ALWAYS COMES FROM THE LEFT SIDE. For all this, a man who walks the paths of the Holy One, blessed be He, and fears Him is not afraid of them. They went and climbed onto the mountain, WHICH MEANS THAT THEY EXTENDED THE LIGHT OF THE LEFT INTO THE NUKVA AND FEARED NOT.

266. Rabbi Yitzchak asked: Are all the desolated mountains also their dwelling place? He replied: Indeed they are, but of those who study the Torah, the scripture says, "Hashem shall preserve you from all evil: He shall preserve your soul. Hashem shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and for ever more" (Tehilim 12:1, 7-8).

29. "I will praise Hashem with my whole heart"

Rabbi Elazar quotes the title verse and proceeds to discuss the righteous ways of King David, who devoted his life to God. David knew that when the northern wind stirs at midnight, God joins the righteous in the Garden of Eden. He also knew that the words of the Torah spoken at night ascend before God. Therefore, he would rise at midnight to sing songs and to praise God. Of all the titles that he gave his songs, "Halleluyah" was the greatest--because the word encompasses both the Name of God and the call to praise Him. Rabbi Elazar then concludes by explaining the meaning of "whole heart" and "the assembly of the upright."

The Relevance of this Passage

The might and mystical wisdom of King David stirs within our soul as we peruse this passage. Specifically, the Light aroused at midnight through the actions and songs of David, descends into our world, filling our souls and the souls of mankind. This diminishes the spiritual darkness that gives birth to personal and global strife.

267. Rabbi Elazar then quoted the verse: "Halleluyah. I will praise Hashem with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation" (Tehilim 111:1). This verse has already been explained, yet come and behold: King David worshiped the Holy One, blessed be He, all his life. He would rise at midnight to praise and offer thanks in songs and hymns to establish his place in the kingdom above.

268. He knew that when the northern wind stirred at midnight, the Holy One, blessed be He, rose in the Garden of Eden to delight Himself with the Righteous. David therefore rose at that time and strengthened himself with songs and praises until morning.

269. This is because the Holy One, blessed be He, is then in the Garden of Eden. We have explained that He and all the Righteous in the Garden would listen to his voice, as it is written: "the companions hearken for your voice: cause me to hear it" (Shir Hashirim 8:13). A thread of grace would also be drawn upon him by day, as we learned from the verse: "in the daytime Hashem will command his steadfast love, and in the night His song shall be with me" (Tehilim 42:9). Moreover, the words of Torah he uttered DURING THE NIGHT would rise and be adorned before the Holy One, blessed be He. King David, therefore, would devote the whole night to the worship of his Master.

270. Come and behold: "Haleluyah". From all the songs and hymns David had sung, the greatest was Haleluyah, as has been explained. What is the reason for this? It contains both a name and praise. HE ASKS: What are they? The name is Yah, but what of the praise? The praise is the Congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE NUKVA CALLED HALEL, BECAUSE it perpetually offers praise to the Holy One, blessed be He, and is never silent, as it is written, "Do not keep silence, Elohim: do not hold Your peace, and be still, El" (Tehilim 83:2), because it offers continuous praise before Him. This is why a name and praise together ARE HINTED AT IN THE WORD HALELUYAH (LIT. 'PRAISE YAH').

271. "I will praise Hashem with my whole heart." It has already been explained THAT WITH THE WHOLE HEART MEANS with the Good Inclination and the Evil, which are constant companions to man, as was explained in reference to "with all your heart" (Devarim 6:5). THIS MEANS THAT THE GOOD INCLINATION DWELLS IN THE RIGHT PART OF THE HEART, AND THE EVIL INCLINATION IN THE LEFT PART. IT IS TRUE IN THIS CASE AS WELL.

272. "...in the assembly of the upright..." refers to the children of Yisrael, WHO ARE CALLED 'UPRIGHT', BECAUSE all the grades are adorned through them, the priests and Levites, the Righteous and the pious, who are upright. "...in the congregation," has the same meaning as "stands in the congregation of El" (Tehilim 82:1). They are the mystery with which the Holy One, blessed be He, adorns Himself.

273. It therefore behooves a man to constantly praise the Holy One, blessed be He, because He desires songs and hymns. Whoever knows how to properly praise the Holy One, blessed be He, will find that He accepts his prayer and delivers him. This is the meaning of the verse: "I will set him on high, because he has known My name...with long life will I satisfy him" (Tehilim 91:14-16).

30. "You are my hiding place"

Rabbi Elazar explains the terms, "hiding place," "adversary," and "songs of deliverance." All the songs and hymns of David, we learn, contain profound allusions to Wisdom, because they were composed with the direct inspiration of God. Rabbi Elazar then discusses the meaning of the verse, "You did push me hard..." David addressed these words to the Other Side, which presses man to turn away from God. As David knew well, God protects those who guard against the Evil Inclination.

The Relevance of this Passage

King David was a brave and valiant warrior by day's light and a profound mystic during the hours of moonlight. Spiritually, David waged war and conquered the Evil Inclination within himself. This is the decisive battleground where the greatest of wars and conflicts unfold. Employing the mystical wisdom of Kabbalah, David skillfully wielded the power of the Light and thus triumphed over the forces of Darkness. This spiritual might and courage is instilled within us by these ancient verses. Moreover, the Light of David empowers our prayers, securing for us greater protection against the internal forces of evil, and increasing the Light that pours into our lives, and hence, into the world.

274. Rabbi Yosi quoted the verse: "You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from the adversary; You do compass me about with songs of deliverance. Sela" (Tehilim 32:7). "...my hiding place," refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, who is a hiding place and a shield to the man who treads the paths of the Torah, THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, and is hidden under the shadow of His wings so as not to come to harm. HE ASKS: WHY THEN DOES IT READ, "You shall preserve me from the adversary," WHICH HAS THE SAME MEANING AS, "YOU ARE MY HIDING PLACE?" HE ANSWERS: Man has enemies above as well as below FOR WHICH IT SAYS, "YOU ARE MY HIDING PLACE." It is the Evil Inclination, OF

WHICH IT IS WRITTEN: "YOU SHALL PRESERVE ME FROM THE ADVERSARY." It attacks above and below--DESCENDS TO INCITE, AND ASCENDS TO BRING ACCUSATIONS. Were it not for the Evil Inclination, man would not have any enemies in the world. Therefore THE SCRIPTURE READS, "You shall preserve me from the adversary," FROM THE EVIL INCLINATION.

275. "...You do compass me about with songs of deliverance, Sela" (Tehilim 32:7). He said: It should have read, 'He does compass me', IN THE THIRD PERSON, BECAUSE IN THE SECOND PERSON IT COULD MEAN 'THE SONGS OF DELIVERANCE COMPASS ME'. Why then does it read, "You do compass," IN THE PRESENT PERSON? HE ANSWERS: Within these songs there are grades of salvation: You will compass me with them to guard me on my way. THE VERSE IS INDEED ADDRESSED TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE SAYING, "YOU DO COMPASS ME." This verse may be read forwards or backwards, from both sides, YET ITS MEANING REMAINS THE SAME.

276. Come and behold: the songs and praises sung by David contain mysteries and high matters of the secret of wisdom, because they were all inspired by the Holy Spirit, which dwelt with David when he recited poetry. Hence they were all said from the Holy Spirit.

277. Rabbi Elazar continued with the verse: "You did push me hard that I might fall: but Hashem helped me" (Tehilim 118:13). HE SAID: IT IS WRITTEN, "You did push me," when it should have been written, 'they did push me'. Why is it written, "You did push me," AS IT WAS NOT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO PUSHED HIM, BUT HIS ENEMIES? HE ANSWERS: This is the Other Side, which always pushes man in an effort to turn him away from the Holy One, blessed be He. It is the Evil Inclination, the constant companion of man, to which David addressed the words, "You did push me hard that I might fall," because it, with all the troubles that came upon him, almost caused him to turn him from the Holy One, blessed be He. In regard to this David said, "You did push me hard that I might fall" into Gehenom, "but Hashem helped me" by not delivering me into your hands.

278. It is incumbent on man to guard against it, so it does not obtain mastery over him. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, will guard him in all his ways, as it is written: "Then shall you walk in your way safely, and your foot shall not stumble" (Mishlei 3:23), and "When you go, your steps shall not be confined" (Mishlei 4:12). It is also written: "But the path of just men is like the gleam of sunlight, it shines ever more brightly until the height of noonday" (Mishlei 4:18). Rabbi Yehuda said: Happy are the children of Yisrael, for the Holy One, blessed be He, keeps them in this world and in the world to come, as it is written, "Your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever" (Yeshayah 60:21).

Blessed be Hashem forever. Amen and Amen.

VOLUME 06 - VAYESHEV

1. "And Ya'akov dwelt"

Rabbi Chiya opens a discussion about the most significant choice that each of us must make: whether to follow the Evil Inclination--a force present and persuasive from the moment of human conception--or the Good Inclination, which does not express itself until a person is thirteen years of age. A righteous individual, we learn, is one who does not put credence in the Evil Inclination, but rather, waits for the arrival of the Good.

While those who follow the Evil Inclination shall certainly suffer in the World to Come, the righteous are made to suffer trials and afflictions in this world, precisely because they do not associate with the Other Side, whose realm this is. Yet God will deliver the righteous from all ills. As He did for Ya'akov, God protects the righteous from severe judgment by removing them from the world at the time of judgment, or by postponing judgment.

The Relevance of this Passage

Living in a dimension of time and space, we invariably fall under the delusion that our negative behavior bears fruit, while positive deeds go unrewarded. This illusion is fueled by our concept of time, which delays both judgement and reward. Our concepts of space and separation redirect due judgments and Light to different areas of our lives. Thus, we might behave unethically in business and reap financial reward. Judgement might then be directed towards our health, but we may fail to see a connection, believing instead that life is chaotic and random. Likewise, we might conduct our business affairs justly and honorably, yet profits fail to rise. However, we fail to notice that our children--who represent true fulfillment--have suddenly drawn closer to us. Or previous negative behavior may have destined us for chaos involving an auto accident [God Forbid], but the Light generated from a sharing action performed many years earlier averts catastrophe, without any awareness on our part of what might have been. All this is intended to allow us to exercise free will and to play an active role in our own fulfillment. This passage illuminates the forces of cause and effect, so that we may live with them in harmony. We gain time protection, time to change our ways before the severe judgments owed us are executed.

1. "And Ya'akov dwelt in the land in which his father sojourned, in the land of Cna'an" (Beresheet 31:1). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and Hashem delivers him out of them all" (Tehilim 34:21). Come and behold: how many enemies a man must face from the day that the Holy One, blessed be He, gives him a soul in this world. As soon as man comes into the world, the Evil Inclination is immediately ready to join him, as it is written: "sin crouches at the door" (Beresheet 4:7), because that is when evil associates with him.

2. Come and behold: this is true. From the day of birth, beasts protect themselves by fleeing from fire and evil places. WHEN HE IS BORN, man immediately flings himself into the fire because the Evil Inclination dwells within him and immediately prompts him to follow the path of evil.

3. For we have learned that it says: "Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king who knows not how to take care of himself" (Kohélet 4:13). "Better is a child," because a child represents the Good Inclination; it has been with man for only a short time. Since the age of 13 years and onward, IT IS WITH MAN, as we have already learned.

4. In the verse: "...than an old and foolish king" (Kohélet 4:13), "king" refers to the Evil Inclination which is called a 'king' and 'ruler of people in the world'. It is certainly "old," and "foolish," because as soon as man is born and comes into the world, it lives with him. Hence, it is an "old and foolish king."

5. Further it reads: "...who knows not how to take care of himself." It is not written: 'to take care of others', but, "to take care of himself". Why? Because it is foolish. About it, Solomon said: "and the fool walks in darkness" (Kohélet 2:14), because it comes from the refuse of darkness and will never have light. BUT HE WHO DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO TAKE CARE OF OTHERS IS NOT YET CONSIDERED FOOLISH.

6. Rabbi Shimon said: Come and behold. It is written: "Better is a poor and wise child." AND HE ASKS: Who is a poor child? AND HE REPLIES: It has been explained, and we learned he is the Good Inclination. But "better is a child," as it is written: "I have been young, and now am old" (Tehilim 37:25). This is the lad who is a poor child and owns nothing. Why is he called a lad? Because he is constantly renewed, like the moon. He is also "a wise child," because wisdom dwells within him.

7. "Than an old...king" refers to the Evil Inclination, WHICH STANDS IN CONTRAST TO MATATRON AND IS CALLED A 'SCOUNDREL'. As we have learned, it never departed from its impure ways from the day it was created. It is foolish, as all its ways lead to evil. It deludes people and does not know how to take care of itself. It accuses people falsely and misleads them from the path of good to the path of wickedness.

8. Come and behold: this is why THE EVIL INCLINATION comes TO JOIN with man as soon as possible, from the day he is born, so that man will believe in it. Later, when the Good Inclination arrives, man will find it difficult to believe in it, AND ITS WORDS will seem burdensome. Similarly, we have learned that he who is a subtle evilmonger hastens to plead his case in front of a judge before the arrival of his colleague, the litigant, as written: "The one who pleads first seems to be in the right" (Mishlei 18:17).

9. "The serpent was craftier" (Beresheet 3:2). He, too, hurries to dwell in man before his colleague, the Good Inclination, comes to dwell in him. And because he arrived early to plead his case, when, his colleague, who is the Good Inclination, comes later, it is difficult for man to unite with it! And he cannot raise his head, as if he carried on his shoulders the burdens of the world. All this is because the Evil One came first. Of this, Solomon said, "The Poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard" (Kohelet 9:16), because the other one arrived earlier.

10. Subsequently, for any judge who accepts the words of a litigant before his colleague arrives, it is as if he accepts another deity to believe in. Otherwise, "his neighbor comes forward, and sifts his case" (Mishlei 18:17), WHICH MEANS ONLY AFTER HIS COLLEAGUE COMES SHOULD HE HEAR HIS WORDS. This is the way of a righteous man because a righteous man does not believe the subtle evilmonger, who is the Evil Inclination, even if he hastens to plead his case before the arrival of his colleague, the Good Inclination. SO IT FULFILLS THE VERSE: "AND HIS NEIGHBOR COMES FORWARD, AND SIFTS HIS CASE." And with this act, people fail TO MERIT the world to come.

11. But the righteous man who fears his Master suffers many afflictions in this world in order not to believe in and join the Evil Inclination. And the Holy One, blessed be He, saves him from them all. As it is written: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and Hashem delivers him out of them all" (Tehilim 34:20). Note that it is literally written: "Many afflictions to the righteous," and not 'BUT MANY ARE THE AFFLICTIONS OF the righteous.' THIS SIGNIFIES THAT WHOEVER SUFFERS MANY AFFLICTIONS IS RIGHTEOUS because the Holy One, blessed be He, cares for him--BECAUSE THE AFFLICTIONS HE SUFFERS ALIENATE HIM FROM THE EVIL INCLINATION. For this reason, the Holy One, blessed be He, cares for this man and delivers him from all in this world and the world to come. Happy is his lot.

12. Come and behold: how many afflictions befell Ya'akov to keep him from becoming infected by the Evil Inclination and to keep distant from his lot. That is why he suffered punishments and afflictions, and had no quiet repose. He said: "I had no repose, nor had I rest, nor was I quiet; yet trouble came" (Iyov 3:26). Come and behold: how many afflictions do the righteous suffer in this world? Trouble after trouble, pain after pain, so that they can merit the world to come.

13. How many afflictions did Ya'akov have to suffer! As it is written: "I had no repose" in Lavan's house, and I could not escape from him. "Nor had I rest" because of that suffering that Esav's minister inflicted on me. And after that, there was the fear of Esav HIMSELF. "Nor was I quiet," on account of Dinah and Shchem.

14. "Yet trouble came." It was the trouble and confusion about Yosef, which was the hardest affliction of all. Why? Because Ya'akov loved Yosef, who is the secret of the Covenant through which YA'AKOV entered Egypt. THAT IS WHY YA'AKOV LOVED HIM SO MUCH. AFTER THIS, it is written: "I remembered my covenant" (Beresheet 9:15). THE WHOLE REDEMPTION WAS FOR HIS SAKE, because the Shechinah was there with him, WITH THE

COVENANT, WHO IS YOSEF. THUS, THE CONFUSION ABOUT YOSEF WAS HARDER ON HIM THAN ALL OTHER AFFLICTIONS THAT BEFELL HIM.

15. "And Ya'akov dwelt in the land in which his father had sojourned, in the land of Cna'an." Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse: "The righteous perishes, and no man lays it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come" (Yeshayah 57:1). "The righteous perishes" when the Holy One, blessed be He, looks on the world and it is not as it should be, and Judgment falls on the world. Then the righteous among them is taken away so that the Judgment will fall only on the others, who will have no protection.

16. As long as the righteous dwells in this world, Judgment can not be handed down on it. What is the origin of this principle? From Moshe, as it is written: "He said that He would destroy them, had not Moshe His chosen one stood before Him in the breach" (Tehilim 106:23). Thus, the Holy One, blessed be He, takes the righteous from among them and elevates them from this world. Only then does He receive His due retribution from the others--as the last part of the passage reads: "The righteous is taken away from the evil to come." THIS MEANS THAT before evil comes to rule the world, the righteous is taken away. Another explanation is that "from the evil" refers to the Evil Inclination, WHICH CORRUPTED AND MISLED THE WORLD.

17. Come and behold: Ya'akov was the choice of the Fathers. He was about to be sent into exile, but he was righteous, so Judgment was withheld and did not control the world. Thus, Judgment did not befall the world through all of Ya'akov's days, and the famine ended.

18. Similarly, in the days of Yosef, who had his father's image, exile was avoided because he protected them throughout his life. But when he died, exile immediately befell them, as it is written: "And Yosef died..." (Shemot 1:6) which is followed by, "Come, let us deal wisely with them" (Ibid. 10), and "they made their lives bitter" (Ibid. 14).

19. Similarly, wherever a righteous person dwells in the world, the Holy One, blessed be He, protects the world for his sake. And as long as he is alive, Judgment cannot befall the world, as we have learned.

20. Come and behold, it is written: "And Ya'akov dwelt in the land in which his father sojourned" (Beresheet 37:1). HE ASKS: What is meant by "his father sojourned (Heb. megurei)"? AND HE REPLIED: Terror (Heb. magor) from every side, because he was anxious and afraid all his days. Rabbi Elazar said: "And Ya'akov dwelt" in this place that was unified in darkness. "The land in which his father sojourned" means precisely THIS PANIC AND FEAR OF HIS FATHER, YITZCHAK, WHO IS THE LEFT COLUMN. "In the land of Cna'an" alludes to a place connected to its proper location, WHICH MEANS THAT THE NUKVA IS CALLED 'LAND.' WHEN SHE IS CONNECTED TO THE LEFT COLUMN, WHO WAS THE FATHER OF YA'AKOV, SHE IS CALLED THE 'LAND OF CNA'AN'. As it was said, a place attached to its proper location, WHICH MEANS THAT THE LAND OF CNA'AN IS CONNECTED TO THE LAND OF HIS FATHER'S SOJOURNING, WHICH IS THE LEFT COLUMN. "His father sojourned" is Harsh Judgment, AS IT IS THE SECRET OF THE LEFT COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN. The "land in which his father sojourned" is A LAND OF Weak Judgment, as we have learned. This is land that is joined with and emerges from Harsh Judgment, WHICH IS THE LEFT COLUMN. Ya'akov dwelt in, and held on to, this land.

2. "These are the generations of Ya'akov"

Here follows a discussion of the significance of Yosef as the first-named in the list of "the generations of Ya'akov." Also, Rabbi Aba comments on the importance of the number seventeen in relation to Ya'akov and Yosef.

The Relevance of this Passage

Yosef corresponds to the Sfirah of Yesod, the portal and gateway through which all the Light of the Upper Worlds flows into our world. The patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov denote this supernal realm, whereas Yosef signifies the funnel through which the sacred Light emerges into physical reality. Here, we connect ourselves to this "cosmic funnel" where we receive the Divine and effulgent Light that shines in the Upper Worlds. The number seventeen is the numerical value of the Hebrew word for good [tov]. Thus, forces of

goodness are amassed and drawn into our lives through the mystical powers attached to the number seventeen, as expounded upon in this passage.

21. *"These are the generations of Ya'akov: Yosef..." (Beresheet 37:2). After Yosef settled in Ya'akov, and the sun--WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN--mated with the moon--WHICH IS THE NUKVA--he began to produce generations. And who is he that brings forth offspring? The scripture continues saying, "Yosef." For the river that flows and comes out OF EDEN IS THE YESOD THAT IS DESIGNATED YOSEF. It is he who is the progenitor of the offspring because his waters never cease to flow!*

22. The sun, WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, unites with the moon, THE FEMININE PRINCIPAL, but can only bear fruit on the grade that is called 'Righteous', and on no other grade--NAMELY YESOD. THUS, IT IS Yosef, who is the grade of Ya'akov, who can bear fruit and bring forth generations to the world. Thus, it is written: "These are the generations of Ya'akov: Yosef..."

23. "These are the generations of Ya'akov: Yosef..." ANOTHER INTERPRETATION IS THAT anyone who gazed at the facial image of Yosef thought it was the facial image of Ya'akov. Come and behold: it is not written THIS WAY when referring to any other children of Ya'akov. FOR EXAMPLE, IT IS NOT WRITTEN: 'These are the generations of Ya'akov: Reuven...' OR 'SHIMON' ETC. Only in reference to Yosef IS IT WRITTEN: "THESE ARE THE GENERATIONS OF YA'AKOV: YOSEF..." THE REASON IS THAT the facial image of Yosef was the same as his father's image.

24. "Yosef being seventeen years old" (Beresheet 37:2). Rabbi Aba said that the Holy One, blessed be He, indicated to Ya'akov that Yosef was seventeen years old at the time he was lost. All the days that remained AFTER HE REACHED SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE, during which time he did not see Yosef, Ya'akov was crying over him. Because he was crying during those years, the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him another seventeen years, during which he lived in the land of Egypt with happiness, honor, and fulfillment. His son, Yosef, was king and all his sons were there before him. Those seventeen years were considered as life for him. Hence, the text informs us that Yosef was seventeen years of age when he lost him.

3. "For the work of a man shall he pay back to him..."

Rabbi Chiya addresses the problem of why some righteous individuals enjoy prosperity, good health, and happiness, while others endure terrible suffering. The mystery revealed to explain this emphasizes the crucial role of mazal (lit. 'fortune, luck'). Whether sinful or righteous, all individuals shall suffer who receive their souls from the Nukva (moon) during the period when she is defective. God compensates those righteous who suffer in this world, by ensuring their merit in the world to come; their suffering in this world is the result of their souls' misfortune. While we may endeavor to reason why there is such disparity in the fortunes of men, Kabbalah explains that a righteous soul actually chooses the moment of birth and the physical body into which it will incarnate. The righteous will often purposely choose a life of suffering in order to help correct the sins of the generation, thus preventing great judgement and destruction. This section underscores the importance of the strength of the soul of the righteous. God's judgment rests on this strength, and not on physical or material qualities.

The Relevance of this Passage

The physical body is of the same shape and structure in all human beings. However, the internal Vessel--a man's Desire to Receive --is of different measure in each person. For example, a person endowed with a large Vessel may have the power to accumulate enormous wealth. Yet on a purely physical level, there is no distinguishing trait that hints at a wealthy man's financial capabilities and business acumen. In similar fashion, the soul of a single righteous individual may be far greater than millions of sinful people of the same generation. The suffering endured by this lone Righteous individual can therefore balance all the negativity generated by the actions of others. Through the merit Light of the righteous souls, whose Light shines so radiantly through this passage, we can help correct the effects of our own negative actions; moreover, our own Vessel is expanded, so that our efforts toward righteousness compensate for the sins of others.

25. Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "Therefore listen to me you men of understanding: Far be it from El to do wickedness and from Shadai to commit iniquity. For

the work of a man shall He pay back to him, and according to his ways will He cause to befall every man" (Iyov 34:10). Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He created it by Judgment, and it exists upon Judgment. All worldly affairs exist according to the principles of Judgment. Nevertheless, to support the world and prevent its destruction, the Holy One, blessed be He, spreads Mercy over it. This Mercy tempers Judgment, so that it does not put an end to the world. Thus, the world acts according to Mercy, and endures due to it.

26. And if you say that the Holy One, blessed be He, judges man without justice, we have learned that when Judgment prevails on man and he is righteous, it is because of the love of the Holy One, blessed be He. As we have learned, when the Holy One, blessed be He, feels pity for a man, it is to bring the man closer to Him. The Holy One, blessed be He, breaks the body so as to give the soul total control. Then man can come closer to Him with love, as is fitting, and the soul controls man while his body is weakened!

27. A man needs to have a weak body and a strong soul that shall grow stronger still. Then he is beloved by the Holy One, blessed be He. According to the friends, the Holy One, blessed be He, causes sorrow to the righteous in this world so that the righteous may merit the world to come.

28. When the soul is weak and the body strong, man is hated by the Holy One, blessed be He, who does not care for him. Therefore, He inflicts no suffering on him in this world. His life runs smoothly and perfectly, for if this man gives alms or performs a kindness, the Holy One, blessed be He, rewards him in this world so that he will have no portion in the world to come. This is why Onkelos translated the verse: "And he repays them that hate him to their face" (Devarim 7:10) as 'And he repays them that hate him in this world.' Thus, the righteous person, who always experiences pain, is beloved by the Holy One, blessed be He. This is true only if he is found to have committed no sin that merits punishment.

29. There are several aspects to this matter. First, we see that the Shechinah does not dwell in a place of sorrow, but only in a place of joy. If a place has no joy, the Shechinah will not abide there. This is echoed in the verse: "But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of Hashem came upon him" (II Melachim 3:15); for assuredly the Shechinah does not dwell in a place of sadness. From where do we derive this principle? We learn this from Ya'akov, from whom the Shechinah departed during the time he mourned Yosef. When joy came upon him with the good news about Yosef, immediately, "the spirit of Ya'akov their father revived" (Beresheet 45:27). THERE IS A MYSTERY HERE, for where is joy in a Righteous man who is broken by troubles and is weak and suffering? Surely he must be saddened with no joy at all.

30. WE MUST LOOK into another matter, for many just men who are beloved of the Holy One, blessed be He, do not suffer bodily pain or diseases; their bodies never weaken. Why are they not as the other righteous men? WHY IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN those who were physically broken and those who were healthy?

31. It is said that those who live well are righteous, the children of righteous men, as has already been explained, while the others, WHOSE BODIES WERE CRUSHED, are righteous, but are not children of righteous men. Yet we see Righteous men whose fathers are righteous, EVEN whose fathers were of righteous men, YET THEY STILL SUFFER MUCH PAIN. Why do they suffer bodily pain and spend their days in grief?

32. There is a mystery here, for all the works of the Holy One, blessed be He, are according to Truth and Justice. "For the work of a man shall he pay back to him, and according to his ways will he cause to befall every man" (Iyov 34:11). I found in ancient books a mystery, and another mystery REVEALED within it--thus, one mystery which is two SECRETS. There are times when the moon, THE NUKVA, is defective and under Judgment, and the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, is hidden from her. She releases souls to give to men, which she first gathered FROM ZEIR ANPIN AT ANY TIME. THEREFORE, she releases THOSE SOULS, EVEN AT A DEFECTIVE TIME, when she is under Judgment. Whoever receives such a soul will always be in want and poverty, ever broken under Judgment and throughout all his life--be he just or wicked. Only prayer annuls all judgmental sentences. A MAN can avert them through prayer.

33. When that grade, THE NUKVA, is complete, and the river which flows and comes out FROM EDEN, YESOD, unites with her, the soul that she releases cleaves to man. He is complete in all--in riches, children and a healthy body.

34. All this depends upon mazal ('constellation, luck'), YESOD, which is drawn to and attached to that grade, THE NUKVA, for her to be perfected and blessed by it. Therefore, all depends upon Mazal. We have learned that "children, life and livelihood do not depend upon merit but upon mazal." There is no merit until THE NUKVA is filled and shines from mazal, WHICH IS YESOD.

35. Therefore, all those who are sentenced according to justice and crushed in this world, yet are also truly righteous, suffer by reason of the soul (Nefesh) THAT THEY RECEIVED FROM THE NUKVA WHILE SHE WAS DEFECTIVE. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, has compassion for them in the world to come.

36. Rabbi Elazar said that the Holy One, blessed be He, does everything according to Justice. IF HE BRINGS SUFFERING ON A RIGHTEOUS MAN, HE DOES SO to purify that soul (Nefesh) and bring it to the world to come, for all the deeds of the Holy One, blessed be He, are true and just. To remove from the soul the filth it accumulated in this world, the body is crushed and the soul cleansed. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, brings pain to the just man, so that he will be cleansed from all sins and thereby merit life in the world TO COME. As it is written: "Hashem tries the righteous" (Tehilim 11:5), as we have already learned.

4. "Only he shall not go in to the veil"

Rabbi Shimon discourses on the spiritual significance of, and the benefits enjoyed by, those who receive their souls from the realm of Malchut when she is defective.

The Relevance of this Passage

The energy arising out of these verses helps reduce the pain and suffering that we endure as a result of negative deeds in present and past lives. Meditating to share this energy with others helps to reduce their pain and suffering as well. The spiritual benefits associated with the Moon's positive aspects are aroused in our life, and the negative influences arising from the Moon are averted.

37. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion with the verse: "Only he shall not go in to the Veil, nor come near the to altar, because he has a blemish; that he profane not My holy places: for I, Hashem, do sanctify them" (Vayikra 21:23). "He shall not go in to the Veil." Come and behold: at the time the river is flowing and comes out FROM EDEN, WHICH IS YESOD, and issues the souls TO THE NUKVA, the Nukva conceives WITH THEM. And they all abide WITHIN HER in a room within a room, where the walls are covered with wallpaper or carpets.

38. When the moon is rendered defective by the same aspect of the evil serpent, all the souls that are issued AT THAT TIME, although they were all pure and sacred, are flawed. Since they emerged at a defective time, THE BODIES are crushed, and suffer pains and afflictions whoever that these souls reach. The Holy One, blessed be He, cares for AND LOVES those who are broken, although their souls are sad instead of joyous.

39. The secret is that they remain as above IN THE NUKVA. When the body is flawed, the soul inside remains the same AS IN THE NUKVA. BECAUSE THE SOUL RESIDED WITHIN THE FLAWED NUKVA, IT RESIDES NOW WITHIN THE FLAWED BODY. The one state resembles the other. Therefore, they are renewed like the moon, as it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that every new moon, and every Shabbat, shall all flesh come to bow down to the ground before Me, says Hashem" (Yeshayah 66:23). "All flesh" assuredly, for they are in need of renewal along with the moon.

40. THOSE RIGHTEOUS are the constant companions of the moon, THE NUKVA, and have the identical defects. She therefore dwells always within them and never leaves them, as it is written: "him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Yeshayah 57:15) and, "Hashem is near to them who are of a broken heart" (Tehilim 34:19)--THAT IS, to those who suffered from the same defect as the moon, those who are always near her. "And he saves such as are of a contrite spirit" (Ibid.), by giving them a portion of the life flowing INTO THE NUKVA for renewal, because they who suffered with her shall also be renewed with her.

41. Those DEFECTS FROM WHICH THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER are called 'sufferings of love', because they are caused by love and not by the man himself. They are of love because the light of the smaller love was impaired when rejected by the greater love. Therefore, THE RIGHTEOUS are her companions and share HER FLAW. Happy is their portion in this world and in the world to come, for they merited to be her friends, as it is written of them: "For my brethren and companions' sakes..." (Tehilim 122:8).

5. "Behold, my servant shall prosper"

In this complex and difficult section, an aspect of the relationship between Zeir Anpin [the upper world] and Malchut [our Lower World] at the time of the latter's creation is revealed, further explaining why the wicked often seem to prosper while the good suffer. The mystery of the title verse is discussed, revealing that at the end of the period of Correction, faith shall be rekindled in men, and Malchut--presented here as the moon--will once more be warmed and illuminated by the Light. There follows a detailed analysis of Torah verses. In question and answer form, the hidden meaning of the verses is revealed as a parable of the yearning for union by opposites, such as male and female. This is one of the Zohar's major themes. Through the story of Yosef and Ya'akov, we are shown that male and female are meant to be together as one: "For blessings abide only where male and female are united." The Malchut is then described with the same attributes as the male: He is wise, for example, whereas She is wisdom; He is mighty, She is might; He is a King; She is a Kingdom. The male is then described with the same attributes as the Nukva, in a profound exposition of apparent duality that governs material creation. Finally, by suggesting a subtle link between the violation of kosher laws regarding the consumption of living flesh and the illicit yearning of one sex for the other, Rabbi Yehuda resolves a discussion about the meaning of the term "an evil report."

The Relevance of this Passage

The mystical power of these words enriches and deepens our marital relationships, while also helping the unmarried to merit the appearance of their true soulmate. It further arouses the Light of the Upper World to radiate in our physical existence. This Light also helps cleanse prior negative sexual experiences and thoughts.

42. He opened the discussion with the verse: "Behold, My servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high" (Yeshayah 52:13). Happy is the portion of the righteous, to whom the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed the ways of the Torah, so they may follow them. Come and behold: the verse, "Behold, my servant shall prosper," contains a supernal mystery, which has already been explained. Yet come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe--THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA--He made the moon AND ENDOWED HER WITH THE SAME STATURE AS THAT OF ZEIR ANPIN. LATER, He decreased her lights in such a way that she had nothing of her own, SAVE WHAT SHE RECEIVED FROM ZEIR ANPIN. Because she made herself small, she shone from the sun, SIGNIFIED BY ZEIR ANPIN, by the power of the Supernal Lights IN IT.

43. While the Temple existed, Yisrael diligently proceeded with sacrifices, offerings and rituals performed by the priests, Levites and the children of Yisrael, creating unification and causing the lights to shine WITHIN THE NUKVA.

44. After the Temple was destroyed, the light darkened and the moon, THE NUKVA, no longer shone from the sun, ZEIR ANPIN. The sun withdrew from her and did not shine. Therefore, as we have learned, no day passes without curses, sorrow, and pain.

45. When the time comes for the moon to shine WITH HER OWN STRENGTH, AT THE END OF CORRECTION, then it is written: "Behold, my servant shall prosper," which is an allusion to the moon. "Behold, my servant shall prosper," refers to the secret of the faith, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. The words, "shall prosper," refer to the Supernal Awakening--WHICH WILL RESEMBLE a man who smells an odor and becomes alert and attentive.

46. "He shall be exalted," means that THE NUKVA SHALL BE FILLED from that facet of the light that is superior to all the lights, INDICATING KETER. "He shall be exalted"--as in, "and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you" (Yeshayah 30:18)--REFERS TO THE LIGHT OF KETER; "and extolled," on the side of Avraham, SIGNIFIES CHESED. "And

be high," on the side of Yitzchak, MEANS GVURAH, while "very," on the side of Ya'akov, IS TIFERET. THIS MEANS THAT THE NUKVA WILL THUS BE FILLED BY ALL THESE GRADES. And although this has already been explained DIFFERENTLY, all is one in the secret of wisdom.

47. At that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, will intensify energy above so as to shine well upon the moon, THE NUKVA. As it is written: "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days" (Yeshayah 30:26). Thus will Supernal Light be added to her own. Then all the dead, BURIED in the dust, will be stirred INTO LIFE.

48. He calls him "servant" (masculine form), THOUGH THIS ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA, for the secret path to his Master's keys is in his hand. THUS, THE PERFECTION OF THE NUKVA IS MADE KNOWN THROUGH HIM, HER MESSENGER. The same applies to the verse: "And Avraham said to the...servant," (Beresheet 24:2) who is the moon, NAMELY THE NUKVA, as we have learned. AND SHE IS REVEALED THROUGH Matatron, the servant messenger of his Master. THEREFORE THE WORD "SERVANT" WAS USED IN BOTH PLACES.

49. "The eldest of his house" (Beresheet 24:2), REFERS TO MATATRON, WHO IS CALLED 'OLD', as in "I have been young, and now am old" (Tehilim 37:25). THE MINISTER OF THE WORLD 'WHO IS MATATRON?' SAID THIS PHRASE. "That ruled over all that he had" (Beresheet 24:2), as all the colors: green, white, and red, are reflected in him.

50. "Put, I pray you, your hand under my thigh" (Ibid.) refers to the righteous, NAMELY, TO YESOD. Since he is the existence AND LIFE of the world WHEN HE HOLDS ON TO YESOD, this servant is appointed to bring life to the dwellers of the dust. And he becomes perfected through the supernal spirit to return spirits and souls to their places, in the skeletons and putrefied cadavers underneath the ground.

51. "And I will make you swear by Hashem, the Elohim of heaven" (Beresheet 24:3). HE SAID THAT IT IS WRITTEN: "And I will make you swear." What is the meaning of, "I will make you swear"? HE ANSWERS THAT IT MEANS he will be clothed in the secret of the seven Supernal Lights--CHESD, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT--FOR they are the secret of supernal perfection. ACCORDING TO HIS EXPLANATION, "SWEAR," DERIVED FROM THE ROOT SHIN BET AYIN, IS DERIVED FROM 'SEVEN' (Heb. sheva: Shin-Bet- Ayin). "That you shall not take a wife," refers to the body underneath the ground, IN THE GRAVE, which now rises from the dust AND IS CALLED A 'WIFE'. All those who were buried and deserved to be interred in the Land of Yisrael shall be the first to rise to life, as has been explained in relation to the verse: "The dead men of your people shall live," (Yeshayah 26:19) referring to the dead in the Land of Yisrael. THEN, "my dead body shall arise," (Ibid.) meaning the dead outside Yisrael. For all that, only the bodies of the children of Yisrael, buried IN THE LAND OF YISRAEL, shall rise, but not bodies from other nations, which defile the land.

52. Therefore, in the verse: "That you shall not take a wife to my son," what is meant by "my son"? HE ANSWERS THAT all the souls in the world that come from the river which flows out FROM EDEN, WHICH IS YESOD, are the children of the Holy One, blessed be He. Therefore, "that you shall not take a wife," means a body; "to my son" refers to the soul; "of the daughters of the Cna'an," are the bodies of the heathen nations, which the Holy One, blessed be He, will shake out of the Holy Land. As it is written: "That the wicked might be shaken out of it," (Iyov 38:13) as dirt is shaken out of a garment.

53. "But you shall go to my country, and to my kindred" (Beresheet 24:4). In this verse, "my country" is the Holy Land, which precedes all other countries, as we have learned. Of the verse, "But you shall go to my country, and to my kindred," HE ASKS: WHY REPEAT "my kindred" after saying, "my country?" HE ANSWERS: "My country" is THE HOLY LAND, as we said and "my kindred" are the children of Yisrael!

54. It is written: "And the servant took..." (Beresheet 24:10). As we have learned, THIS IS A REFERENCE TO MATATRON; "ten camels" are the ten grades, which the servant governs. They are a likeness to the above, LIKE THE GRADES OF ATZILUT. "Of the camels of his master" means they bear a likeness to his master's camels--THAT IS, THE GRADES OF THE NUKVA OF ATZILUT, HIS MASTER, as we have learned. And this servant rules over them and is established through them.

55. "For all the goods of his master were in his hand" (Beresheet 24:10), refers to the goodness and the lofty fragrance issued from the Supernal Lights and candles. ANOTHER EXPLANATION OF, "for all the goods of his master were in his hand," is that it refers to the union of the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, which is attracted to the moon, THE NUKVA. FOR THROUGH HIM OCCURS THE UNION OF MALE AND FEMALE.

56. "And he arose, and went to Aram-naharayim" (Beresheet 24:10), the place in the Holy Land where Rachel wept when the Temple was destroyed. "And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water" (Beresheet 24:11), for he wanted to add to her strength before raising and reviving the bodies.

57. In the verse: "At the time of evening" (Beresheet 24:11), WHAT TIME IS REFERRED TO? HE REPLIED: It is Shabbat eve, NAMELY YESOD, the era of the sixth millennium. FOR THE SIX DAYS OF CREATION ARE THE SECRETS OF 6,000 YEARS AND THE SIXTH DAY, SHABBAT EVE, CORRESPONDS TO THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM, ON WHICH DAY RESURRECTION WILL OCCUR. In the phrase, "At the time of evening," why say "time"? It should have said, 'AT EVENING.' HE ANSWERS: It conveys the meaning of, "And to his labor until the evening" (Tehilim. 104:23), and "For the shadows of the evening are lengthened" (Yirmeyah 6:4). THESE VERSES ARE THE SECRETS OF THE JUDGMENTS REVEALED DURING THE EVENING. "AT THE TIME OF EVENING" ALSO ALLUDES TO THE SECRET OF YESOD, WHICH THE SERVANT HAS MENDED.

58. In the verse: "At the time that the women go out to draw water" (Beresheet 24:11), they draw the water of the Torah. At that time, they will be resurrected before any other man because, by drawing the water of the Torah, they are strengthened by the Tree of Life. Thus, they will come out first at the resurrection of the dead, as the Tree of Life causes them to be the first to rise.

59. "And the daughters of the men of the city come out" (Beresheet 24:13). HE ASKS: What is meant by "come out?" HE ANSWERS: It has the same meaning as: "and the earth shall cast out the shades of the dead" (Yeshayah 26:19). That is, it will cast out all the bodies that are in it. Therefore, it is written: "come out," WHICH ALLUDES TO THE BODIES THAT WILL BE CAST OUT BY THE EARTH AT THE TIME OF RESURRECTION. The words, "to draw water," MEAN to accept and properly receive a soul so that it will be perfected.

60. "And let it come to pass that the girl to who I shall say, 'Let down your pitcher, I pray you, that I may drink'..." (Beresheet 24:14). We have learned that every soul that strove in this world to know its Master by means of the mysteries of divine wisdom, will rise to the highest grade--a grade higher than all the souls who neither conceived nor attained knowledge. These will be the first to revive. This is the question that the servant wished to ask so that he could determine what the soul dealt with in this world, AND THUS LEARN WHETHER IT IS WORTHY OF BEING RESURRECTED FIRST. THIS IS THE MEANING OF, "LET DOWN YOUR PITCHER, I PRAY YOU, THAT I MAY DRINK."

61. "And she will say to me 'You may also drink'..." (Beresheet 24:44). You need to drink and receive water yourself first. After [I have served] you: "I will also draw for your camels," because these other Chariots, although they are watered through this grade, are watered mainly from the worship of the righteous, who know well how to serve their Master. For the righteous know how to nourish each grade properly. Therefore, if she says, "I will also draw for your camels," then "she shall be the woman whom Hashem has appointed for my master's son," the body which is surely appointed to that Supernal Soul.

62. Come and behold: we learned that the male yearns for the female, BY WHICH THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH IS DRAWN FROM THE NUKVA, and a soul is created. The female yearns for the Male, BY WHICH CHASSADIM ARE DRAWN FROM THE MALE, who rises and mingles WITH THE SOUL upward. Thus, they become included within one another, THE CHOCHMAH OF THE FEMALE WITH THE CHASSADIM OF THE MALE. This forms the soul, THAT IS, COMPLETES IT. From this procedure, THE SERVANT DIVINED THAT IF SHE SAYS 'DRINK' (WHICH ALLUDES TO DRAWING THE CHOCHMAH), 'I WILL ALSO DRAW FOR YOUR CAMELS', NAMELY CONTINUING THE FLOW OF CHASSADIM--then she is indeed the woman, the body, who will execute the wishes of the soul issuing from the male, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, INCLUDING BOTH CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM.

63. These bodies will be raised TO LIFE earlier, as we have said. After these are revived, all other bodies outside Yisrael will be raised into perfect existence and resurrected with the renewal of the moon, FOR THE LIGHT OF THE MOON WILL THEN BE AS THE LIGHT OF THE SUN. The world will then be renewed as before. At that time, it is written: "Let Hashem rejoice in his works" (Tehilim 104:31).

64. Therefore, "Behold, my servant shall prosper," MEANS THAT THE SERVANT, MATATRON, WILL KNOW how to return each soul to its own place, THAT IS, TO THE BODY WORTHY OF IT, as was said. "He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high" (Yeshayah 52:13), on the side of all those supernal grades.

65. "Just as many were astonished at you, saying, 'Surely his visage is too marred to be that of a man, and his form to be that of the sons of man'" (Yeshayah 52:14). Come and behold: we have learned that when the Temple was destroyed and the Shechinah exiled to foreign countries, it is written: "Behold, the mighty ones shall cry outside; ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly" (Yeshayah 33:7). They all wept for her, they mourned and grieved for the Shechinah who went from her place into exile. EXILE changes her and her husband, ZEIR ANPIN, WHO withholds his light, FOR THERE IS NO ONE TO SHINE UPON, as it is written: "The sun shall be darkened in his going forth" (Yeshayah 13:10). Therefore, "his visage is too marred to be that of a man." Another explanation of the verse, "Surely his visage is too marred to be that of a man," is that it refers to the servant MATATRON, WHO AT THE TIME OF EXILE WAS changed in form and colors, which were GREEN, WHITE, RED.

66. Yet another explanation of, "Surely his visage is too marred to be that of a man," is that it has the same meaning as the verse: "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering" (Yeshayah 50:3). From the day the Temple was destroyed, the heavens, MEANING ZEIR ANPIN, did not hold their light. The secret is that blessings dwell only where there are Male and Female, as has been explained in relation to the verse: "Male and Female He created them. And Elohim blessed them" (Beresheet 1:27-28). But in exile, where male and female are not united, it is written: "His visage is too marred to be that of a man" (Yeshayah 52:14).

67. It is similar to the meaning of: "The righteous perished," (Yeshayah 57:1) which does not read 'perishes' or 'will perish', but rather "perished" ('is lost'), WHICH MEANS THAT THE RIGHTEOUS LOST HIS BLESSINGS. For blessings abide only where male and female are united.

68. Therefore, when the male is not with the female, the souls released FROM HER are different than those issued when the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, was united with the moon, THE NUKVA, as we learned. FOR AS ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA WERE CHANGED DURING THE EXILE, SO THE SOULS OF THEIR OFFSPRING WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE PREVIOUS ONES. Of this, it is written: "These are the generations of Ya'akov: Yosef..." (Beresheet 37:2). AFTER YOSEF BECAME LIKE YA'AKOV AND THE SUN UNITED WITH THE MOON, THE VIRTUE OF THE SOULS IS ELEVATED. BUT THEY CHANGE DURING EXILE.

69. "...and the lad..." (Beresheet 37:2) means that because their union is never broken, the righteous, WHICH IS YESOD, and righteousness, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, are constantly together. The Nukva is described with the same attributes as the male, WITH THE ADDITION OF THE FEMALE SUFFIX. FOR EXAMPLE: HE IS WISE, SHE IS WISDOM; HE IS MIGHTY, SHE IS MIGHT; HE IS A KING; SHE IS A KINGDOM. And the male is described with the same attributes as the Nukva. As it is written: "And the lad (Heb. na'ar)..."; AS THE NUKVA IS CALLED 'GIRL' (HEB. NA'ARAH), SO IS Yesod CALLED 'LAD'.

70. "...with the sons of Bilhah, and the sons of Zilpah" (Beresheet 37:2). YOSEF is found within them, all TWELVE TRIBES, EVEN IN THE SONS OF THE HANDMAIDS, THE HIND PARTS OF THE SHECHINAH. He renews them appropriately and delights them with his mirth, for all branches and leaves OF THE SHECHINAH are blessed by his joy; THAT IS, EVEN THE HIND PARTS OF THE SHECHINAH, WHICH ARE CALLED 'LEAVES'--IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VERSE: "WHOSE LEAF SHALL NOT WITHER" (YECHEZKEL 47:12)--ARE PERFECTED THROUGH HIM.

71. "And these are the generations of Ya'akov: Yosef..." (Beresheet 37:2). We have learned that Ya'akov's image was reproduced in Yosef. Thus, everything that happened to Ya'akov also happened to Yosef. They shared the same path, according to the secret of the letter

Vav--THE FIRST VAV BEING THE SECRET OF YA'AKOV, TIFERET, AND THE SECOND, THE FULLY SPELLED VAV, BEING THE SECRET OF YOSEF, YESOD. And they walk together--AS THEY SOUND LIKE ONE WHEN THE VAV IS PRONOUNCED--because they share one meaning and image.

72. "...and Yosef brought to his father their evil report" (Beresheet 37:2). As has been explained, he told his father that they ate raw meat cut from a living animal. HE INSISTED THAT the sons of the handmaids were part of the twelve tribes. Thus, how could the sons of Leah treat them with contempt and also eat flesh from a living animal, thereby transgressing the commandment of their Master to the sons of Noah? As it is written: "But flesh with its life, which is its blood, you shall not eat" (Beresheet 9:4). Could they have eaten and thus transgressed their Master's commandment? HE ANSWERS: Yosef told this by his own invention, and was therefore punished for it.

73. According to one explanation, Rabbi Yehuda said: Yosef's "evil report" is that they cast their eyes upon the daughters of the land, which is CONSIDERED TO BE evil because IT ALLOWED the unholy grades to nourish the Side of Defilement.

6. "Now Yisrael loved Yosef"

Using the story of Yosef and his many-colored coat as an analogy, Rabbi Elazar discusses the spiritually privileged position of the children of Israel and the enmity this inspires in idolatrous nations. We learn that Ya'akov's love for Yosef over his brothers, and the coat that he gave Yosef, was the immediate cause of the Exile itself, which is, in turn, shown to be a parable of human history.

The Relevance of this Passage

The children of Israel are designated as the Chosen People in response to the measure of their internal Vessel--the Desire to Receive--which is more intense than that of other nations. For this reason, they are the channel through which the Light of The Creator emerges into our world. When the Desire to Receive is directed towards the self alone, there is a lack of Light in our world, and this instigates negative repercussions from other nations. These other nations sense the lack of Light, which creates enmity between them and the children of Israel, and is ultimately the cause for the continuing Exile. Thus, Exile is both a personal and an historical occurrence. When the hardships of life reach their extreme, this is a spiritual connection to the Exile of the children of Israel, which exists to this very day. The Exile is also an effect of our failure to direct our desires towards positive and sharing causes. The spiritual forces of liberation present in this passage can hasten both our personal redemption and also the Final Redemption of the entire world.

74. "Now Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a striped shirt" (Beresheet 37:3). Rabbi Elazar began the discussion with the verse: "Come, My people, enter you into your chambers, and shut your doors about you: hide yourself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpassed" (Yeshayah 26:20). Come and behold: how much did the Holy One, blessed be He, love the children of Yisrael? He had more love for them than for all the other heathen nations. Thus, He warned them and guarded them in their actions.

75. Come and behold: Judgment hovers about the world three times a day. During these times, it behooves a man to take heed and be watchful lest Judgment shall fall on him. This is so at specific times, as has already been explained.

76. The three times are when morning comes and Avraham is awakened into the world, where he holds on to Judgment, so that he is attached to it. Within the first three hours, Judgment is driven from its place to be awakened within Ya'akov, until the time is come for Minchah. Then, the lower Judgment is stirred to be attached to the upper Judgment. Then one Judgment joins another, and it behooves us to be on our guard.

77. Moreover, when Judgment is upon the world and death is in the marketplace, no man should walk alone in a public place, as has been explained elsewhere. Man should shut himself in and never venture out, as Noach did when he shut himself in the ark to avoid being found in the presence of the Angel of Destruction.

78. Therefore: "Come, my people, enter you into your chambers..." (Yeshayah 26:20) MEANS shut yourself inside YOUR HOUSE, "and shut your doors about you," so as not to be seen by the Destroying Angel. "Hide yourself for a little moment, until the anger be over passed," because after the Judgment has past, the Angel of Destruction has no permission to harm you.

79. Come and behold: it is the affection that the Holy One, blessed be He, harbors for Yisrael and His drawing them near Him THAT CAUSES the other heathen nations to hate Yisrael. For they are kept away from the Holy One, blessed be He, while Yisrael are near.

80. Come and behold: as a result of the exceptional love Ya'akov had for Yosef, his brothers "conspired against him to slay him" (Beresheet 37:18). How much more do the idolatrous nations HATE Yisrael BECAUSE OF THE LOVE THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, HAS FOR YISRAEL ABOVE THEM?

81. Come and behold: see what this love, which Ya'akov had for Yosef OVER HIS BROTHERS, caused. YOSEF was exiled from his father, who then joined him. By this action, he brought exile upon the tribes and the Shechinah. Although it was decreed IN THE COVENANT, THE REASON, NEVERTHELESS, WAS THAT HE LOVED HIM BETTER THAN HIS BROTHERS. It has been explained that all this happened because of the many-colored coat he made him, as it is written: "And when his brethren saw...THEY HATED HIM, AND COULD NOT SPEAK PEACEABLY TO HIM" (Beresheet 37:4).

7. "And Yosef dreamed a dream"

Rabbi Chiya discusses dreams as a form of divine revelation. Situated beneath Prophecy and Vision in the hierarchy of revelatory experiences, dreams comprise a mixture of truth and falsehood, and serve as an admonition to the dreamer. Once given, the interpretation of a dream can influence both its meaning and its fulfillment. According to Rabbi Shimon, the dreamer's awareness and interpretation is not necessary for fulfillment. The interpretation of Yosef's dream by his brothers, whereby they sealed their fate, warns us not to dismiss our dreams too quickly or to share them with those who are not friends.

The Relevance of this Passage

Reading this section raises awareness of the vital information dreams often provide to help in our spiritual development. We learn to protect ourselves against negative dream interpretations and their manifestation.

82. "And Yosef dreamed a dream" (Beresheet 37:5). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "And he said, 'Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I, Hashem, make myself known to him in a vision, and speak to him in a dream'" (Bemidbar 12:6). Come and behold: how many grades of prophecy the Holy One, blessed be He, formed. They stand upon each other, one grade superior to another, higher than the other. They all nourish each other according to their ability, some from the right and some from the left, as is proper.

83. Come and behold: the prophets in the world are nourished from one aspect, from two known grades, NETZACH AND HOD, which are seen within the mirror (Heb. mar'ah) that has no reflection, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. As it is written: "I, Hashem make myself known to him in a vision (Heb. mar'eh)" (Bemidbar 12:6). This is the mirror that reflects all the colors, NAMELY WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, WHICH REPRESENT THE THREE COLUMNS OF ZEIR ANPIN; it is known as the 'dull mirror'. The phrase: "And speak to him in a dream" (Ibid.), refers to the sixtieth part of prophecy. As has been explained, it is Gavriel's grade, the sixth grade BENEATH the grade of prophecy, who supervises dreams.

84. Come and behold: every well-formed dream proceeds from that grade OF THE ANGEL GAVRIEL. BECAUSE IT IS FROM AN ANGEL, every dream includes some lies. Therefore, parts of dreams are true and parts are false; no dream is without both.

85. Because a dream has both TRUE AND FALSE ELEMENTS, all the dreams in the world follow verbal interpretations, as was explained in relation to the verse: "And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was" (Beresheet 41:13); FOR IT COMES TO PASS ACCORDING TO ITS OWN INTERPRETATION. What is the reason? A dream contains truth and lies; hence,

the words of interpretation prevail over everything, in that they determine WHETHER THE TRUE OR THE FALSE PART SHALL PREVAIL. A dream therefore needs a favorable interpretation. Rabbi Yehuda said that because a dream is of a lower grade, THAT OF THE ANGEL GAVRIEL, and speech, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, has power OVER THE ANGEL, dreams follow their own interpretations--WHICH COME FROM THE ASPECT OF SPEECH AND PROCEED FROM THE NUKVA, CALLED 'SPEECH', RULING OVER THE ANGEL GAVRIEL'.

86. He continued with the verse: "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, in slumbering upon the bed, then He opens the ears of men, and with discipline seals their instruction" (Iyov 33:15-16). Come and behold: when man lies in his bed, he should first acknowledge the Kingdom of Heaven over him, then utter a verse of mercy. The friends explained that when a man sleeps in his bed, his soul leaves him to soar above, each soul according to its own way.

87. When people fall asleep in their beds, the soul departs. "In slumbering upon the bed, then He opens the ears of men." Thus, the Holy One, blessed be He, reveals to the soul through the grade in charge of dreams, NAMELY GAVRIEL, what will happen in the world in the future, or that which corresponds to his innermost thoughts, THAT IS, TRUTH, LIES, OR BOTH. Thus, through admonition, a man receives knowledge of things to come. FOR THIS REASON, HE IS TOLD OF FUTURE EVENTS.

88. A man is not given this knowledge while the body is strong. The angel informs the soul, and the soul informs the man. The dream comes TO THE SOULS from above, when the souls depart from the body and ascend, each according to its merit.

89. How many grades are in the secret of the dream, in the secret of wisdom? Come and behold: a dream is one grade, a vision is another, and a prophecy a third. All these grades are in ascending order; THE DREAM IS BENEATH THE VISION, AND THE VISION IS BENEATH THE PROPHECY.

90. "And Yosef dreamed a dream, and told it to his brethren: and they hated him yet the more" (Beresheet 37:5). From this, we learn that a man should tell his dream only to someone who loves him. If the listener does not LOVE HIM, he shall bring evil upon him; for if the dream changes, he is the reason that THE TRUE MEANING OF THE DREAM is not fulfilled, BECAUSE OF HIS INCORRECT INTERPRETATION.

91. Come and behold: Yosef told his dream to his brothers WHO DID NOT LOVE HIM, and so fulfillment of the dream was delayed 22 years. Rabbi Yosi asked: How do we know THAT HATRED PREVENTED THE DREAM FROM BEING CARRIED OUT? From the words: "and they hated him yet the more" (Beresheet 37:8). This hatred caused accusations to be brought against him, AND THE DREAM WAS DELAYED FOR 22 YEARS.

92. It is written: "And he said to them, 'Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed'" (Beresheet 37:6). He begged them to listen to him, yet were it not for them, who gave the dream a different meaning, it would have come true. But they answered: "'Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?'" (Beresheet 37:8). In their answer, they gave its interpretation, AND TURNED ITS MEANING OF REIGN AND DOMINION INTO SOMETHING ELSE. They decreed THAT HE SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM, and it is therefore written: "And they hated him yet the more," MEANING THEY CAUSED ACCUSATIONS TO BE BROUGHT AGAINST HIM.

93. Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yosi were with Rabbi Shimon. Rabbi Chiya said: We have learned an uninterpreted dream resembles an unopened letter. HE ASKS: Does this mean that the dream comes true without the dreamer being conscious of it, or that it does not come true at all? He answers: IT MEANS THAT the dream comes true, but the dreamer does not know it. For there is a power dwelling upon the dream WHICH FORCES IT TO COME TRUE. Only the dreamer is not aware whether the dream comes true or not, JUST AS ONE DOES NOT KNOW THE CONTENTS OF AN UNOPENED LETTER.

94. Everything that happens in the world depends on a dream or a proclamation before it becomes reality. We have learned that before any matter enters the world, a proclamation resounds in heaven, from where it is spread throughout the world. It is done by a crier, as it is written: "Surely Hashem Elohim will do nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). This was when there were prophets in the world. When

the prophets were gone, sages took their places. And when THE SAGES were gone, the future was announced by a dream--and if not BY A DREAM, through birds in the sky, as has been already explained.

8. "And his brothers went to feed"

This section touches upon the role of providence in the story of Yosef and especially of his sale into slavery--since, when Yosef's brothers sold him, they were in collaboration with the Shechinah.

The Relevance of this Passage

The longest and strongest master-slave relationship is that between man and his ego. All of us are in bondage to our reactive whims and egocentric desires. We are also prisoners of other people's perceptions of us. Our ego is our taskmaster--and the ego is so good at its job, most of us don't even realize we are in bondage. Therefore, the Light of The Creator will send us challenging opportunities to provoke our ego and highlight our self-centeredness. The Light of this passage opens our eyes and shows us the way to freedom by allowing us to recognize life's hardships for what they really--opportunities to rise above the power of impulse and effect inner transformation.

95. "And his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shchem" (Beresheet 37:12). Rabbi Shimon asked: Why is the particle Et ('the') added? HE ANSWERS: THE PREPOSITION Et has dots over it, which represent the Shechinah, FOR THE SHECHINAH, NAMED 'ET', dwelt with them as they were a group of ten. WHEREVER THERE ARE TEN MEN, THE SHECHINAH HOVERS ABOVE THEM. They were ten because Yosef was not with them and little Binyamin was at home. When they went, the Shechinah was among them, for which reason there are dots ABOVE THE PARTICLE ET.

96. For that reason, they were in collaboration with the Shechinah when they sold Yosef; they made her a partner to their oath and made her vow NOT TO REVEAL THE SALE OF YOSEF. Thus, until THE SALE OF Yosef was made known, the Shechinah did not rest upon Ya'akov.

97. If you say that the Shechinah was not with THE TRIBES, come and behold the verse: "There the tribes used to go up, the tribes of Yah, an appointed practice for Yisrael to give thanks to the name of Hashem" (Tehilim 122:4). They were all just and pious, the sustenance of the inhabitants of the world, FOR THE WHOLE WORLD ENDURED THANKS TO THEM both above and below, IN THE UPPER AND LOWER WORLDS.

9. "O Jerusalem, built"

This section begins with a brief discussion of the preordained roles of David and Solomon in the construction of the temple, and then proceeds to address the relationship between the terrestrial Jerusalem and the heavenly Jerusalem. It is, we see, mirrored by the relationship of the children of Israel to the Upper and Lower Worlds.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our planet contains many spiritual energy centers that serve as portals through which the supernal Light of the Upper World flows into our dimension. Israel is the energy center of the entire planet. The city of Jerusalem is the energy source of Israel. The Temple is the primal source of energy for Jerusalem, and the Holy of Holies is the Fountainhead of spiritual energy for the Temple. Reading this passage connects us to Jerusalem, the Temple and ultimately, to the Holy of Holies. It ensures that all our prayers, deeds, and meditations draw their Light from this wellspring of spiritual energy.

98. He then quoted the verse: "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of Hashem'" (Tehilim 122:4). It has been explained that David said this when he set his heart on building the Temple, as it is written: "And it was in the heart of David, my father, to build a house for the name of Hashem, the Elohim of Yisrael" (I Melachim 8:17). But then it is written: "Yet you shall not build the house; but your son that shall come forth out of your loins, he shall build the house to My Name" (I Melachim 8:19). All the children of Yisrael knew that and asked: When will David die so that his son Solomon can rise and build the

Temple, as "our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem" (Tehilim 122:2), and we will go up to offer sacrifices?

99. For all that they used to ask, 'When will this old man die?' David was nevertheless "glad," and rejoiced on account of his son, who, it was said, would reign in his stead and carry out the building the Temple. Then he began to praise THE SHECHINAH, saying: "O Jerusalem, built as a city that is joined together" (Tehilim. 122:3).

100. We learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, formed the terrestrial Jerusalem, THE NUKVA, in the image of the heavenly Jerusalem, BINAH, with each facing the other, FOR THE NUKVA IS ESTABLISHED WITH ALL THE AMENDMENTS OF BINAH. As it is written: "In the place, Hashem, which You have made for you to dwell in" (Shemot 15:17). "Built" means that the Holy One, blessed be He, will cause Jerusalem to descend from above, completely BUILT. Therefore, HE SAYS "built." "That is joined together," as has already been explained. HE SAID: It should have been 'are joined', IN THE PLURAL. HE ANSWERS: The mother, BINAH, joined her daughter, THE NUKVA, and they became as one. HENCE IT IS WRITTEN IN THE SINGULAR, as has been explained.

101. "There the tribes used to go up..." (Tehilim 122:4). They sustain the world and support the lower world. And not just the lower world, but also the upper world, as it is written: "The tribes of Yah, an appointed practice (also: 'testimony') for Yisrael"-precisely, "for Yisrael." Because the children of Yisrael support the lower world, they bear testimony above IN THE UPPER WORLD. All this is to thank the Holy One, blessed be He, on all sides, as it is written: "To give thanks to the name of Hashem" (Ibid.).

10. "And a certain man found him"

This section addresses the role of providence in the sale of Yosef to the Egyptians and illustrates our inability to interpret events and their causal relationships as positive or negative, since we are ignorant of their role in God's preordained design.

The Relevance of this Passage

The selling of Yosef into slavery, and his subsequent rise from the status of prisoner to the second in command of Egypt, alludes to our ability to take control over the physical reality and triumph over our most base desires, thereby freeing our souls. The strength to accomplish this is aroused within us by the liberating Light set aflame by these Kabbalistic verses. In addition, we become more cognizant of our limited perspectives on life, particularly when hardships strike. Just as Yosef's imprisonment was a dire and tragic predicament that was eventually turned into triumph, our afflictions can be transformed into conquests given the right state of enlightened consciousness. That is, the foresight and wisdom to see beyond the immediate circumstances. Enlightenment is thus awakened in us by the lessons and Light emitted through the luminous letters of the Hebrew language appearing in this passage.

102. "And a certain man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, saying, 'What are you seeking?'" (Beresheet 37:15). It is written earlier: "And Yisrael said to Yosef, 'Do not your brothers feed the flock in Shchem? Come, and I will send you to them'" (Ibid. 13). Why did the perfected Ya'akov, who loved Yosef better than his other sons and knew that his brothers hated him, send Yosef to them? HE ANSWERS: Because he knew they were righteous, he did not distrust them. The Holy One, blessed be He, caused all this to carry out the decree he made TO AVRAHAM in the Covenant, between the pieces.

103. We have found it stated in ancient books that it was imperative that the sons of Ya'akov have mastery over Yosef before he descended to Egypt. For if he had gone there before they dominated him, the Egyptians, would have ruled over Yisrael in perpetuity, AND YISRAEL WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO LEAVE. THEREFORE, it came to pass that HIS BROTHERS were Yosef's masters and sold him as a slave. THUS, when Yosef was later crowned king of Egypt, Yisrael ruled over them all. FOR THEY OBTAINED MASTERY OVER YOSEF, THEIR KING, BY SELLING HIM TO BE A SLAVE. IT WAS AS IF THEY RULED OVER THE EGYPTIANS THEMSELVES. THIS WEAKENED EGYPTIAN POWER AND ENABLED YISRAEL TO BE FREED FROM IT.

104. Come and behold: Yosef was the Supernal Covenant, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, and as long as the Covenant, YOSEF, endured, the Shechinah lived within Yisrael in peace. Once Yosef, the Supernal Covenant, was gone from the world AND SOLD AS A SLAVE, the Covenant, the Shechinah, and Yisrael all went into exile. This has been explained in connection with the verse: "Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Yosef" (Shemot 1:8). THIS INDICATES THAT HIS RANK HAD BEEN REVOKED AND HE WENT INTO EXILE. The Holy One, blessed be He, caused all this, and it happened as it had to.

105. "And a certain man found him" refers to Gavriel. It has been explained here that it is written: "And a certain man found him," and elsewhere it is written: "The man Gavriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning" (Daniel 9:21). BY ANALOGY, WE LEARN THAT THE MAN IN THE FIRST SENTENCE IS ALSO GAVRIEL, and "he was wandering" (Beresheet 37:15) in every way, for trusting his brothers, for seeking fraternity but not obtaining it, and for looking for them without finding them. Therefore, "the man asked him, saying, 'What are you seeking?'"

11. "I seek my brothers..."

Rabbi Yehuda interprets the title quotation to indicate Yosef's intimate association with righteousness and the Shechinah. We are also shown how Joseph's enduring love and loyalty toward his brothers provide a human demonstration of God's compassionate love for the children of Israel.

The Relevance of this Passage

The drama of human existence is more than a one-act play. It's a production that encompasses many lifetimes, where credits and debits accrue according to our actions. Therefore, forgiving those who have inflicted harm upon us really has nothing to do with the other person. Kabbalistically, the people who hurt us in life are messengers. Everything that befalls us is a result of our prior deeds. The consequences of our actions eventually return through the agency of others, in order to help us achieve spiritual growth and correction. The strength to display compassion and forgiveness, even when we feel it is not deserved, is stimulated by the words of this passage.

106. "And he said, 'I seek my brothers'...And the man said, 'They are departed from here.'" Rabbi Yehuda quoted the verse: "O that you were as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find you outside, I would kiss you; and none would scorn me" (Shir Hashirim 8:1). This verse has already been explained by the friends. The congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, said to the King to whom peace belongs, TO ZEIR ANPIN: "O that you were as my brother," as Yosef was to his brothers. Yosef said to them, "'Now therefore fear not: I will nourish you, and your little ones'" (Beresheet 50:21) and he provided for them in time of famine. Therefore, THE CONGREGATION OF YISRAEL SAID TO ZEIR ANPIN, "O that you were as my brother," AS YOSEF WAS TO HIS BROTHERS.

107. According to another explanation of "O that you were as my brother...", Yosef, YESOD, said this to the Shechinah, whom he joined and to whom he cleaved. "...that sucked the breasts of my mother..." means that WHEN SHE RECEIVES MOCHIN FROM IMA, there is friendship and unity between them. "I should find you outside," in exile in a strange land; "I would kiss you," to merge her spirit with his; "...and none would scorn me"--'although I am in a foreign land'.

108. Come and behold: although Yosef's brothers did not act as his brothers when he fell into their hands, he was a brother to them when they fell into his hands. This is understood from the verse: "And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them" (Beresheet 50:21); he spoke kindly in every WAY UNTIL THEY BELIEVED HIM.

12. There is anger, and there is anger

This section provides a discussion on the two species of anger, one blessed and the other cursed. Rabbi Shimon then explains the ritual of cleansing the hands each morning, and why this sanctification is necessary.

The Relevance of this Passage

At times we must exert judgement or anger that is rooted in love and sharing. Positive anger is a form of love, as when a parent disciplines a child out concern for the child's safety. Ego-based anger, however, creates negative energy. If a parent punishes a child as an expression of inner frustration, this anger is cursed. One version of anger generates love; the other creates darkness. The words that reveal these truths help us attain the wisdom to mete out anger rooted in love, which is, therefore, blessed with the Light of The Creator.

109. Come and behold: "And they said one to another (lit. 'a man to his brother')" (Beresheet 37:19). These are Shimon and Levi, who were brothers in every respect, because they both came from the side of Harsh Judgment, and their anger was murderous anger, as it is written: "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel" (Beresheet 49:7).

110. Come and behold the secret of this matter. There are two kinds of anger. One kind of anger is blessed above and below, and is called 'blessed', as we learned from the verse: "Blessed be Avram of the most high El, possessor of heaven and earth" (Beresheet 14:19). IT HAS ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH AVRAHAM WAS ENGAGED IN WAR AND KILLED PEOPLE, IT WAS STILL SAID OF HIM, 'BLESSED BE AVRAM,' BECAUSE HE SANCTIFIED THE NAME OF HEAVEN IN DOING IT. Another kind of anger is cursed above and below, and we have learned that it is called 'cursed', as it is written: "You are cursed above all cattle" (Beresheet 3:14), and "Cursed be their anger."

111. Two mountains rely on this mystery, as it is written: "That you shall put the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Eval" (Devarim 11:29). They correspond to the two grades, THE ONE CALLED 'BLESSED' AND THE OTHER 'CURSED'. OF THESE MOUNTAINS AS WELL, one is called 'cursed' and the other 'blessed'. Shimon and Levi are from the side of Harsh Judgment, and from this harsh and rigorous Judgment, the accursed anger, WHICH IS CALLED 'CURSED', is issued.

112. Come and behold: from the side of Harsh Judgment, anger travels in two directions, one blessed and the other accursed. Similarly, two sons issued from Yitzchak, the one blessed and the other accursed, above and below. Each went to his own side. One dwelled in the Holy Land, while the other was in the mount of Seir, as "a cunning hunter, a man of the field" (Beresheet 25:27). One dwelled in a place of desolation and ruin, while the other was "dwelling in tents," as it should be.

113. Therefore, each of the two grades, blessed and cursed, goes to its own side. From the former comes all the blessings in the world from above and below—all goodness, illumination, redemption, and salvation. From the latter comes all the curses, ruin, blood, waste, evil, and all that is defiled in the world.

114. Rabbi Shimon quoted the verse: "I wash my hands in innocence: so I compass your altar, Hashem" (Tehilim 26:6). This has already been explained, yet come and behold: the mystery is that no man in the world avoids tasting death at night. As a result, the Spirit of Defilement hovers above his body. The reason is that the Holy Soul leaves him at that time and, once it leaves, the Spirit of Defilement hovers above his body, and he is defiled.

115. When the soul returns to the body, the filth passes away; yet it remains on the hands. Thus, a man should not pass his hands across his eyes since the Spirit of Defilement rests on them until they are washed. When a man properly washes them, he is then sanctified and called 'holy'.

116. HE ASKS: How should we sanctify ourselves WITH HAND WASHING? HE RESPONDED THAT we need a vessel beneath and a vessel above. To be sanctified from the vessel above, the vessel below must receive the filth of impurity and hold the contaminated WATER, while the vessel ABOVE is used for sanctification, AS ITS WATER IS Poured ON THE HANDS. The one ABOVE is blessed, and the one BENEATH is cursed. We must not empty the impure water within the house so that no one will come near it, for HARMFUL SPIRITS gather to it and a man might be harmed by the unclean water.

117. A man should not say a blessing before he removes the filth from his hands. It has been explained that a man is called 'unclean' before he washes his hands in the morning.

Once he washes his hands, he is called 'pure'. Therefore, a man's hands should be washed only by the hands of a clean man, as it is written: "And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean" (Bemidbar 19:19). He WHO ALREADY WASHED HIS HANDS is called 'pure', while he WHO HAS NOT is called 'impure'.

118. Therefore, the vessel above is pure, and the vessel below is impure. It is forbidden to put the impure water to any use; it needs be emptied where no one shall use it or pass over it. It must not be kept in the house at night, for once it is spilt on the ground, the Spirit of Defilement abides there and might cause harm. It is considered wise to dig a hole for it under the ground, where it can flow unseen.

119. It must not be given to witches who may use it to harm people, because it is water that causes the curse. The Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to purify Yisrael and make the people holy, as it is written: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean" (Yechezkel 36:25).

13. "And that pit was empty; there was no water in it"

This section opens with a description of the rich rewards of studying Torah, both in this world and the world to come. Those who neglect study, we are told, receive punishment. As Rabbi Yehuda points out, the children of Israel were exiled from the Holy Land because they abandoned the Torah. The discussion moves from various interpretations of the "empty pit" to the actions of Joseph's brothers--including Reuven's repentance and redemption, the punishment of Ya'akov, and the removal of Yehuda as king of the tribe.

The Relevance of this Passage

Kabbalistic concepts of retribution are not based on a Creator who metes out penalties and rewards. The Light of The Creator is a Divine Force whose only attributes are sharing and goodness. This can be compared to an electrical current--which can bring light to a city, or can be destructive if we carelessly poke a finger into a wall socket. Our own free will determines whether we short-circuit [receive punishment] or turn on the "light switch" [gain reward]. The Torah is a blueprint to show us how the universe is "wired," so that we harness spiritual forces in a positive and productive way. This wisdom and enlightenment comes to us through the intricate "wiring" of the words that compose these passages, and the spiritual Light they emit.

120. "And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and that pit was empty; there was no water in it" (Beresheet 37:24). Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse: "The Torah of Hashem is perfect, restoring the soul" (Tehilim 19:8). Men should endeavor to study the Torah as much as possible, for whoever does so gains life in this world and in the world to come, and he merits both worlds. Even he who strives to study the Torah, but does it for worldly reasons, merits reward in this world and escapes Judgment in the next.

121. Come and behold, it is written: "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and honor" (Mishlei 3:16). "Length of days," refers to that person who endeavors to study the Torah for its own sake, for he has length of days in a world of long days, SIGNIFYING THE EVERLASTING WORLD. These long days, which are found in the everlasting world, are certainly days. THIS MEANS THAT THEY ARE SURELY GOOD AND WORTHY DAYS. In addition, there is the certainty of sacredness above, NAMELY THE HOPED FOR REWARD. A man who trusts in this world should study the Torah diligently to be happy in the EVERLASTING world. "And in her left hand are riches and honor," for he receives good reward and peace in this world.

122. Whoever studies the Torah for its own sake will find that when he passes from the world, the Torah goes before him with proclamations and protects him from approaching accusers. When the body lies in the grave, it guards him and when the soul departs to ascend to its place, it precedes the soul. Many CLOSED gates are thrown open before the Torah until it brings THE SOUL to its place. THE TORAH stands by that man when the dead are resurrected, and speaks in his favor.

123. "When you walk, it shall lead you; when you lie down, it shall keep you and when you awake, it shall talk with you" (Mishlei 6:22). "When you walk, it shall lead you," refers to THE TORAH THAT GOES BEFORE HIM WHEN HE DIES. "When you lie down, it shall keep

you," refers to the interval when the body lies in the grave, for at that time the body is judged and sentenced and the Torah acts in its defense. "And when you awake, it shall talk with you," refers to the time at which the dead rise TO LIFE from the dust. "It shall talk with you," means it will speak in your defense.

124. Rabbi Elazar quoted the verse: "It shall talk with you" (Mishlei 6:22). What does this mean? HE ANSWERS: It means that although they have just risen from the dust, they will remember the Torah they studied before their death. They will know all they studied before departing from the world. It is penetrates inside them and speak in their innermost parts. THIS MEANS THAT IT DOES NOT COME BACK SLOWLY, AS IS THE NATURE OF THOUGHT, BUT SIMULTANEOUSLY, AS IN DRESSING, AS IS THE NATURE OF THE VISCERA.

125. And everything shall be clearer than it was before HE DIED, for whatever he did not grasp well THEN, whatever he strove to understand yet did not successfully grasp, is now clear in his innermost parts. And the Torah speaks within him. This is the meaning of the verse: "And when you awake, it shall talk with you" (Mishlei 6:22). Rabbi Yehuda said that whoever studied the Torah diligently in this world deserves to be occupied with it in the world to come.

126. Come and behold: a man who did not have the merit to be occupied with the Torah in this world walks in darkness. When he passes from the world, he is put in the lowest place in Gehenom, where no one pities him, a place described as a "gruesome pit", a "miry clay," as it is written: "He brought me up also out of the gruesome pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my footsteps" (Tehilim 40:3).

127. It is therefore written of he who does not study the Torah in this world, but besmirches himself with the filth of this world: "And they took him, and cast him into a pit" (Beresheet 37:24), into Gehenom, where those who do not study the Torah are sentenced. "And the pit was empty" (Ibid.); it is empty, because there was no water in it--THAT IS, TORAH, CALLED 'WATER'.

128. Come and behold: the punishment for neglecting the study of the Torah. Yisrael were exiled from the Holy Land, only for being removed from and leaving the Torah. This is explained by the verse, "Who is the wise man, that may understand this? Why does the land perish...? Because they have forsaken My Torah which I set before them" (Yirmeyah 9:11-12). Rabbi Yosi said: "Therefore My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge" (Yeshayah 5:13), NAMELY, OF THE TORAH.

129. Hence, everything is based on the existence of the Torah, and the world only endures by means of the Torah, which sustains the worlds above and below. As it is written: "If my Covenant be not day and night, it were as if I had not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth..." (Yirmeyah 33:25).

130. "And they took him, and cast him into a pit" (Beresheet 37:24). This alludes to the fact that LATER they cast him into Egypt, where the secret of the faith does not abide. WATER IS THE SECRET OF THE FAITH, AND WHEN IT IS WRITTEN: "AND THE PIT WAS EMPTY," IT REFERS TO A LACK OF THE SECRET OF THE FAITH. Rabbi Yitzchak said: If there were snakes and scorpions in the pit--ACCORDING TO THE SAGES, IT CONTAINED SNAKES AND SCORPIONS, BUT NO WATER--why is it written of Reuven, "He might save him out of their hands" (Ibid. 22)? Did not Reuven fear that the snakes and scorpions would harm Yosef? If so, how did he plan "to deliver him back to his father...that he might save him"?

131. HE REPLIED THAT Reuven saw that Yosef would surely come to harm in their hands, for he knew how much they hated him and wished to kill him. Reuven thought it was better to cast him into the pit of snakes and scorpions than to deliver him to his enemies, who have no compassion for him. Thus, the saying: "Rather should a man throw himself into a fire or a pit full of serpents and scorpions, than be delivered into the hands of his enemies."

132. For if a man is righteous here in a place of snakes and scorpions, the Holy One, blessed be He, performs miracles for him, or sometimes he is saved by the merit of his fathers. But once delivered into the hands of enemies, few escape.

133. Therefore, he said: "That he might save him out of their hands," (Beresheet 37:22) not simply 'that he might save him', but rather, "out of their hands." Reuven said to himself,

'may he be saved from them, and if he dies, it is BETTER FOR HIM to die in the pit.' It is therefore written: "And Reuven heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands." HE SAVED HIM ONLY FROM DYING BY THEIR HANDS, EVEN THOUGH HE MIGHT HAVE DIED IN THE PIT.

134. Come and behold, the piety of Reuven. He knew that Shimon and Levi were ruthless when they joined forces and cunning. When they joined against Shchem, they killed all the males. They were not satisfied, so they took the women and the little ones, gold and silver, and all beasts and precious vessels--in short, everything that was to be found in the city. Yet even this was not enough, so they took what was in the field, as it is written: "And that which was in the city, and that which was in the field they took" (Beresheet 34:28).

135. Reuven said, 'If such a great city did not escape them, then if this boy falls in their hands, not a shred of flesh will remain. Therefore, it is better to save him from them, for they will leave no sign of him for my father to see.'

136. 'Even if he dies IN THE PIT, his brothers will not prevail against him. His body will remain intact and I will return him whole to my father.' Therefore, it is written: "that he might save him out of their hands, to deliver him back to his father." 'I WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN HIM TO MY FATHER even though he will die there.' He therefore said, "The child is not," (Beresheet 37:30) instead of 'not alive', because he was not even dead.

137. Come and behold what Reuven did. He wisely joined them and said, "Let us not kill him" (Beresheet 37:21), instead of 'Do not you take his life', for he was not there when Yosef was sold. They each then attended their father for one day. When it was Reuven's day, he did not want Yosef to perish. It is therefore written: "And Reuven returned to the pit and, behold, Yosef was not in the pit"--NOT EVEN DEAD--"and he rent his clothes." Immediately, "he returned to his brothers, and said, 'The child is not'."

138. Even Reuven was not informed of the sale of Yosef. It has already been explained that the Shechinah was a partner IN THE VOW NOT TO REVEAL THE SALE OF YOSEF. Therefore Reuven did not know of it, and it was not revealed to him until Yosef made himself known to his brothers!

139. Come and behold the pleasure Reuven attained in trying to save Yosef's life. It is written: "Let Reuven live, and not die" (Devarim 33:6). For although he knew that the birthright was taken from him and given to Yosef, nevertheless he tried to save his life. Therefore Moshe prayed for him, saying, "Let Reuven live, and not die," and be supported in this world and in the world to come. What is the reason - it is this SAVING YOSEF'S LIFE and repenting for DEFILING HIS FATHER'S BED! If a man repents his sins, the Holy One, blessed be He, will revive him in this world and in the world to come.

140. Come and behold: "And they took Yosef's coat..." (Beresheet 37:31). It has been explained that this is because a coat's blood resembles human blood. Yet come and behold: even when an act is well executed--WITHOUT COMMITTING ANY SIN--the Holy One, blessed be He, is strict with the righteous, even to a hair's breadth.

141. Ya'akov did well to kill a goat for his father. Yet by offering a goat, which comes from the side of Harsh Judgment, he weakened THE ASPECT OF THE STRICT JUDGMENT OF his father since he is of its aspect, AS YITZCHAK TOO PERTAINS TO SEVERE JUDGMENT. AND ALTHOUGH THE JUDGMENT TOOK HOLD OF THE GOAT, Ya'akov was punished in that his sons brought its blood before him.

142. It is written OF YA'AKOV: "And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck" (Beresheet 27:16). Therefore it is said OF HIS SONS: "And they dipped the coat in the blood" (Beresheet 37:31). This was measure for measure. Since he caused that "Yitzchak trembled very much" (Ibid. 33), HIS SONS made him tremble when they said, "'Know now whether it be your son's coat or not'" (Ibid. 32).

143. Rabbi Chiya said it is written concerning him (Ya'akov): "Are you my son Esav or not" (Beresheet 27:21), and addressing him (they said), "is it your son's coat or not" (Beresheet 37:32). This is because the Holy One, blessed be He, is strict with the righteous to a hair's breadth in everything they do.

144. Rabbi Aba said that when the tribes saw their father's grief, they surely regretting SELLING YOSEF and determined to rescue him if they could find him. When they saw they could not RESCUE HIM, they turned to Yehuda, WHO ADVISED THEM TO SELL HIM and rejected him from among them. For he now was their king, and when they deposed him, it is written: "And it came to pass at that time, that Yehuda went down from his brothers" (Beresheet 38:1).

14. Tzion and Jerusalem

Here, Rabbi Yehuda discusses the creation of the universal structure that issued from Zion, the central point of faith and perfection. While Zion and Jerusalem are one, they represent the two grades of judgment and mercy. Through Binah, which correlates to understanding, the attributes of mercy and judgment are commingled and reconciled in the world.

The Relevance of this Passage

Throughout life, our actions disrupt and misalign the supernal forces that embody the attributes of judgement and mercy. This occurs on both a personal and universal level, in line with individual and collective actions of humanity. Consequently, judgement may occur in place of mercy; the world may seem especially hard and judgmental toward us. In response, we may find ourselves overreacting to situations where we'd normally respond with restraint and patience. Balancing these two attributes in our behavior is vital.

An example of judgement and mercy is illustrated by the following parent-child situation. A child terribly misbehaves. The parent becomes extremely upset and immediately spansk the youngster. The parent reacted to the situation, and the act of judgement was rooted in selfish frustration. The child might attempt to change his behavior, but he does so only out of fear. Kabbalistically, the parent needs to balance judgement with mercy. That is, sharing and care for the child must be the intent behind any disciplinary action. The parent might gently spank the child, but out of love and concern, rather than anger and frustration. The child's motivation for change will now be rooted in love and respect, not fear.

If a soul descends into a human being from the lineage of Avraham [Right Column], it is said that the person's nature will be shaped and influenced by the quality of mercy. If a soul descends from the lineage of Yitzchak [Left Column], the individual is imbued with a greater proportion of judgement in his nature, and behavior is influenced in that direction.

Reading this section helps balance the forces of judgement and mercy in our interactions with the world. Moreover, these verses open us to the Light so that we ourselves can be worthy of mercy, rather than judgement, when the time comes for them to appear in our lives.

145. Rabbi Yehuda quoted the verse: "Hashem also thundered in the heavens, and the highest gave His voice; hail and coals of fire" (Tehilim 18:14). Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, THAT IS, WHEN THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, EMANATED THE NUKVA, CALLED 'WORLD', He made seven pillars for it BY ILLUMINATING ON HER WITH THE SEVEN SFIROT: CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT OF ZEIR ANPIN. All of them are supported by one single pillar, NAMELY YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN'. In the verse: "Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars" (Mishlei 9:1), it was explained that they all stand on one grade called 'YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN'; "the righteous is an everlasting foundation" (Mishlei 10:25).

146. When the universe was created, it issued from the spot that included, along with its improvements, the point in the middle of the world, which is Tzion, THE INNER YESOD OF THE NUKVA. As it is written: "A psalm of Asaf. The mighty one, El, Elohim Hashem, has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof" (Tehilim 50:1). Where did He speak from? From Tzion, as it is written: "Out of Tzion, the perfection of beauty, Elohim has shone forth" (Tehilim 50:2), the place that constructs faith to perfection. Tzion is the strength, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, and the point of the whole world--THAT IS THE SECRET OF THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM--on which the world has been constructed BY THE CHOCHMAH IN IT, and wherein it is nourished, BY THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM IN IT.

147. Come and behold: after stating, "Hashem also thundered in the heavens" (Tehilim 18:14), why add, "and the Highest gave His voice," WHICH IS REDUNDANT? RABBI YEHUDA ANSWERS: Here is the secret of the faith I mentioned. For Tzion constructs and beautifies the world, and the world is nourished by Tzion FROM ITS TWO ASPECTS, NAMELY CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM. This is similar to the two grades that are one, namely Tzion and Jerusalem; the former of Judgment and the latter of Mercy, and both are one. Judgment is issued from one, and Mercy is issued from the other.

148. From high up, REFERRING TO THE SFIRAH OF BINAH, a voice resounds. THIS IS THE CENTRAL RECONCILING COLUMN OF BINAH. When it is heard, WHEN IT RECONCILES THE NUKVA, AND THE LIGHTS OF RIGHT AND LEFT ARE HEARD, Judgments issue forth FROM THE NUKVA and the paths of Judgment and Mercy may be seen diverging. "Hashem also thundered in the heavens," refers to the Merciful Court. And although the Highest, BINAH may be neither found nor known, because the same voice comes out AND RECONCILES RIGHT AND LEFT, all is then under Judgment and Mercy. AS THE HIGHEST, BINAH GIVES ITS VOICE TO THE NUKVA AND RECONCILES HER TWO COLUMNS. So it is written: "And the Highest gave His voice" (Tehilim 18:14). Then came "hail and coals of fire"--water and fire.

149. Come and behold: when Yehuda was born, it was written: "And she left off bearing" (Beresheet 29:35). This refers to the fourth of the four foundations, CALLED CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT, because they are the Supernal Chariot OF BINAH, and this is one of the four legs of the throne, CALLED MALCHUT. THEREFORE, IT WAS WRITTEN WITH REGARD TO HIM, "AND SHE LEFT OFF BEARING," FOR HE IS THE LAST SFIRAH, MALCHUT. It is written of him: "And it came to pass at that time, that Yehuda went down from his brothers" (Beresheet 38:1). He was their king, BEING OF MALCHUT, BUT AFTER SELLING YOSEF, HE WAS DEPOSED. Why? Because Yosef was brought down to Egypt.

15. "And he called his name Er"

The interconnection of the upper and lower worlds is exemplified in this section concerning the fate of Yehuda's firstborn son, Er. Yehuda's fall and descent, we're told, signify the descent and obscuring of the moon and the supernal Light; consequently, his son was born of the Side of Defilement, and was therefore later slain by the Lord.

The Relevance of this Passage

In order to grow spiritually and bring greater fulfillment to our lives, we must abolish all the character traits within us that emerge from the side of Defilement and Darkness. The end of darkness occurs the instant the 'Light' is turned on--which, in turn, occurs at the moment we peruse these profound words of wisdom.

150. "And Yehuda saw there a daughter of a certain Cna'anite" (Beresheet 38:2). HE ASKS: Was he Cnaanite? DID NOT THE FATHERS AVOID MARRYING AMONG THE CNA'ANITES? HE REPLIED: It has been explained by the friends THAT THE WORD CNA'ANITE MEANS 'MERCHANT'. "And she conceived, and bore a son, and he called his name Er" (Ibid. 3). Yehuda had three sons, but only one, Shelah, remained BECAUSE YEHUDA WENT DOWN, AND WAS PUNISHED FOR IT BY BEGETTING SONS AND THEN BURYING THEM.

151. Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Yosi, and Rabbi Chiya were walking along the road. Rabbi Yosi asked Rabbi Elazar: Why is it written in relation to Yehuda's firstborn: "And he called his name Er," USING THE MALE PRONOUN, and of the other two sons, "she called his name Onan," and "she called his name Shelah," USING THE FEMALE PRONOUN?

152. He said to him: Come and behold. This portion contains a profound secret, and all is proper. "Yehuda went down from his brothers" because the moon, THE NUKVA, became obscure and descended from the upright grade to another grade to which the serpent is attached. It is written: "And turned into a certain Adullamite, whose name was Chirah."

153. "And she conceived, and bore a son; and he called his name Er (Ayin Resh)" (Beresheet 38:3). He was evil (Heb. Resh Ayin)-which amounts to the same thing, FOR 'EVIL' AND ER ARE SPELLED WITH THE SAME HEBREW LETTERS. Because he came from the side of the Evil Inclination, it is written: "And he called (Heb. et) his name Er." The particle et adds yet another grade of filth of defilement, from which he was born. This is why Er and Ra ('evil') are identical, NAMELY, SPELLED WITH THE SAME HEBREW LETTERS!

154. With the second son, the place was not yet sweetened AND RETURNED TO HOLINESS. That happened only when Shelah, who was the most important of them all, came. It is written: "And Er, Yehuda's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of Hashem" (Beresheet 38:7), and "for the inclination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Beresheet 8:21). THERE IT MEANS 'SPILLING SEMEN IN VAIN'; THUS, HERE IT MEANS HE WAS SPILLING blood, for he spilt semen on the ground. That is why "Hashem slew him" (Ibid.). Then, "Yehuda said to Onan, 'Go in to your brother's wife...'"

16. "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform the duty of a brother in law"

Rabbi Shimon begins by discussing the responsibility of the righteous man to beget children in order to ensure a place for his soul in the world to come. By perpetuating the image of the Holy King through offspring, the righteous man may prevent the reincarnation of his soul. Thus, the section addresses the necessity of marriage and of levirate marriage. We are also reminded of the futility and vanity of the individual who endeavors to provide only for himself, without creating a family.

The Relevance of this Passage

A dark room becomes progressively brighter with each lighting of a new candle. Every soul that comes into this world is likened to a candle. Though true reality, which is our ultimate destination, offers immortality and endless fulfillment, during the course of human spiritual evolution, the Light is temporarily dimmed. Immortality is relegated to the act of procreation and childbearing, which ensures the ongoing entrance of new souls into this world for the purpose of bringing about the final correction of humanity. In other words, the chain of humanity is immortal, while the individual body remains perishable and finite. All men live for the existence of the chain until such time as humanity completes its spiritual correction and transformation. At that juncture, the force of immortality will expand and bring endless life. This transformation, the final redemption, is hastened by bringing new souls into this world, whose Light, through the path of Torah, helps diminish darkness and death and accelerate the process of correction. This Light is also generated through the spiritual influences that radiate from these ancient Hebrew verses.

155. "And Yehuda said to Onan, 'Go in to your brother's wife'..." (Beresheet 38:21). Rabbi Shimon then quoted: "'I have raised up one from the north, and he is come from the rising of the sun, and he shall call upon my name; and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treads clay" (Yeshayah 41:25). Come and behold: how foolish are men who neither know nor care for the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He. They are all asleep, and sleep never leaves their eyes.

156. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, wisely created man in the image of above. There is neither a member nor an organ within man that was not created by Divine Wisdom, AS EACH ORGAN ALLUDES TO A SPECIFIC GRADE. After the body is complete with all its members, the Holy One, blessed be He, joins them and inserts a sacred soul to teach the man to tread the paths of the Torah and keep its commandments, so that the man will be properly perfected IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE APHORISM: 'A MAN'S SOUL SHALL TEACH HIM.'

157. Now that the sacred soul is within him, HE IS WORTHY OF BEGETTING CHILDREN IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. Therefore, a man should multiply to perpetuate the image of the highest King in the universe. The secret of this is the river which issues forth: SUPERNAL YESOD, whose water never stops. Similarly, a man should never stop the flowing of his river and the source in this world, BUT SHOULD BEGET CHILDREN. When a man is unsuccessful IN BEGETTING CHILDREN in this world, the Holy One, blessed be He, uproots him FROM THIS WORLD and replants him again and again. THAT IS, HE DIES AND IS BORN AGAIN INTO THE WORLD UNTIL HE SUCCEEDS IN BEGETTING CHILDREN.

158. Come and behold, it is written: "I have raised up one from the North, and he is come" (Yeshayah 41:25). "I have raised up," refers to a man's desire to mate in this world, which is raised by the north side FROM THE LEFT, FOR THE DESIRE TO MATE COMES FROM THE LEFT. "And he is come," refers to the sacred soul, which comes from above, sent by the Holy One, blessed be He, into this world, where it enters people.

159. "...from the rising of the sun..." (Yeshayah 41:25) The place from which the river issues forth is TIFERET, THE ABODE OF YESOD, from which the shining soul comes and is born, AS ALL SOULS COME FROM THE UNION OF TIFERET AND MALCHUT. "And he shall come upon princes" (Ibid.), means that the armies of the world--THE NUKVA CALLED 'WORLD', WHOSE ARMIES ARE ANGELS--come with the stirring of the souls, NAMELY, ARE BORN WITH THEM. AND, "as upon mortar" (Ibid.), means as a man awakening into his body, WHICH IS CALLED 'MORTAR'.

160. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, couples souls and sends them into this world, causing union between above and below, and thus the source of all is blessed. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, created man so that he will strive to walk in His ways and never stop his river, RATHER HE WILL BEGET CHILDREN.

161. He whose source is dried up AND DOES NOT BEGET CHILDREN cannot enter the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He, when he passes from the world, and he does not participate in that world. Come and behold, it is written: "He did not create it a waste land; He formed it to be inhabited" (Yeshayah 45:18). Therefore, He created man IN THE LIKENESS OF ABOVE, for the Holy One, blessed be He, is kind to the world. Come and behold, it is written: "Then again Avraham took a wife, and her name was Kturah" (Beresheet 25:1). This is the secret of the soul returning INTO A BODY to be perfected.

162. Come and behold: it is written of the body, "But it pleased Hashem to crush man by disease: if his soul shall consider it a recompense for guilt, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the purpose of Hashem shall prosper in his hand" (Yeshayah 53:10). We have to study this verse further. Why does it so please HIM? HE ANSWERS: Because it purifies him! HE ASKS: Why the feminine gender INSTEAD OF THE MASCULINE in the verse, "If his soul shall consider (feminine) it a recompense for guilt"? HE ANSWERS: Because the phrase, "shall consider," alludes to the soul. THUS, if the soul wishes to perfect herself properly, then "he shall see his seed," because the soul roams around without rest and is destined to enter the seed of a man who observed THE COMMANDMENT OF being fruitful and multiplying. He shall then "prolong his days...and the purpose of Hashem," referring to the study of the Torah, "shall prosper in his hand." BUT IF HE DID NOT HAVE CHILDREN, THE TORAH DOES NOT HELP HIM.

163. Come and behold: if a man studies the Torah day and night, but does not use his source and fountain of life TO BEGET CHILDREN, he is not permitted in the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He. We have learned that a well of water is no well unless the source feeds it, for the well and the source are of one secret. And we have explained THAT WHOEVER HAS NO CHILDREN IS JUDGED AS IF THE SOURCE DID NOT FLOW INTO HIM, NAMELY DID NO WORK WITHIN HIM.

164. It is written: "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sadness; for truly to His beloved He gives tranquillity" (Tehilim 127:2). Come and behold: how precious are the words of the Torah, for each contains high and holy mysteries. We have learned that when the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Yisrael the Torah, he included within it all the holy and supernal mysteries that were given to the children of Yisrael when they received the Torah on Mount Sinai.

165. Come and behold: "It is vain for you to rise early," refers to single men without wives who are not as they should be, without union with a woman. They rise up early to do their work, as is manifest in the verse: "There is one alone, without a companion...yet there is no end of all his labor" (Kohelet 4:8). "...to sit up late..." refers to those who retire late, WHO ARE LATE TO MARRY, FOR IT MEANS 'REST', as in "because in it he rested" (Beresheet 2:3); for a woman is considered a repose for man.

166. Of the verse, "To eat the bread of sadness" (Tehilim 127:2), HE ASKS: What is the bread of sadness? HE ANSWERS THAT when a man has children, he eats his bread joyously, with a glad heart. If he does not have children, he eats the bread of sadness. These are assuredly those who "eat the bread of sadness."

167. HE ASKS: What is meant by the verse, "For truly to His beloved He gives tranquillity" (Tehilim 127:2)? HE ANSWERS: To he whose source is blessed WITH CHILDREN, the Holy One, blessed be He, gives sleep in this world, in accordance with the verse, "You shall lie

down, and your sleep shall be sweet" (Mishlei 3:24). This is because he has a part in the world to come, and he therefore lies IN THE GRAVE and enjoys the world to come.

168. "There is one alone without a companion" (Kohelet 4:8), refers to the man who is alone in the world, but not appropriately; HE IS without a wife. He is "without a companion," having no wife to help him. "...he has neither son..." to preserve his name in Yisrael after him, "nor brother" to amend for him BY LEVIRATE MARRIAGE.

169. "...yet there is no end of all his labor..." (Kohelet 4:8) means that he labors constantly, from early day to night. "Neither is his eye satisfied with riches" (Ibid.), and he has not the sense to ask, "For whom then do I labor, and bereave my soul of good?" It may be said that if he toils to have more food and drink to feast every day, this is not so, because the soul does not derive any enjoyment from it. Assuredly, he denies his soul good, of the light of the world to come, because the soul is defective; that is, it is not properly perfected. Come and behold: how compassionate is the Holy One, blessed be He, toward His creatures, IN BRINGING HIM BACK IN ANOTHER INCARNATION SO HE CAN PERFECT HIMSELF. For He wishes him to be perfected and not to be cut off from the world to come.

170. Rabbi Chiya asks: What is the position in the world to come of a thoroughly righteous man who engages in the study of the Torah day and night and devotes all his deeds to the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, yet does not have children in this world? Or a man who tries but can not have children, or has children who die? Rabbi Yosi replied: His deeds and the Torah protect him, so he is worthy of the world to come.

171. Rabbi Yitzchak said: It is written of them and of the truly just: "For thus says Hashem to the eunuchs that keep My Shabbatot (plural), and choose the things that please Me, and take hold of My Covenant. And to them will I give in My house and within My walls a memorial better than sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off" (Yeshayah 56:4-5), for they have a portion in the world to come. Rabbi Yosi said to him: This is good and well; THAT IS, HE AGREED WITH HIM.

172. Come and behold: a thoroughly righteous man who attained all THE AFOREMENTIONED VIRTUES and reached perfection, but died without children, inherits his place in the world to come. HE ASKS: Does his wife have to marry his brother or not? If she does, it is in vain, FOR HE DOES NOT NEED HIS BROTHER TO PERFECT HIM, having already attained his place in the world to come!

173. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly his wife should marry his brother, for we can not tell whether he was whole in his deeds or not. If his wife marries his brother, it is not in vain, EVEN IF HE ATTAINED PERFECTION. For the Holy One, blessed be He, keeps a place FOR THOSE WHO DIE WITHOUT CHILDREN OR A BROTHER TO MARRY THEIR WIFE. When a thoroughly righteous man dies and his wife marries his brother, he has already inherited his place AND DOES NOT NEED THE CORRECTION OF THE LEVIRATE MARRIAGE. Then comes a MAN WHO DIED CHILDLESS, WITHOUT A REDEEMER IN THE WORLD, and is perfected by the marriage OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S WIFE. In the meanwhile, the Holy One, blessed be He, prepares a place FOR THE MAN WITHOUT THE REDEEMER until the righteous man dies. Then, he may be perfected in the world THROUGH A LEVIRATE MARRIAGE. This is the meaning of the verse: "Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest" (Bemidbar 35:28).

174. In relation to this, we have learned that the righteous are destined to have children through their death; THAT IS, THE CHILDREN OF THE LEVIRATE MARRIAGE WHO PERFECT THOSE WHO HAVE DIED CHILDLESS AND WITHOUT A BROTHER. They attain in their deaths what they did not attain during their lives. Hence, all the works of the Holy One, blessed be He, are true, just, and compassionate toward all, EVEN THOSE WHO HAVE NO BROTHER.

175. He began by quoting the verse: "Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their labor" (Kohelet 4:9). This refers to those who strive to beget children in this world. For the sake of the children they leave after them, they receive a good reward in this world. For their sake, their fathers inherit a portion of the world to come.

176. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, plants trees in the world. If they grow well, it is good; if they do not, He uproots them and replants them SOMEWHERE ELSE as

many times as required. Such are the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, in tending to the good and to the correction of the world.

177. "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law" (Beresheet 38:8) IS REDUNDANT, for Yehuda and the other tribes knew this. The ONLY important thing he told him was, "and raise up seed", for seed was needed for purification and for preparing an embryo to receive the remedy, so that the stock would not be severed from the root. This is the meaning of: "and man shall return to dust" (Iyov 34:15).

178. Having been prepared properly AFTER THE SAID INCARNATION, they are well praised in the world to come, for they please the Holy One, blessed be He. It is therefore written: "So I praised the dead that are already dead more than the living that are yet (Heb. adenah) alive" (Kohelet 4:2). FOR THEY COME BACK TO LIFE AND RETURN TO A TENDER AGE. The word "adenah" as in, "After I am grown old shall I have pleasure (Heb. ednah)" (Beresheet 18:12), and "he shall return to the days of his youth" (Iyov 33:24), MEANS THE DAYS OF YOUTH AND PLEASURE TO WHICH HE RETURNED IN INCARNATION.

179. "...but better than both of them is he who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun" (Kohelet 4:3, refers to he who has not returned to his youth AND BEEN REINCARNATED. HE IS A THOROUGHLY RIGHTEOUS PERSON, who does not need a new incarnation to achieve perfection and is not burdened by former sins, like one incarnated who suffers for sins he committed in former life. The Holy One, blessed be He, prepared for him a fitting place in the world to come.

180. Come and behold, it is written: "And so I saw the wicked buried, and come to their rest" (Kohelet 8:10), as we said THAT THEY WERE BORN AGAIN TO MEND THEIR DEEDS. For the Holy One, blessed be He, is kind and does not want the world to perish, BUT PREFERS TO REFORM THE WICKED THROUGH REINCARNATION. All His ways are true and gracious and benefit them in this world and in the world to come. Happy is the portion of the righteous who walk the true path, of whom it is written: "The righteous shall inherit the land" (Tehilim 37:29).

17. "And the thing which he did displeased Hashem..."

This section addresses the sin which, we're told, defiles man most in this world and in the world to come: masturbation. This judgment is not based upon moral or ethical principles, but rather upon the metaphysical structure of the Upper Worlds. The dark forces that challenge us throughout our spiritual development derive their strength and sustenance from the Light they steal from us. Thus, when we react or behave with intolerance towards others, the Light we lose strengthens the Evil Inclination. Masturbation is condemned for the simple reason that a man's seed is the substance that is closest in form to the Light of The Creator. It is raw, naked energy, and therefore requires concealment when it is revealed in our physical world. This concealment takes place when a man's seed is used for the direct purpose of creating life. Moreover, sexual relations between a man and wife express the ultimate in sharing, with both parties imparting pleasure to one another. In this loving and protected environment, the Light and power of a man's sperm cannot be appropriated or defiled by the Evil Inclination. The spilling of a man's seed is an act that is done for immediate self-gratification. Consequently, negative forces immediately appropriate this Light and our lives grow a little bit darker. Hardships and misfortunes in life--whether emotional, financial, marital, or otherwise--result from a lack of spiritual Light. We also learn of the great rewards in the world to come for a man who has trained his children to draw close to God and live by the spiritual wisdom of Torah.

The Relevance of this Passage

When a man refrains from pleasuring himself through the wanton spilling of his seed, his spiritual life force grows increasingly stronger. This manifests in many ways, including more intense sexual desire for his mate, and greater emotional stability and inner peace. The Light of this passage helps to cleanse and eradicate the dark forces that attach to us as a result of our sexually self-gratifying actions. This Light helps us to recognize the spiritual benefits associated with directing our carnal desires towards sharing pleasure with our mate, and drawing the Light of the Creator into this darkened world.

181. "And the thing which he did displeased Hashem: So He slew him also" (Beresheet 38:10). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand" (Kohelet 11:6). Come and behold: it behooves man much to be careful lest he sin and to be heedful in his actions before the Holy One, blessed be He. For there are numerous messengers and chieftains in the world who roam about observing the deeds of man and bearing testimony of him, recording everything in a book.

182. Come and behold: of all the sins that defile a man in this world, that which defiles him the most in this world and in the world to come is spilling his semen in vain. Letting it out in vain by the hand or leg brings impurity on man, as it is written: "For you are not an El that has pleasure in wickedness: nor shall evil dwell with you" (Tehilim 5:5).

183. He therefore does not come inside the curtain OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, or behold the presence of Atik Yomin, as is learned from the verses: "Nor shall evil dwell with you" (Tehilim 5:5), and "And Er, Yehuda's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of Hashem" (Beresheet 38:7). BOTH VERSES INDICATE THAT HE DOES NOT BEHOLD THE FACE OF HASHEM. Hence, it is written: "Your hands are full of blood" (Yeshayah 1:15), WHICH REFERS TO LETTING SEMEN BY THE HAND, WHICH IS LIKENED TO SHEDDING BLOOD. Happy is the portion of the man who fears Hashem and is guarded from the evil path, and purifies himself to be occupied in the fear of his Master.

184. The verse, "In the morning sow your seed" (Kohelet 11:6), has already been explained. The morning is the time of man's strength and youth. He should then strive to beget children with the wife appropriate for him, according to the verse: "In the morning sow your seed."

185. Then it is his time TO BEGET CHILDREN, as it is written: "As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of one's youth" (Tehilim 127:4). Then he is able to teach them the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, and to receive good reward for the world to come, as it is written: "Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them, they shall not be put to shame, but they shall speak with their enemies in the gate" (Tehilim 127:5). "They shall not be put to shame" in the World of Truth when the Accusers bring accusations on them, for there is no better reward in that world than THE REWARD of he who teaches his child the fear of Hashem in the ways of the Torah.

186. Come and behold: it is written about Avraham, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Hashem, to do justice and judgment" (Beresheet 18:19). This merit stood him well in the world to come against all Accusers.

187. It is therefore written: "In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand" (Kohelet 11:6). Even in old age, CALLED 'EVENING', it is written: "Do not withhold your hand" from begetting children. Why? "For you know not which shall prosper, whether this or that," before Elohim, and which will defend them in the World of Truth.

188. Hence it is written: "Lo, children are the heritage of Hashem" (Tehilim 127:3). This is the Eternal Life (lit. 'bundle of LIFE') of the soul, THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "YET THE SOUL OF MY LORD SHALL BE BOUND IN THE BOND OF LIFE" (I SHMUEL 25:29), CONSIDERED AS the world to come and called 'heritage' BY THE SCRIPTURE. Who causes man to merit the heritage of Hashem? Children do. The children cause man to merit the heritage of Hashem! Therefore, happy is the man who has children to whom he may teach the ways of the Torah.

18. "And she put off her widow's garments..."

This section explains the actions of Ruth and Tamar, two women who lost their first husbands and later conceived through levirate marriage. We learn that both acted piously and with the help of God, because the fruitful seed of Yehuda was established through them.

The Relevance of this Passage

This story concerns the eventual birth of King David and the Messiah. What's most relevant to the reader is the Messianic Light concealed inside the passage. A simple reading of the

text sets the Light aglow, helping to hasten the emergence of the Messiah within us, and in turn, the arrival of the global Mashiach and Final Redemption.

189. "And she put off her widow's garments..." (Beresheet 38:14). Come and behold: could it be that Tamar, a priest's daughter, who was always modest, would commit incest with her father-in-law? HE ANSWERS: She was a righteous woman AND did this with wisdom. She was not lewd, but wise, and KNEW WHAT WOULD BECOME OF IT. SHE approached him to do kindness and truth by him.

190. Come and behold: because she knew what would become of her efforts, the Holy One, blessed be He, aided her in the act, and she conceived immediately. All this was from THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. It may be wondered why the Holy One, blessed be He, did not use another woman to bear these sons, but this one, TAMAR. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly, she was needed for this and no other woman would do.

191. The seed of Yehuda was established with two women, who bore King David, King Solomon, and Mashiach. The two women, Tamar and Rut, resembled each other. Both Tamar and Rut lost their first husbands and replaced them through similar efforts.

192. Tamar approached her father-in-law, who was next of kin to his dead sons AND THUS WORTHY OF TAKING HER IN LEVIRATE MARRIAGE. The reason for her act is stated in the verse: "For she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him to wife" (Beresheet 38:14). She therefore did this by her father-in-law.

193. Rut's first husband died as did that of Tamar, and then she did the deed by Boaz, as it is written: "And uncovered his feet, and laid herself down" (Rut 3:7). She then gave birth to Oved. You might ask why Oved was not born to another woman, INSTEAD OF IN THIS MANNER. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly, it was necessary that she, and not any other woman, bore him. From these two, the seed of Yehuda was built and established. Both did well and brought kindness upon the dead, so they would later be perfected in the world.

194. This is the explanation of the verse: "So I praised the dead that are already dead" (Kohelet 4:2). As long as THE HUSBANDS OF TAMAR AND RUT were alive, there was no praise to their name. After they died, THEIR WIVES WERE TAKEN IN LEVIRATE MARRIAGE AND THE KINGDOM OF DAVID, SOLOMON, AND MASHIACH DESCENDED FROM THEM. Both TAMAR AND RUT did kindness and truth by the dead, and the Holy One, blessed be He, helped them in the very act. Thus, all is fitting as it should be. Happy is he who studies the Torah day and night, as it is written: "But you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it: for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success" (Yehoshua 1:8).

19. "And Yosef was brought down to Egypt..."

This section begins by interpreting the phrasing of the title quotation as indicating God's approval of this act; it was necessary in order to fulfill His announcement to Avraham.

A discussion follows concerning the legions of angels who sing praises to the glory of God throughout the night. It is the role of the children of Israel to offer praises to God through litanies three times daily. In this way, God is glorified both day and night, from above and below. Rabbi Shimon next offers two explanations of the phrase, "who commands the sun," in the context of Ya'akov and Yosef. One explanation interprets this as an allusion to Yosef, when he was sold. The other understands it to be concerned with Ya'akov, when his sons showed him evidence of Yosef's death.

The Relevance of this Passage

In the course of spiritual development, we sometimes have to fail in order to build a greater vessel that can hold all the Light that awaits us as we ascend to the next level. This is what happened to Yosef when he was "brought down to Egypt." Egypt is a code word for darkness and disconnection from the Light of The Creator. Reading these passages helps attune us to the angelic hierarchies and the spiritual energy forces they transmit. These forces give us power to rise when we fall, strength to stand after we stumble--and this serves to increase the size of our vessel, so that we can receive even greater Light in our lives. These verses also help us expand our vessel so that it is not necessary for us to fall quite so far down or to

stumble quite so often.

195. In the verse, "And Yosef was brought down to Egypt; and Potifar bought him" (Beresheet 39:1), why is it written: "brought down" RATHER THAN 'WENT DOWN TO EGYPT'? HE ANSWERS: The Holy One, blessed be He, consented to the act OF SELLING YOSEF TO EGYPT, so that the decree He made between the pieces would be fulfilled, as it is written: "Know surely that your seed shall be a stranger" (Beresheet 15:13). "And Potifar bought him," to commit sin with him, NAMELY SODOMY.

196. He quoted the verse: "Who commands the sun, and it rises not; and seals up the stars" (Iyov 9:7). Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, made seven stars in the firmament THAT CORRESPOND TO THE SEVEN SFIROT: CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT. Each firmament contains numerous attendants who wait upon the Holy One, blessed be He.

197. There is no attendant or appointee who does not have a specific task and service to perform for the Holy One, blessed be He, and each knows his own task.

198. Some act as their Master's messengers, appointed in this world to oversee men's deeds. There are those who sing CHANTS AND HYMNS before Him, and those in charge of poetry. And even they are in charge of poetry, there is no host, no star or constellation that does not praise the Holy One, blessed be He.

199. For when night falls, three legions are divided into the three directions of the world, each containing thousands and tens of thousands OF ANGELS, whose task it is to sing.

200. There are three hosts OF ANGELS and one living creature, THE NUKVA, that stands in charge of them. They all praise the Holy One, blessed be He, until morning comes, when those of the south side and the luminous stars, THE ANGELS, praise and recite poetry before the Holy One, blessed be He. It is written: "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy" (Iyov 38:7). "The morning stars" are the stars on the south side, NAMELY CHESED, as it is written: "And Avraham went early in the morning" (Beresheet 19:27). "All the sons of Elohim shouted for joy," refers to the stars on the left side, which are included within the right.

201. When daylight breaks, the children of Yisrael sing the praises of the Holy One, blessed be He, three times a day, corresponding to the three night WATCHES. They stand before each other until the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, is duly risen day and night. The Holy One, blessed be He, ascends by means of the six litanies, THREE IN THE DAY AND THREE AT NIGHT.

202. The living creature that stands above them, THE NUKVA, also stands on Yisrael below to properly fix everything, as it is written: "She rises also while it is yet night, and gives food to her household, and a portion to her maidens" (Mishlei 31:15). "And gives food to her household," refers to the upper THREE hosts and, "a portion to her maidens," alludes to the camp of Yisrael below. Thus the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, is extolled on every side, above and below; everything exists by His permission and according to His wish.

203. "...who commands the sun, and it rises not..." (Iyov 9:7). Rabbi Shimon says this refers to Yosef WHEN HE WAS SOLD INTO EGYPT. "And seals up the stars" are his brothers, about whom it is written: "And the eleven stars bowed down to me" (Beresheet 37:9). In another explanation, "Who commands the sun," refers to Ya'akov at the time he was told: "know now WHETHER IT BE YOUR SON'S COAT OR NOT" (Beresheet 37:32). "...and it rises not..." means when the Shechinah was gone from him; "and seals up the stars," means his sons, and his light was sealed and closed upon him because of them. The sun darkened and the stars did not shine because Yosef was separated from his father. Come and behold: since Yosef was sold, Ya'akov abstained from marital intercourse and remained in mourning until he heard the good tidings of Yosef.

20. "And Hashem was with Yosef"

Rabbi Yosi quotes the verse, "For The Creator loves justice," in order to lead a discussion on the protection that God offers the righteous. Through the examples of David and Yosef, both of whom walked "through the valley of the shadow of death," we are shown that God never

abandons the righteous. In His mercy, He even guards the wicked, who, we learn, receive blessings and are sustained by the spiritual elevation of the righteous. Ultimately, though, we see that fortunate, indeed, are the righteous in this world and in the World to Come.

The Relevance of this Passage

Kabbalistically, mercy represents the concept of time. Time is defined as the distance between cause and effect; the separation between action and reaction; the space between deed and dividend; the span between a person's behavior and the inevitable repercussion; the divide between crime and consequence. Within this gap, it is hoped that a person becomes enlightened to the senselessness of negative ways, and recognizes the rewards of spiritual growth and positive, unselfish behavior. Time, however, can cause us to mistakenly believe that goodness goes unrewarded, while the wicked go unpunished. Yet time merely creates a delay-- a window of opportunity in which our free will can earn us fulfillment, transformation, and recognition of the cause-and-effect principle that is at work in our world. Without time, a person would be instantly punished the moment he sinned. The wicked would be obliterated the moment they transgressed. They would lose the opportunity to change their ways and partake of the endless fulfillment in the world to come. Mercy [time] is awarded to the wicked on the merit of the righteous who love humanity unconditionally. Awareness and a deeper understanding of mercy and the cause-and-effect principle are aroused within us through the merit of the righteous, whose spiritual power surges through this passage.

204. "And Hashem was with Yosef, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian" (Bereshheet 39:2). Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse: "For Hashem loves justice, and forsakes not His pious ones; they are preserved forever" (Tehilim 37:28). It has been explained that this refers to Avraham, because "His pious ones" is spelled 'pious one' IN THE SINGULAR, as has already been explained.

205. Come and behold: wherever the Righteous go, the Holy One, blessed be He, protects them and never abandons them. As David said, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff" (Tehilim 23:4). For wherever the Righteous go, the Shechinah never leaves them.

206. When Yosef walked the valley of the shadow of death and was brought down to Egypt, the Shechinah was with him, as it is written: "And Hashem was with Yosef" (Bereshheet 39:2). Because the Shechinah was with him, whatever he did in his hand prospered. If he had something in his hand, but his master asked for something else, what was in his hand would turn into that which his master wanted, as it is written: "And his master saw that Hashem was with him, and that Hashem made all that he did prosper in his hand" (Bereshheet 39:3). Assuredly, it "did prosper in his hand," for Hashem was with him.

207. Come and behold, it is not written: 'And his master knew that Hashem was with him,' but rather "And his master saw." THIS TEACHES US THAT he saw with his own eyes the miracles that the Holy One, blessed be He, performed by His hand. Therefore, "Hashem blessed the Egyptian house for Yosef's sake" (Bereshheet 39:5). The Holy One, blessed be He, preserves the righteous. For their sakes, He also protects the wicked. This is said in the verse: "Hashem has blessed the house of Oved Edom...because of the ark of Elohim" (II Shmuel 6:12).

208. Other people are blessed for the sake of the righteous, but they themselves can not be saved by their own merits. This has been explained: Yosef's master has been blessed for his sake, yet Yosef could not be saved by his merits and gain his freedom.

209. He was later put in prison, as it is written: "Whose foot they hurt with fetters he was laid in iron" (Tehilim 105:18). Subsequently, the Holy One, blessed be He, set him free and made him ruler over Egypt. Thus, it is written: "For Hashem loves justice and forsakes not His pious ones; they are preserved forever" (Tehilim 37:28). It is spelled as has already been explained, and the Holy One, blessed be He, protects the righteous in this world and in the world to come, as it is written: "But let all those that put their trust in You rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because You do defend them; and let those who love Your name be joyful in You" (Tehilim 5:12).

21. "His master's wife cast her eyes"

This section pointedly reminds us that we must constantly be on guard to avoid being led astray by the Evil Inclination. As the Accusers assail man daily, he must cleave to the dimension and Sfirah known as Gvurah to become mightier than the Evil Inclination. As the rabbis point out, Yosef exemplifies this endeavor. He exposed himself to unfounded accusations because of the enormous care he took over his personal appearance. The rabbis next address the importance of guarding and preserving the Holy Covenant. The Covenant, we're told, upholds heaven and Earth. When it is properly guarded, God showers the world with blessings, but if God's judgment finds the world full of wicked people, heaven and earth will dry up and their natural, life-sustaining functions will cease.

The Relevance of this Passage

A reading of this section strengthens our resistance to evil and vain impulses, and steels our resolve to pursue positive change, for the sake of our soul and for all humankind. The collective intolerant, self-centered actions of man can become so great that they create a mass of negativity that literally blocks the Light from flowing into our world. Our connection to this passage helps dissolve this blockage, to allow the penetration of the Light.

210. "And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Yosef" (Beresheet 39:7). Rabbi Chiya began the discussion with the verse: "Bless Hashem, you angels of His, you mighty in strength who perform His bidding, hearkening to the voice of His word" (Tehilim 103:20). Come and behold: a man should be very careful to avoid sinning and should walk the path of righteousness so as not to be led astray by the Evil Inclination, who daily brings accusations against him.

211. Because the Evil Inclination constantly accuses him, it behooves a man to overcome it and stand firmly, SO THAT THE EVIL INCLINATION CANNOT MOVE HIM. Man must be mightier than it and be attached to the place of Gvurah ('might'), for when man overpowers it, he cleaves to the side of Gvurah and is strengthened. Because the Evil Inclination is mighty, it behooves a man to be mightier.

212. Those who overcome it are described as "mighty in strength," FOR BY OVERCOMING THE MIGHTY ONE, THEY BECOME AS MIGHTY AS IT. These are the angels of the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY THE RIGHTEOUS, who come from the side of Harsh Gvurah to overcome THE EVIL INCLINATION. THEY ARE CALLED the "mighty in strength who perform His bidding" (Tehilim 103:20). "Bless Hashem, you angels of His," such as Yosef, who was called 'righteous' and 'mighty' and preserved the Holy Covenant, which was imprinted upon him.

213. Rabbi Elazar asks: What is THE MEANING OF THE VERSE, "And it came to pass after these things" (Beresheet 39:7)? HE SAYS: It has been explained that the place from which the Evil Inclination brings forth accusations is the grade CALLED "after these things." Yosef gave it an opening for accusations, while THE EVIL INCLINATION said that Yosef's father was mourning over him and that he, Yosef, adorned himself and curled his hair. Thus, it aroused against him the bear, NAMELY POTIFAR'S WIFE, and it assailed him.

214. "And it came to pass after these things." Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, inspects the world to judge it and finds wicked people therein, then "He shut up the heavens, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not its fruit and, according to justice you perish quickly" (Devarim 11:17). Because of the sins of men, the heavens and earth stop performing their natural functions.

215. Come and behold: those who do not keep the Holy Covenant cause separation between the children of Yisrael and their father in heaven. For it is written: "And you turn aside, and serve other Elohim, and worship them; and then Hashem's anger be inflamed against you and He shut up the heavens, that there be no rain" (Devarim 11:16-17). He WHO GUARDS NOT THE COVENANT is equal to a person who serves other Elohim, for he is false to the Holy Covenant.

216. When the holy Covenant is well kept in the world, the Holy One, blessed be He, pours blessings from above, which are showered over the world, as it is written: "You Elohim, did send a plentiful rain, whereby You did strengthen your inheritance when it languished"

(Tehilim 68:10). The "plentiful rain" is a rain of favor that pours when the Holy One, blessed be He, is favorable toward the congregation of Yisrael and desires to pour blessings upon it. Then, "you did strengthen your inheritance when it languished."

217. Your inheritance is Yisrael, the inheritance of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "Ya'akov is the lot of his inheritance" (Devarim 32:9). The 'languishing' is the Congregation of Yisrael which languishes in a strange land. It is thirsty for water BUT CANNOT SLAKE ITS THIRST and is thus weary. With favorable rain then, "You did strengthen."

218. Thus, the heavens, the earth, and all their armies are all established on the principles of the Covenant, as it is written: "If my covenant be not day and night, it were as if I had not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Yirmeyah 33:25). We should guard it, as has already been explained. It is therefore first written: "And Yosef was of beautiful form and fair to look upon," and then, "his master's wife cast her eyes upon Yosef," WHICH MEANS THAT BECAUSE HE WAS NOT ON HIS GUARD, BUT ADORNED HIMSELF BY CURLING HIS HAIR, AND WAS GOOD LOOKING AND WELL FAVORED, HIS MASTER'S WIFE CAST HER EYES UPON HIM.

22. "...she spoke to Yosef day by day"

This section discusses the struggle of the individual to resist the seduction of the Evil Inclination. God has provided certain devices that preserve us from accusations of the Evil Side. The most important of these is, of course, the Torah. Those who study the Torah for its own sake, we are told, shall inherit both the upper and lower worlds, and will rejoice when God finally banishes the Evil Inclination from this world. Those who succumb to the Defiled Side, however, shall be punished in Gehenom, or Hell. There they shall weep with anguish that they did not overcome the Evil Inclination.

The Relevance of this Passage

Physical creation came about when the collective souls of man rejected the endless Light of Fulfillment that was originally bestowed upon them by The Creator. We did this in order to gain the opportunity to earn and create this fulfillment through our own effort. Moreover, just as an athlete requires competition to give meaning to the concept of victory, the Evil Inclination was created to challenge us during this process. The Torah represents the path to victory over our Evil Inclination, not from a strictly religious standpoint, but from a spiritual perspective. The Torah, through the lens of Kabbalah, is a tool that imbues us with strength and courage to conquer our negative impulses --even those that may have been barely noticeable. A reading of these passages provides us with spiritual strength to reject the temptation of the ego-based desires that are our true adversaries in life.

219. "And it came to pass, as she spoke to Yosef day by day" (Beresheet 39:10). Rabbi Elazar began the discussion with the verse: "To keep you from the evil woman" (Mishlei 6:24). Happy are the righteous who know the paths of the Holy One, blessed be He, and tread them, for they are occupied in the study of the Torah day and night. And whoever is occupied with the Torah day and night inherits two worlds, the upper and the lower. He inherits this world even though he does not study it for its own sake, and inherits the upper world if he does study it for its own sake.

220. Come and behold, it is written: "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and honor" (Mishlei 3:16). "Length of days is in her right hand," means that whoever studies the Torah for its own sake has length of days in the world to come, where he attains the glory of the Torah. This is the Glory and Crown which adorn everything, for the crown of the Torah abides only in the world to come. "And in her left hand are riches and honor," in this world, for he who does not study the Torah for its own sake merits riches and honor in this world.

221. When Rabbi Chiya came FROM BABYLON to the land of Yisrael, he read the Torah until his face shone like the sun. Those who studied the Torah stood before him, and he would say this one studied it for its own sake and this one did not. He would pray for the one who studied it for its own sake, prayed that he would do so always and merit the world to come. And he prayed for he who did not study it for its own sake, that he would come to do so and thereby merit everlasting life.

222. One day, he saw a student who studied the Torah. The student's face was pale. He said to himself that he assuredly contemplates sin. He made him come before him and spoke to him the words of the Torah until he composed himself. From that day on, the student resolved not to seek evil thoughts, but to study the Torah for its own sake

223. Rabbi Yosi said that when a man notices that he is assailed by evil thoughts, he should study the Torah and they will pass. Rabbi Elazar said that when the Evil Side comes to crush man, he should draw it toward the Torah and it will part from him.

224. Come and behold: we have learned that when the Evil Side stands before the Holy One, blessed be He, and indicts the world for its evil sins, the Holy One, blessed be He, pities it and advises men on how to be saved from it, so it will not control them or their deeds. The advice is to escape the Evil Side by studying the Torah diligently. HE ASKS: How do we know this? HE ANSWERS: From the verse, "For Your commandment is a lamp; and Torah is light; and reproofs of instruction are your way of life," which is followed by the verse: "To keep you from the evil woman, from the smoothness of the tongue of an alien" (Mishlei 6:23-24). THE TORAH THEN PRESERVES ONE FROM THE EVIL INCLINATION.

225. The Side of Defilement, the Other Side, is always before the Holy One, blessed be He, blaming men for their transgressions. It also stands below to accuse men for their sins. HE EXPLAINED THAT it stands above to remind men of their sins and to accuse them for their deeds, because they were given over to its power, as was Iyov WHEN THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SAID TO THE SATAN: "HE IS IN YOUR HAND" (IYOV 2:6).

226. It also accuses them and when the Holy One, blessed be He, judges them ON ROSH HASHANAH (NEW YEAR'S DAY) AND YOM KIPPUR, it remembers every sin and deed. It stands over them and brings accusations, but the Holy One, blessed be He, pities Yisrael and advises them on how to escape the Evil Side. How? By blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah day and giving of the scapegoat on Yom Kippur, so the Evil One will leave them and busy himself with the portion GIVEN HIM.

227. Come and behold, it is written: "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold of Sheol (Hell)" (Mishlei 5:5). Of the secret of the faith it is said, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Mishlei 3:17). These are the ways and paths of the Torah, and all are one; THAT IS, THE ROADS --THOSE OF DEFILEMENT AND THOSE OF HOLINESS--ARE ALL ONE. This one is of Peace, and the other is of Death. And they are complete opposites to each other, FOR EACH AND EVERY PATH LEADING TO DEFILEMENT HAS AN OPPOSING PATH LEADING TO HOLINESS.

228. Happy is the portion of Yisrael who cleave faithfully to the Holy One, blessed be He, for He advises them on how to be saved from all the other sides in the world. Because they are a Holy Nation--His lot and portion--He helps them in every THING. Happy are they in this world and in the world to come.

229. Come and behold: the Evil Side comes down to hover about the world, and when it sees the deeds of men who deviated from their ways in the world, it goes up to accuse them. And were it not for the Holy One, blessed be He, who feels pity for His creatures, they would not remain in the world.

230. It is written: "And it came to pass, as she spoke to Yosef day by day" (Beresheet 39:10). "As she spoke," REFERS TO THE EVIL SIDE, who daily ascends to bring accusations before the Holy One, blessed be He--SINCE YOSEF ALLUDES TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE--as well as evil reports and slander, in order to destroy men.

231. It is written: "that he hearkened not to her, to lie by her, or to be with her" (Beresheet 39:10). "He hearkened not to her," because THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, is compassionate towards the world; "to lie by her" means to allow her to rule over the world, for she cannot govern without permission.

232. Another explanation of the phrase, "to lie by her," has the same meaning as: "and of him that lies with her that is unclean" (Vayikra 15:33). "...to be with her..." means to give her power, blessings, and help. Were it not for the help she obtained from above, not one

man would remain in the world. But the Holy One, blessed be He, pities the world AND HELPS IT WHEN THE OTHER SIDE RULES THE WORLD, so the world continues to exist.

233. Rabbi Aba said: THE TWO EXPLANATIONS are really the same, but the Evil Inclination roams about seducing men, diverting their paths and cleaving to them. Each day, it seduces men from the Path of Truth and pushes them from the Path of Life to Gehenom.

234. Happy is he whose deeds ARE GOOD, who keeps his ways so that THE EVIL INCLINATION shall not be attached to him, as it is written: "And it came to pass, as she spoke to Yosef day by day that he hearkened not to her" (Beresheet 39:10). HE DID NOT HEARKEN to what she said to him daily, as the Spirit of Defilement, which is the Evil Inclination, seduces man every day "to lie by her" in Gehenom, and thus be sentenced there "to be with her."

235. Come and behold: when a man cleaves to that side, he is drawn after her. He defiles himself with her in this world and in the next. Come and behold: the Side of Impurity is dirty and filthy, as it is written: "You shall say to it, 'Get you hence (Heb. tze)'" (Yeshayah 30:22). Actual excrement is implied (Heb. tzoah), and with 'EXCREMENT', we proclaim that whoever turns from the ways of the Torah is condemned to excrement, to which were sentenced all the wicked people in the world who had no faith in the Holy One, blessed be He.

236. It is written: "And it came to pass about this day, that he went into the house to do his work; and there was none of the men of the house there within" (Beresheet 39:11). "This day" is when the Evil Inclination rules over the world and goes down to lead men astray. HE ASKS: When will that be? HE ANSWERS: When men repent their sins or study the Torah and observe its precepts, THE EVIL INCLINATION comes down to lead them astray AND THUS PREVENT THEIR REPENTANCE AND OCCUPATION WITH THE TORAH AND ITS PRECEPTS.

237. "He went into the house to do his work" (Beresheet 39:11) to study the Torah and observe its precepts, which are man's work in this world. Because a man's work in this world is the service of the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY THE STUDY OF THE TORAH AND ITS PRECEPTS, a man should be as strong as a lion on all sides, so that the Other Side will not have power over him and seduce him. It is written: "And there was none of the men," namely nobody to rise before the Evil Inclination and wage war against it.

238. When it sees no one standing against it, it is the way of the Evil Inclination to wage war with him immediately: "She caught him by his garment, saying, 'Lie with she'." "She caught him by his garment," because when the Evil Inclination obtains mastery over man, HE FIRST adorns and mends his clothes and curls his hair, as it is written: "She caught him by his garment, saying, 'Lie with me'" and cleave to me.

239. The Righteous stands against him and engages in war against him (Beresheet 39:12). It is written: "And he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and went outside." He should leave it, be strong against it, flee from it, and escape it so that it will have no power over him.

240. Rabbi Yitzchak said that IN THE FUTURE, the righteous will see the Evil Inclination as a high mountain and wonder how we could have conquered such a high and huge mountain. The wicked will see the Evil Inclination as a thread that is as thin as a hair. They will marvel and ask: How could we not have overcome such a tiny thread of hair? These weep, and the others weep. The Holy One, blessed be He, will sweep the wicked from the world and slay him before their eyes, so he will not have dominion over the world anymore. The Righteous will see it and rejoice, as it is written: "Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your name: the upright shall dwell in your presence" (Tehilim 140:14).

23. "The butler of the king of Egypt and his baker..."

In this section we learn that God regulates the order of nature so He may execute His divine purpose, which is to bestow infinite pleasure to His Creation upon humanity's completion of spiritual transformation. Rabbi Yehuda opens a discussion on the superior position of man in the hierarchy of the animal kingdom. Man, we're told, retains dominion over all species as long as his divine image is not tainted by sin. This point is exemplified by the story of Daniel in the lions' den. We should, therefore, guard against sin and examine our actions every day so that we may repent for any sins we have committed. The text then turns to an

examination of God's role in enabling Yosef to achieve greatness because he was righteous. We learn that Yosef was able to provide interpretations of dreams only because he entrusted the task of interpreting them to God.

The Relevance of this Passage

We have the divine capacity to consider others before ourselves, and even to sacrifice our own lives for the good of others. This is a uniquely human trait and a mark of humanity's spiritual superiority throughout Creation. However, if we are intolerant and insensitive to one another, we utterly lose our spiritual value. This passage removes intolerance and judgement of others. It awakens compassion, respect, and sensitivity toward our fellow human beings, especially during moments of hostility and conflict. This passage further assists us in more clearly identifying and more sincerely trusting the many hidden roles played by the Creator in our lives. The purpose of these many roles is to bring Light into the world through human actions and interactions.

241. "And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt..." (Beresheet 40:1). Rabbi Yehuda opened with the verse: "Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has taken nothing?" (Amos 3:4) Come and behold: how careful should a man be in worshipping the Holy One, blessed be He, for whoever is assiduous in studying the Torah and serving the Holy One, blessed be He, is feared by all.

242. For when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, He made all the creatures in the world in their appropriate shape. He then created man in the supernal image and made him ruler, by power of this image, over all creatures. As long as man continues in the world, all creatures look up to him, and when they see the Supernal Image of man, they feel dread and tremble before him, as it is written: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird" (Beresheet 9:2). This is true only when they look and see in him the Supernal Image and the soul IS in him.

243. Rabbi Elazar said that the image of the Righteous does not change, even when the soul is not in them. When a man does not walk in the ways of the Torah, his sacred image is altered, and the beasts of the field and the birds in the sky then prevail against him. When the sacred image was changed, so was the image of man, WHO THEN RECEIVED THE IMAGE OF THE OTHER ANIMALS, SO THAT CREATURES ARE NO LONGER FEARFUL OF HIM AND CAN HAVE POWER OVER HIM.

244. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, alters the deeds above and below. THAT IS, HE SWITCHES THE SACRED IMAGE ABOVE AND THE IMAGE OF MAN BELOW to bring matters back to their roots, AS THEY WERE BEFORE THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, so that His wish shall abide in all the world's deeds. BY RETRIBUTION, ALL THE DEEDS IN THE WORLD IMPROVE. Daniel's image was not changed when he was cast into the lions' den and, because of that, he was saved. Rabbi Chizkiya asked: If this is true, why is it written: "My Elohim has sent his angel, and he has shut the lions' mouths, that they have no hurt me" (Daniel 6:23). It sounds as if he was not hurt because of the angels who shut the lions' mouths, AND NOT BECAUSE OF HIS SACRED IMAGE.

245. He said to him: Daniel was not hurt because the sacred image of a Righteous man is the very angel who shut the LIONS' mouths and shackled them to keep Daniel safe. Therefore, DANIEL SAID: "My Elohim has sent an angel" (Daniel 6:23). This refers to that angel upon whom all the images of the world are engraved. He strengthened the image in me, so that the lions could not overpower me, and he shut their mouths. Assuredly, He sent His angel.

246. This is the one angel upon whom all the images are engraved. HE IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, CALLED 'ANGEL', FROM WHOM ALL THE SHAPES IN THE WORLD ARE ISSUED. It is written: "He judges among the nations: their land is full of dead bodies" (Tehilim 110:6), FOR ALL THE SHAPES OF THE BODIES ARE BEFORE HIM BECAUSE no shape can change itself before him. Thus, it behooves a man to guard his ways and paths so as not to sin before his Master, and thereby retain the image of Adam.

247. Come and behold: Yechezkel guarded his mouth against forbidden food, as it is written: "Nor did loathsome meat ever come into my mouth" (Yechezkel 4:14). He therefore merited

being named the son of Adam. It is written of Daniel: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank" (Daniel 1:8). He then merited preserving the image of Adam. For all the beings in the world were fearful of the image of Adam, who ruled over them all and was king over all.

248. Rabbi Yosi said that a man should beware of sinning and not deviate right or left. ALTHOUGH HE GUARDS HIMSELF, he should search himself daily for sins. For when a man rises from his bed, two witnesses stand before him and accompany him the whole day.

249. When a man wishes to rise, he opens his eyes and the witnesses say to him, "Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you" (Mishlei 4:25). When he prepares himself to go, they say to him, "Make even the path of your foot" (Ibid. 26). Thus, when a man walks, he should guard against his sins the whole day.

250. When night falls, he should examine and search his actions for that day to repent for his deeds. He should always search them so he can repent before his Master, as it is written: "And my sin is ever before me" (Tehilim 51:5).

251. Come and behold: as long as the children of Yisrael were in the Holy Land, they had no sin on their hands, because--as has been explained--of the sacrifices they offered daily that atoned for their sins. Once Yisrael is exiled from the Holy Land, and there was nothing to atone for them, the Torah and their good deeds atoned for them. Because the Shechinah is with them in exile, whoever does not care for the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, causes the Shechinah to bend to the dust, as it is written: "He lays it low, even to the ground" (Yeshayah 26:5).

252. Rabbi Yitzchak said that he who devotes himself to the Torah and to good deeds causes the Congregation of Yisrael, THE SHECHINAH, to lift up its head in exile. Happy is the portion of those who devote themselves to the Torah day and night.

253. Come and behold: the Holy One, blessed be He, transforms matters in the world so as to lift the heads of the righteous. To enable Yosef to raise his head for being righteous before Him, He caused the master to be angry with his servants, as it is written: "The butler of the king of Egypt, and his baker, offended their lord the king of Egypt" (Beresheet 40: 1). All this happened to lift the head of Yosef the righteous. Come and behold: he was humiliated by his brothers through a dream. He obtained greatness over his brothers and was raised above the whole world through a dream, NAMELY BY THE DREAM OF PHARAOH.

254. "And they dreamed a dream, both of them, each man on the same night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream" (Beresheet 40:5). Come and behold: we have learned that all dreams follow their interpretation. IN THIS RESPECT, HE ASKS: When Yosef interpreted their dreams, why did he give one a good interpretation and another a bad one? WHY DID NOT HE GIVE THEM BOTH A GOOD INTERPRETATION? HE ANSWERS: The two dreams concerned Yosef, and because he knew the root of every matter, he interpreted their dreams accordingly, and gave them meaning, so as to return each matter to its own place AND ROOT.

255. It is written: "And Yosef said to them, 'Do not interpretations belong to Elohim? tell me them, I pray you'" (Beresheet 40:8). HE ASKS: Why DID HE SPEAK THUS? HE ANSWERS: This is the way a dream should be interpreted, by entrusting the interpretation to the Holy One, blessed be He. For the existence of everything is there, and therein lies the interpretation.

256. Come and behold: we have learned that the dream's grade is the sixth below prophecy. For between the grade of prophecy and the grade of dreams lie six grades, and interpretation ascends from the dream's grade into another one. HE EXPLAINS THAT the dream is a low grade OF GAVRIEL, and interpretation is established by it, for it depends upon speech--THE NUKVA--as it is written: "Do not interpretations belong to Elohim" (Beresheet 40:8); assuredly, "to Elohim," WHICH IS THE NUKVA CALLED 'ELOHIM'.

24. "Let a double portion of your spirit be upon me"

We learn that whoever contemplates the image of his master in the spirit of wisdom shall gain an additional measure of spirit. Thus Elisha, Eliyahu's heir by right, was granted the

power to perform a double achievement with the same spirit, if he could penetrate to the deepest core of the spirit that Eliyahu had bequeathed at the moment Eliyahu was taken from him. Yosef also received illumination in this way. This allowed him to interpret the symbolism of the dreams of the chief wine steward and the chief baker, and to grasp the significance these dreams held for the children of Israel. The chief wine steward's dream, it is explained, belonged to "the grade of the moon in lightness" and was thus under the rule of Zeir Anpin; while the chief baker's dream belonged to "the grade of the moon in darkness" and thus came under the rule of the Evil One.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we receive a powerful connection to the souls of the righteous, which gives us the ability to ascend to spiritual heights unattainable by ordinary men. Moreover, we begin to recognize our spirit's ceaseless yearning for re-union with The Creator, coupled with the wisdom to find our way back to Him

257. It is written: "And the chief butler told his dream to Yosef" (Beresheet 40:9). Rabbi Elazar opened with the verse: "And it came to pass, when they had gone over, that Eliyahu said to Elisha, 'Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken away from you.' And Elisha said, 'I pray you, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me'" (II Melachim 2:9). We must study this verse, for the words are surprising. "Eliyahu said to Elisha, 'Ask what I shall do for you.'" It was not for him, but for the Holy One, blessed be He, to grant wishes. Moreover, Elisha also knew HE COULD NOT GRANT HIS REQUEST, ONLY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, COULD. Why did he ask, "I pray you, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me?"

258. HE ANSWERS THAT He who held heaven and earth and the whole world in His grip could perform this wish. It is a certainty that the Holy One, blessed be He, always fulfills the wishes of Eliyahu and the other Righteous, as it is written: "He will fulfill the desire of those who fear him" (Tehilim 145:19). This is all the more true of he, upon whom the Holy Spirit dwells, who bequeaths it to Elisha the righteous. For Elisha was his servant AND WAS WORTHY OF BEING HIS HEIR, as was expressly said by the Holy One, blessed be He: "And Elisha the son of Shafat of Avel-mecholah shall you anoint to be prophet in your place" (I Melachim 19:16). Elisha was then his heir apparent.

259. "...double portion of your spirit be upon me" (II Melachim 2:9). HE ASKS: What does this mean? Could it possibly mean that he asks two for one, THAT IS, THAT HIS SPIRIT WILL BE DOUBLE ELIYAHU'S SPIRIT? How could he have asked of him for something that he did not possess, AS NO ONE CAN GIVE WHAT HE DOES NOT HAVE? HE REPLIES THAT he did not ask for two spirits for the one he had, but that the same spirit he had perform twice as many miracles AS ELIYAHU PERFORMED.

260. It is written: "And he said, 'You have asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so'" (II Melachim 2:10). WHY DID HE MAKE HIS REQUEST CONDITIONAL? HE ANSWERS THAT he said to him: 'If you could understand the essence of the spirit that I leave you when I am taken from you, it shall be yours.' For the essence of the spirit that he discerns while looking at Eliyahu is something he should well cleave to.

261. Come and behold: he who looks into what he learned from his Rabbi and sees in him the wisdom HE LEARNED FROM HIM could receive an additional portion of spirit. Come and behold: in whatever he did, Yosef would see the spirit of wisdom in his father's image. He therefore succeeded in what he did, and another spirit of a superior illumination was added to him.

262. When that wicked man said to him, "Behold, a vine was before me" (Beresheet 40:9), Yosef trembled because he did not know what it meant. But when he added, "And on the vine were three tendrils" (Beresheet 40:10), his spirit rose and received additional illumination. He looked at his father's image and his spirit shone because he understood its meaning.

263. It is written: "And on the vine were three tendrils" (Beresheet 40:10). Yosef said: 'This is assuredly an altogether good tiding', for the vine indicated the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA. Yosef was informed THAT HER TIME CAME TO RULE, "and on the vine were three tendrils" that allude to the three supernal grades that came out of the vine: the

priests, Levites, and Yisrael--CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH SHINE WITHIN THE NUKVA WHEN SHE IS WHOLE.

264. "...and it was as though it budded, and its blossoms shot forth" (Beresheet 40:10). For their sake, the congregation of Yisrael mounts TO ZEIR ANPIN and is blessed by the Supernal King, ZEIR ANPIN; "and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes," refers to the righteous men in the world, who are likened to ripened grapes. Another explanation of the verse, "and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes," is that it refers to the wine preserved in its grapes since the six days of Creation.

265. Thus far was Yosef was informed by this dream OF THE CHIEF BUTLER. The rest of the dream OF THE CHIEF BUTLER is his. Some dreams are for the dreamer as well as for others; THAT IS, PART OF THEM REVEALS FUTURE EVENTS FOR THE DREAMER, AND ANOTHER PART FUTURE EVENTS FOR OTHERS. "...and I took the grapes..." refers to himself--NOT TO YOSEF.

266. We have learned that whoever sees white grapes in his dream sees a good sign for himself. Black grapes are not A GOOD SIGN. What is the reason for this? There are two grades, black and white. One is good and the other is not, FOR WHITE INDICATES MERCY AND BLACK INDICATES JUDGMENT. All grapes, BOTH WHITE AND BLACK, depend on the secret of the faith, THE NUKVA. According to wisdom, their meanings are explained as either good or evil. The BLACK ONES indicate the need for Mercy, and THE WHITE indicates the providential care of Mercy.

267. Come and behold: Adam's wife pressed him grapes and brought death upon him, Yisrael, and the whole world. When Noach came upon these grapes, he was not well guarded, as it is written: "He drank of the wine, and was drunk; and he was uncovered within his tent" (Beresheet 9:21). The sons of Aharon drank wine PRESSED FROM THESE GRAPES and offered a sacrifice while still under its influence. Consequently they died, as has been already explained. It is therefore written: "Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter" (Devarim 32:32). It is written thus because of what the grapes caused.

268. THE CHIEF BUTLER saw IN HIS DREAM good grapes, NAMELY WHITE GRAPES, in the vineyard, where they sent forth pleasantness and fragrance in perfectly whole grades. Yosef therefore knew it, looked into the root OF THE MATTER, and solved it thoroughly. Because he received good tidings by that dream, he interpreted it favorably, and so it came to pass.

269. Come and behold, it is written: "When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Yosef, 'I also (Heb. af) in my dream, behold: I had three baskets of white bread on my head'" (Beresheet 40:16). Damned are the wicked, whose every deed is for evil, whose every speech is uttered for evil and to cause evil.

270. He opened his speech with the word "af (also: 'anger')" in the sentence, "I also in my dream..." Immediately, Yosef was seized with fright, for he knew that all his words were of evil intent and that he bore evil tidings. By the verse: "Behold, I had three baskets of white bread on my head," Yosef knew that he was informed of the destruction of the Temple and the exile of Yisrael from the Holy Land.

271. Come and behold: "And in the uppermost basket there was all manner of Pharaoh's baked food; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head" (Beresheet 40:17). This refers to the other nations, who will gather upon Yisrael to kill them, destroy their homes, and scatter them to the four winds of the world. Yosef saw all this and knew that this dream alluded to Yisrael, who would be guilty before the King. He then interpreted his dream in an evil sense, which was fulfilled.

272. Come and behold: there were two grades that they had seen. THE CHIEF BUTLER saw the supernal grade, ZEIR ANPIN, ascending to rule, and the moon, THE NUKVA, shining. THE CHIEF BAKER saw darkness and the evil serpent ruling over THE NUKVA. Yosef therefore looked into the dream and gave it an evil interpretation. Thus, all depends on interpretation. The two of them saw the two grades RULING OVER THE NUKVA, ZEIR ANPIN, OR THE EVIL SERPENT. Either the one rules, ZEIR ANPIN, or that EVIL One, THE SERPENT, does.

25. "Create in me a clean heart, Elohim..."

Rabbi Yehuda begins a discussion of the steadfast spirit of Mashiach, which King David invoked to preserve himself from the spirit of confusion, whose task is leading people astray. Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Elazar then discuss in some detail Achav's crime against Navot, along with the verse, "the lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets." This spirit was not that of Navot, as has been presumed, but rather, the lying spirit which continually ascends and descends to distract people from life's true goal. King David, because he knew full well the rewards of the righteous, often made supplication in order that he might be guarded from defilement by powerful Accusers of this world.

The Relevance of this Passage

Far worse than lying to others is the act of lying to ourselves. It is in our nature to believe our own false tales and then attempt to promote these distortions in the world. Self-deception is the greatest of all deceptions, because our intentions might very well be good. When sunlight shines through the window pane, the dust floating in the air is suddenly revealed. Spiritual Light has the same effect on our negative qualities, which so often remain hidden. Purposefully perusing these passages removes prevarication, so that the true purpose of our existence--identifying and eliminating negative aspects of our character -- shines brightly in our lives. It is of equivalent effect to David's supplications, summoning the Light to guard us from the ever-present dangers of self-deception, and allowing us to grow in righteousness and wisdom.

273. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse: "Create in me a clean heart, Elohim, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Tehilim 51:12). This verse has already been expounded upon, yet the "clean heart" has the same meaning as in the verses: "Give therefore your servant an understanding heart" (I Melachim 3:9), and "but he that is of a merry heart has a continual feast" (Mishlei 15:15). For that reason, his heart is assuredly clean.

274. "...and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Tehilim 51:12). This is surely the steadfast spirit mentioned in the verse: "And a spirit from Elohim moved over the surface of the waters" (Beresheet 1:2). It has been said that this is the spirit of Mashiach, ABOUT WHICH IT IS WRITTEN: "A new spirit will I put within you" (Yechezkel 36:26). David therefore asked, "And renew a steadfast spirit"--THE SPIRIT OF MASHIACH--"within me" (Tehilim 51:12).

275. For on the Other Side, there is a defiled heart and a spirit of confusion that provokes humans to transgress. This is the Defiled Spirit, called "the spirit of confusion," as it is written: "Hashem has mingled a spirit of confusion in the midst of her" (Yeshayah 19:14). Therefore David requested, "renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Tehilim 51:12). HE ASKS: What does "renew" imply? HE ANSWERS: It refers to the renewal of the moon--THAT IS, THE RENEWAL OF THE UNION BETWEEN THE NUKVA AND ZEIR ANPIN. Because at the time that the moon is renewed, it is proven that David, King of Yisrael--SYMBOLIC OF THE NUKVA--is considered alive and well, HAVING ATTAINED MOCHIN OF THE LIGHT OF CHAYAH. Therefore, he asked to be renewed, IMPLYING THE RENEWAL OF THE UNION WITH ZEIR ANPIN.

276. As they were walking together, Rabbi Yosi asked Rabbi Elazar about the verse: "And there came forth a spirit, and stood before Hashem, and said, 'I will persuade him.' And Hashem said to him, 'With what?' And he said, 'I will go out, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You shall persuade him, and prevail also: go out, and do so'" (I Melachim 22:21-22). We have learned that this was the spirit of Navot the Yizraeli. HE ASKS: Could it be that the souls, after ascending and staying above, return to this world? It is astonishing that he said, "I will go out and I will be a lying spirit..."

277. Also, why was Achav punished for what he did? It was a law decreed by Shmuel to Yisrael, as it is written: "And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your best oliveyards" (I Shmuel 8:14). If Achav took the vineyard from Navot, he was within his rights. Moreover, Achav offered him a vineyard or gold in exchange, but he refused. WHY, THEREFORE, WAS HE PUNISHED?

278. Rabbi Elazar replied: This is well asked. Come and behold: we have to look at the assumption that this was Navot's spirit. Could his spirit have risen and stood in the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He, and asked to lie, as it is written: "And there came a spirit...I WILL GO OUT, AND I WILL BE A LYING SPIRIT" (I Melachim 22:22). If he were righteous, how could he have asked to lie in that world, which is the World of Truth? A righteous Man will not ask to lie in this world, let alone in that world. And if he were not righteous, how could he have stood in the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He?

279. But surely Navot was not righteous enough to stand before the Holy One, blessed be He. It is another spirit that rules over the world, the spirit that always ascends to stand before the Holy One, blessed be He - NAMELY, THE SATAN. He is the one who leads men astray by lying, FOR HE LIES BY THE HOLY NAME. He is wont to lie and constantly resorts to lies. Therefore he said, "I will go out, and I will be a lying spirit." The Holy One, blessed be He, replied, "Go out, and do so." Get you hence, for it has been explained that "He that tells lies shall not remain in my sight" (Tehilim 101:7). He is therefore assuredly a Lying Spirit.

280. Further, WE HAVE TO EXPLAIN WHY HE WAS PUNISHED. IT WAS BECAUSE he killed Navot. If he already took his vineyard, why kill him? It was because he killed him without cause that he was punished. He first killed unjustly and then took his vineyard. Thus, it is written: "Have you killed, and also taken possession?" (I Melachim 21:19). And he was punished. Come and behold: there are innumerable people in the world, whom the Lying Spirit has led astray. He has dominion over the world, using several devices and actions, as we have already explained.

281. King David therefore wished to be guarded from THE LYING SPIRIT and to be removed from impurity, as it is written: "Create me a clean heart, Elohim, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." This is the steadfast spirit; the other is the Lying Spirit. Thus there are two grades, the one holy, THE STEADFAST SPIRIT, and the other impure, THE LYING SPIRIT.

282. He opened with the verse: "And Hashem utters his voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for he is mighty who executes His word" (Yoel 2:11). This verse has already been explained, yet wherever "and Hashem (Vav-Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei)" is mentioned, IT ALLUDES TO ZEIR ANPIN and His court of Justice, THE NUKVA--HE "utters his voice." This is the voice referred to in the verses: "The voice of words" (Devarim 4:12), and "I am not a man of words" (Shemot 4:10), because the man of words is, "the man of Elohim" (Devarim 33:1); " before his army," refers to Yisrael.

283. "...for His camp is very great..." is similar to the verse: "Is there any number to his armies?" (Iyov 25: 3). For there are countless chieftains and messengers to the Holy One, blessed be He, all ready to bring accusations against the children of Yisrael. The Holy One, blessed be He, therefore came before Yisrael, as was stated above "and Hashem utters His voice before His army" (Yoel 2:11), to guard them against the accusations.

284. "...for he is mighty who executes His word." HE ASKS: Who is mighty? HE REPLIES: It is the righteous who is occupied with the Torah day and night. Another explanation is that "mighty" refers to the Accuser who is always before the Holy One, blessed be He, strong as iron, strong as a stone. He "executes His word." After receiving permission above FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, he takes away the soul below.

285. "For the day of Hashem is great and very terrible; and who can abide it" (Yoel 2:11). He is ruler over all, high and mighty, and everything is subject to His dominion. Happy are the righteous, to whom the Holy One, blessed be He, desires always to give merit in the world to come and to enable them to participate in the joy of the righteous in the future to come. It is written: "But let all those that put their trust in You rejoice: Let them ever shout for joy, because You do defend them: and let those who love Your Name be joyful in You" (Tehilim 5:12).

Blessed be Hashem for ever, amen and amen.

VOLUME 06 - MIKETZ

1. "He puts an end to darkness"

Rabbi Chiya introduces a discussion on the secret nature of good and evil. Rabbi Shimon then defines evil as "the end of the left"; that is, the lack of "remembrance" or connection between the Left and Right Columns. The friends relate this phenomenon to the dreams of Yosef and the Pharaoh. Yosef's dream of a river signifies the end of darkness and evil, and the beginning of peace and plenty.

The Relevance of this Passage

The energy arising from the mystical shapes of the Hebrew letters enlightens us to the severity of our negative actions and their consequences. Negative behavior rooted in the Left Column refers to selfish indulgence without regard or concern for others. Awareness and careful management of both Columns--of receiving and of sharing--bring lasting Light to our lives. Inattention to either Column creates imbalance. Sharing without receiving [Right Column without Left Column], for example, quickly depletes our resources. If we share water from a glass without replenishment, the glass will soon be empty. Receiving without sharing is like casting a dehydrated man into the middle of a raging sea. Though he is in desperate need of water, overabundance eventually drowns him. Reading this section has a stabilizing effect on our spirituality and on the decisions we make. Intuitively, we begin making that strike a delicate balance between knowing when to share and when to receive.

1. "And it came to pass at the end of two years" (Beresheet 41:1). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse, "He puts an end to darkness, and searches out all perfection: the stone of darkness and the shadow of death" (Iyov 28:3). "He puts an end to darkness" is the end of the left, WHICH IS NOT INCLUDED WITHIN THE RIGHT; IT IS THE SATAN, THE ANGEL OF DEATH. He hovers about the world AND INCITES PEOPLE TO SIN; he hovers above and stands before the Holy One, blessed be He, and blames and accuses the world. As it is written, he "searches out all perfection (Heb. tachlit)," for his deeds are not intended to achieve good, but rather to exterminate (Heb. lechalot) and bring extinction to the world, AS HE TAKES THE SOULS OF MEN AND KILLS THEM.

2. "... the stone of darkness and the shadow of death" refers to a stumbling stone, NAMELY THE SATAN, WHO IS CALLED A STUMBLING STONE BECAUSE the wicked stumble and sin on it. It abides in that which is called "a land of gloom, as darkness itself" (Iyov 10:22). Come and behold: There is the land of the living above, which is the land of Yisrael, NAMELY, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. And there is a land below called "darkness and the shadow of death," namely the darkness that is issued from the land of gloom, WHICH IS THE NUKVA OF THE KLIPAH. What are "the stone of darkness and the shadow of death?" They are the end, on the side of darkness. They are THE SATAN, the dross of gold, as we have already learned.

3. Come and behold how much it behooves men to look into the worship of the Holy One, blessed be He, and strive to study the Torah day and night, so they will know and behold His worship. For the Torah proclaims every day before men, saying, "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here: as for him that lacks understanding, she says to him" (Mishlei 9:4). We have already explained this matter.

4. When a man studies the Torah and cleaves to it, he is strengthened in the Tree of Life, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "a Tree of Life..." (Mishlei 3:18). Come and behold: When a man is strengthened in the Tree of Life in this world, he is strengthened in it for the world to come. And when the souls leave this world, grades are prepared for them in the world to come.

5. Come and behold: The Tree of Life is divided into several grades, but they are all unified into one. For in the Tree of Life there are grades upon grades--branches, leaves, husks, the trunk, and the roots. All of them are the tree. In the same manner, whoever strives to study the Torah is strengthened and improved by the Tree of Life, NAMELY, IN THE TRUNK OF THE TREE.

6. All those of the faith, Yisrael, are strengthened by the Tree of Life. They all hold onto the tree, but some of them hold on to the trunk, some to the branches, some to the leaves, and

some to the roots. It seems, therefore, that they hold onto the Tree of Life. All of those who are occupied in the study of the Torah hold to the trunk of the tree, and for that reason, he who studies the Torah holds onto the whole tree, BECAUSE THE TREE TRUNK INCLUDES ALL OF IT. This has already been explained.

7. "And it came to pass at the end." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "the end?" Rabbi Shimon replied that this is a place in which there is no remembrance--the end of the left. What does this mean? For it is written, "But think of me (lit. 'remember') when it shall be well with you" (Beresheet 40:14). HE ASKS: Is it proper for Yosef the righteous to say, "But remember me." AND HE ANSWERS, When Yosef looked at the dream, he said, 'This is assuredly a dream of remembrance'--but he was wrong, because it all came from the Holy One, blessed be He.

8. Therefore, the place of forgetfulness rose against him. It is written: "Nevertheless the chief butler did not remember Yosef, but forgot him". HE ASKS: If it is said "the chief butler did not remember," why then add "but forgot him"? HE ANSWERS, "but forgot him" indicates the place in which there is forgetfulness, which is CALLED to the end on the side of darkness. HE ASKS: What are the two years? AND HE ANSWERS: The grade of forgetfulness returned after that time to the grade in which there is remembrance.

9. "...that Pharaoh dreamed: and behold, he stood by the river" concerns the dream of Yosef, NAMELY A DREAM OF REMEMBRANCE THAT REFERS TO YOSEF, because every river is part of Yosef the Righteous. This is the hidden meaning of the thought that whoever sees a river in his dream sees peace, WHICH IS THE GRADE OF YESOD, THAT IS, YOSEF, as it is written, "I will extend peace to her like a river" (Yeshayah 66:12), AS "RIVER" ALLUDES TO YOSEF.

2. "And it came to pass at the end of two years"

Here the rabbis discuss Yosef's sojourn in Egypt. Yosef is compared to King David, who at a later time occupied a similar position in relation to the world above and the world below. "The king by justice establishes the land but he who exacts gifts overthrows it." The king is the Pharaoh of Moshe's time. His lack of faith and his inability to interpret the true meaning of his dream bring destruction to his realm.

The Relevance of this Passage

Yosef's sojourn in Egypt is a metaphor for the soul's human incarnation in the material world. Yosef represents the soul, and Egypt, the negativity of the body. King David also represents the realm of Malchut, our lower dimension. Man's spiritual work is to rise above the temptations of material existence by removing the blinders that prevent us from recognizing the Divinity in the world, the foolishness of our negative behavior, and the consequences of our negative deeds. This elevated consciousness is stimulated by reading this section.

10. "And it came to pass at the end of two years." Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "The king by justice establishes the land: but he who exacts gifts overthrows it" (Mishlei 29:4). Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the upper world, BINAH, He made everything properly and created bright lights that shone in all directions. THESE REPRESENT THE THREE COLUMNS, and all is united into one. He created heaven above, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, and the earth below, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, to combine as one--BINAH, ZEIR ANPIN, AND NUKVA--to benefit the lower beings.

11. Come and behold: In the verse, "The king by justice establishes the land", who is the king? He is the Holy One, blessed be He--BINAH. The words "by justice" refer to Ya'akov, THAT IS, ZEIR ANPIN, who forms the foundation of the land. Therefore the letter Vav IN THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, is sustained by the upper Hei IN THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS BINAH. The lower Hei IN THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, is sustained by the Vav, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, because "justice establishes the land" with all its needs and nourishes it.

12. Another explanation of "the king" is that it refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, while justice refers to Yosef, "who established the land" as it is written: "And all countries (lit. 'and all the land') came to Egypt to Yosef to buy provisions" (Beresheet 41:57). Because the Holy One, blessed be He, favored Ya'akov, He made him governor of all the land.

13. Rabbi Yosi said: "The king" is Yosef and "by justice" is Ya'akov, because as long as Ya'akov did not come to Egypt, the land was beset by famine. After Ya'akov came to Egypt by his merit, the famine was gone and the land was established.

14. Another explanation is that "The king by justice establishes the land" refers to King David, as it is written: "And David reigned over all Yisrael; and David executed judgment and righteousness to all his people" (II Shmuel 8:15). He established the land DURING HIS LIFETIME, and by his merit, it stood AFTER HIS DEMISE. THE PHRASE, "but he who exacts gifts overthrows it" refers to Rechav'am.

15. Come and behold: For the sake of the righteous, the Holy One, blessed be He, did not impose punishment that had been decreed on the world, so it will not have sway over the world. All the days of King David, the land was established for his sake. After he died, it continued because of his merit, as it is written: "and I will defend this city for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake" (II Melachim 20:6). Similarly, no punishment was inflicted on the world during all the days of Ya'akov and all the days of Yosef, AS THE FAMINE CEASED FOR THEIR SAKES AND THE ENSLAVING BY EGYPT WAS DELAYED.

16. Come and behold: The verse, "The king by justice establishes the land" refers to Yosef, "but he who exacts gifts overthrows it" refers to Pharaoh. Because Pharaoh hardened his heart against the Holy One, blessed be He, the land of Egypt was destroyed. Before that, the land was thriving through Yosef, in accordance with Pharaoh's dream, as it is written, "And it came to pass at the end of two years..."

17. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse, "Hashem lives; and blessed is my Rock; and let the Elohim (Elohai) of my salvation be exalted" (Tehilim 18:47). "Elohai" is spelled with a Vav. This verse requires careful study. The phrase, "Hashem lives" refers to the righteous, the foundation of the world, NAMELY, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, who is referred to as the life of the world. The phrase "and blessed is my Rock" is the meaning of "Blessed be Hashem my Rock" (Tehilim 144:1). The world, THAT IS, THE NUKVA, is sustained by the generosity of the Righteous, WHICH IS YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. IN THE VERSE, "Let the Elohim of my salvation be exalted": "exalted" refers to the upper world, NAMELY BINAH, and "Elohai" with a Vav is heaven, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "The heavens are the heavens of Hashem" (Tehilim 115:16).

18. Come and behold: "Blessed be Adonai who day by day bears our burden" (Tehilim 68:20). The name Adonai is spelled Aleph-Dalet-Nun-Yud, WHICH ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA. This verse contains the mystery of wisdom. "Day by day" is the secret of "two years (lit. 'two years' days')", WHICH ARE THE TWO GRADES BINAH AND ZEIR ANPIN, FOR THE NUKVA IS BLESSED ONLY BY THEM. This is as it is written: "And it came to pass at the end of two years that Pharaoh dreamed: and behold, he stood by the river." We have already learned this secret; it means Yosef, because the words, "a river" refer to Yosef the Righteous.

19. The verse, "And, behold, there came up out of the river seven cows, well favored, and fat of flesh, and they fed in the reed grass" reads "out of the river" because from this river, WHICH IS YESOD, all the grades below are blessed, because the river that flows from Eden, WHICH IS BINAH, waters and sustains everything. And Yosef, WHO IS YESOD, is a river, and the whole land of Egypt is blessed for his sake.

20. Come and behold: From that river, NAMELY YESOD, the seven grades OF THE NUKVA, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT IN HER, THAT WERE EXTENDING FROM HER, AND WERE STANDING IN THE WORLD OF BRIYAH are watered and blessed by it. These are THE SEVEN "well favored, and fat of flesh" COWS, who "fed in the reed grass." THAT IS, they fed together in friendship, and there was no separation among them. All of them stand to be praised, FOR THERE IS NO NOURISHMENT FOR THE OTHER SIDE, for these seven grades are the mystery of the verse: "and the seven maids chosen to be given her, out of the king's house" (Ester 2:9), WHICH REFERS TO THE SEVEN TEMPLES OF BRIYAH, ALL OF WHICH ARE PRAISEWORTHY. And so are the "seven cows well favored," ALL TO BE PRAISED. In contrast, "the seven chamberlains who served in the presence of the king" (Tehilim 1:10) ARE NOT TO BE WHOLLY PRAISED, FOR THEY INCLUDE A PORTION OF THE POWERS OF DEFILEMENT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE SEVEN LEAN COWS.

21. Rabbi Yitzchak said: The seven good cows are grades, superior to other grades, whereas the seven ill-favored cows are the grades below. THE UPPER ONES are on the side of holiness, and THE LOWER ONES on the side of defilement.

22. "...the seven ears of grains:" Rabbi Yehuda said that the first SEVEN EARS are good, because they are of the right side, about which it is written, "it was good." The ill and thin SEVEN EARS are beneath them. The seven GOOD ears are on the side of purity, and the ILL ones are on the side of impurity. These grades all stand on top of each other-against each other. Pharaoh saw all of them in his dream.

23. Rabbi Yesa asks: How could they have shown the evil Pharaoh all these grades? Rabbi Yehuda answers, He only saw their likeness, NOT THE GRADES THEMSELVES. For there are grades upon grades, all stand on top of each other, of which Pharaoh saw only their images.

24. We have already learned that a man's character is revealed in his dreams. As his soul ascends, he will perceive that which he deserves according to his grade. Pharaoh, therefore, saw what he was worthy of seeing and no more.

25. "And it came to pass in the end." Rabbi Chizkiyah began with the verse: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Kohelet 3:1). Come and behold what the Holy One, blessed be He, did below: He set a time for everything, and fixed a term for it. He fixed a term for light and darkness. He set a time for light for all nations EXCEPT YISRAEL, which now have mastery over the world, and He set time for darkness, when Yisrael are in exile and under the dominion of other nations. The Holy One, blessed be He, appointed a season for all and, therefore: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of, "and a time to every purpose?" HE REPLIES: It means a time and season for everything that is below, that is, for all the goodness found below has a set time and season.

26. Another explanation for "...and a time to every purpose." HE ASKS: What is "time?" HE ANSWERS, It is the same as mentioned in the verses: "It is time to act for Hashem: they have made void your Torah" (Tehilim 119:126) and "that he come not at all times into the holy place" (Vayikra 16:2). This is the grade appointed TO LEAD THE WORLD, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, and has already been explained. Therefore, the scriptures explain that "time", THE NUKVA, is appointed over "every purpose under the heaven." "And it came to pass at the end of two years" refers to the side of the end of darkness, FOR HE SET AN APPOINTED TIME FOR LIGHT AND DARKNESS, that Pharaoh had seen in his dream, this is where he derived his knowledge from, and the dream was revealed to him.

3. "His spirit was troubled"

This passage deals with Pharaoh's troubled spirit, caused by his inability to interpret his dream. The rabbis compare Pharaoh's state of mind to that of Nevuchnetzar during the Babylonian captivity. Rabbi Yitzchak maintains that kings and other heads of state are occasionally granted glimpses of the hidden world usually only provided to the prophets of Israel.

The Relevance of this Passage

Each night our soul ascends to higher realms, where it receives dream messages that can influence us in our spiritual endeavors. Depending on our actions and interactions during the previous day, these messages can advance or hinder our efforts. Positive actions arouse prophetic messages of truth, while negative behavior invokes deceitful messages and disingenuous dreams. Here we receive assistance in making positive use of our sleep, so that our dreams can provide reliable glimpses of the future.

27. "And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled (Heb. vatipaem)." HE ASKS: What does vatipaem mean? Rabbi Yosi said: It has already been explained. Of Pharaoh, it is written, vatipaem, and of Nevuchadnetzar, it is written, "his spirit was troubled (Heb. vatitpaem)" (Daniel 2:1). Pharaoh is described as vatipaem because he comprehended the dream but not its interpretation. Nevuchadnetzar, on the other hand, saw the dream and its interpretation, but forgot everything. IT IS THEREFORE WRITTEN VATITPAEM (WITH AN EXTRA TET).

28. But come and behold: "and his spirit was troubled (Heb. vatipaem)" corresponds to "And the spirit of Hashem began to move him (Heb. lepha'ahmo)" (Shoftim 13:25), for the spirit would appear and disappear, come and go, yet not settle upon him properly. It is therefore written, "And the spirit of Hashem began to move him," when THE SPIRIT just began TO INSPIRE HIM. Here also the spirit would appear and leave, then appear AGAIN, but would not settle upon him, so that he could understand. Of Nevuchadnetzar it is written, "and his spirit was troubled (Heb. vatitpaem)," for the inspiration, THE SPIRIT, was twice as strong, BECAUSE HE UNDERSTOOD NEITHER THE DREAM NOR ITS INTERPRETATION. THE SPIRITS would come and go, as it is written, "as on previous occasions (Heb. kepha'am bepha'am, lit. 'as time to time')" (I Shmuel 3:10), now upon this and now upon that, but his mind was not settled.

29. The verse: "and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt," refers to the sorcerers; "and all her wise men" refers to the astrologers. They all tried to understand, but could not.

30. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Although we have learned that a man is shown only what is appropriate to his grade, this is not true for kings. They are shown supernal things that are different from those that other people ARE SHOWN. Because a king is of a superior grade than other men, that which he is shown is of a higher grade than the rest, as it is written, "what the Elohim are about to do He has declared to Pharaoh" (Beresheet 41:25). But to other men, the Holy One, blessed be He, does not reveal his works. He reveals them only to the prophets, the pious, and the wise men of the ages, as has already been explained.

31. Come and behold: It is written, "me he restored to my office, and him he hanged" (Beresheet 41:13). From this, we understand that a dream follows its interpretation. Who is referred to in the phrase, "me he restored to my office?" It is Yosef. Also YOSEF hanged him because of his interpretation of the dream, and so it is written: "And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was" (Ibid.).

4. "And they brought him hastily out of the dungeon"

This passage discourses on the allegorical meaning of Pharaoh's elevation of Yosef. Rabbi Aba maintains that the verse reveals the benefits of standing in awe of God and of studying Torah at night. The text then moves to a discussion of Ecclesiastes (Kohelet). It points out that while we cannot control what comes into our eyes and ears, we can control what comes out of our mouths. Therefore, speak not evil. A discussion follows on the nature of time, the timing of good deeds, the valuable lessons to be learned from our mistakes, and the dilemma of those caught in an evil time.

The Relevance of this Passage

Words are vessels that draw particular blends of energy into our lives. Human speech possesses power that can directly influence the world around us. Hence, we should take great care in choosing what we say. Although we are initially given an unlimited amount of time to live in this world and accomplish our spiritual purpose, every negative word decreases the length of our stay. Positive words do not add time to our lives, but they also do not detract from it. This passage helps us use our speech for spiritual purposes, so that our words inspire Light in others instead of adding darkness to the world.

32. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Yosef, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon." Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse, "Hashem takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope for His mercy" (Tehilim 147:11). How much the Holy One, blessed be He, delights in the righteous, for they make peace above IN ABA AND IMA, they make peace below IN ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA, and they bring the bride to her husband. The Holy One, blessed be He, is therefore pleased with those who fear Him and abide by His wish.

33. "Those who hope for His mercy." HE ASKS: Who are "those who hope for His mercy?" HE ANSWERS, They are the ones who study the Torah at night and join the Shechinah. When morning comes, they hope for His mercy. It has already been explained that when a man studies the Torah at night, a thread of grace is drawn upon him during the day, as it is written: "Yet Hashem will command His grace in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me" (Tehilim 42:9). Why is it said that "Hashem will command His grace in the daytime?" Because "in the night His song shall be with me." Hence the verse, "Hashem takes

pleasure (in) those who fear Him," uses the particle Et instead of "in," because HE IS NOT ONLY PLEASED WITH THEM, but act as one who pleases another and wishes to be at peace with him. It is therefore written: "Hashem takes pleasure (in) those who fear him"--WHICH MEANS THAT HE PLEASES AND APPEASES THEM, rather than "Hashem takes pleasure in those who fear Him," WHICH WOULD ONLY MEAN HE IS PLEASED WITH THEM THEMSELVES.

34. Similarly, Yosef was sad in mind and spirit, BECAUSE he was imprisoned. Once Pharaoh had sent for him, it is written: "and they brought him hastily," which means that he appeased him and addressed him with joyful words that gladden the heart. Why? Because he was dejected FROM SITTING in the dungeon (lit. 'pit'). Come and behold: First he fell into a pit, and from which he later rose to greatness.

35. Rabbi Shimon said: Before the incident happened, Yosef was not called righteous. After he guarded the Holy Covenant BY NOT SINNING WITH POTIFAR'S WIFE, he was called righteous and the grade of the Holy Covenant, YESOD, decorated him. That which was first in the dungeon, THE KLIPAH, rose with him. It is written: "and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon", for he had ascended from THE KLIPAH and was adorned with a well of living water, THE SHECHINAH.

36. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Yosef." HE SAID: It should have been written "to call Yosef" INSTEAD OF "AND CALLED," WHICH INTERRUPTS THE PHRASE. HE ANSWERS, It was the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO CALLED TO BRING HIM FROM THE PIT, as it is written, "until the time that His word came to pass: the word of Hashem had tested him" (Tehilim 105:19). The verse: "until the time that His word came to pass" is similar to the phrase, "and called Yosef," FOR IT WAS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO CALLED HIM. It is written here "and called Yosef" and elsewhere "And He called to Moshe" (Vayikra 1:1). IN BOTH PASSAGES, IT WAS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO CALLED HIM. "And he shaved himself, and changed his garments" out of respect for the king, AS HE HAD TO STAND BEFORE PHARAOH.

37. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "So Yisrael came into Egypt; and Ya'akov sojourned in the land of Cham" (Vayikra 1:23). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, directs events and fulfills vows and oaths in order to fulfill the vow and edict He decreed.

38. We have learned that were it not for the fondness and affection the Holy One, blessed be He, bore for the Patriarchs, Ya'akov would have had to go down to Egypt in iron chains. In His love for them, He made Yosef, His son, ruler and governor over the whole land. The tribes then went to Egypt honored, and Ya'akov was as a king.

39. Come and behold: It is written, "So Yisrael came into Egypt; and Ya'akov sojourned in the land of Cham." HE ASKS: Because it is written, "So Yisrael came into Egypt," it is understood that Ya'akov sojourned in the land of Cham. Why should he have added it? HE REPLIES: "so Yisrael came into Egypt" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY, ZEIR ANPIN CALLED YISRAEL, AND "and Ya'akov sojourned in the land of Cham" refers to Ya'akov, because it was for the sake of Ya'akov, and his sons that the Shechinah came down to Egypt. The Holy One, blessed be He, planned events so that Yosef was brought down first; for as a result of his merit, the covenant dwelt with him and made him ruler over the whole land.

40. It is written: "The king sent and loosed him: and the ruler of the people let him go free" (Tehilim 105:20). Rabbi Shimon said: It is written, "Hashem looses the prisoners" (Tehilim 146:7), and "The king sent and loosed him." Why DID HE REPEAT THE THOUGHT BY SAYING, "and the ruler of the people let him go free?" HE ANSWERS, "The king" is the Holy One, blessed be He, and the "ruler of the people" is the Holy One, blessed be He. THE MEANING OF THE VERSE IS: "The king" refers to the supernal king, ZEIR ANPIN, who "sent and loosed him." Whom did he send? The redeeming angel, THE NUKVA, who is "ruler of the people" and rules below IN THE LOWER WORLD. All comes from the Holy One, blessed be He.

41. The word, vayritzuhu ("and they brought him hastily") is spelled without the letter Vav TO INDICATE THAT IT IS SINGULAR INSTEAD OF PLURAL. Who BROUGHT HIM HASTILY FROM THE DUNGEON? The Holy One, blessed be He, for there is no one else who imprisons and frees people from prison, as it is written: "He shuts up a man, and there can be no opening" (Iyov 12:14) and "When He gives quietness, who then can condemn? and when He

hides His face, who then can behold Him? Whether against a nation, or against a man alike" (Iyov 34:29). For everything depends upon Him, as it is written, "and He does according to His will in the host of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say to Him, What do you?" (Daniel 4:32). Hence it is written: "and they (he) brought him hastily out of the dungeon," THAT IS, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BROUGHT HIM HASTILY OUT OF THE DUNGEON.

42. HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "and he brought him hastily (Heb. vayritzuhu)?" HE REPLIES: As "he shall pray to Eloha, and He will be favorable to him (Heb. vritzuy)" (Iyov 33:26) MEANS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WAS FAVORABLE TO HIM, so the verse "and he brought him hastily out of the dungeon" MEANS THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WAS FAVORABLE TO HIM. Then he was brought before Pharaoh. Another explanation is that vayritzuhu IS DERIVED FROM WILL (HEB. RATZON) AND GRACE, for He drew upon him a thread of grace so he will find grace before Pharaoh. HE ADDRESSED HIM WITH, "Elohim shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" to hasten to greet him and open HIS SPEECH with THE WORD "peace."

43. Rabbi Aba said: Come and behold see the wicked Pharaoh, who said: "I know not Hashem (Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei)" (Shemot 5:2). As he was wiser than all his magicians, HOW COULD HE HAVE NOT KNOWN YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI? HE ANSWERS, Assuredly he knew the name of Elohim, as it is written, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the spirit of Elohim" (Beresheet 41:38). However, because Moshe came before him with the name of Hashem only, it was hard for him to understand anything more, for he knew that ELOHIM was ruler over the land, but he did not know the name Hashem. Therefore he found this name difficult to grasp.

44. This is why it is written, "And Hashem hardened the heart of Pharaoh." It was the word YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI that hardened his heart and made him headstrong. Moshe, therefore, spoke to him only by the name Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, as has already been explained.

45. He opened the discussion with the verse: "Who is like Hashem our Elohim, who is enthroned on high, who looks far down to behold" (Tehilim 113:5-6): "Who is like Hashem our Elohim, who is enthroned on high" MEANS THAT He rises above His throne of glory not to be revealed below. For when there are no righteous to be found in the world, He is gone from them and does not reveal himself to them. The phrase: "who looks far down to behold" REFERS TO the time when the righteous are found in the world, and the Holy One, blessed be He, descends to the lower ones to take care of the world and do good by them.

46. For when there are no righteous men in the world, He is gone, hides His face from them, and does not pay attention to them. This is because the righteous are the foundation and existence of the world, as it is written, "and the righteous is an everlasting foundation" (Mishlei 10:25).

47. The Holy One, blessed be He, therefore revealed His Holy Name to Yisrael alone, who are His portion, lot and inheritance. The Holy One, blessed be He, divided the world among the mighty chieftains, THE SEVENTY MINISTERS. This we have learned from the verse: "He set the borders of the people...For Hashem's portion is His people; Ya'akov is the lot of His inheritance" (Devarim 32: 8-9).

48. Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yosi were walking together. Rabbi Yosi said: I wonder about the words of King Solomon, for all his speeches are obscure, and the words of Kohelet are vague.

49. He began with the verse, "All things are full of weariness; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Kohelet 1:8): HE ASKS: If "all things are full of weariness," are they all too weary to speak? SOME THINGS CLEARLY ARE NOT. He also quoted the verse: "man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." Why did precisely these occur to him? HE ANSWERS, Two of them-eyes and ears-are not under a man's control; the mouth, however, is under his control. THUS, HE TEACHES US THAT ALTHOUGH THESE ORGANS COMPRISE ALL THE FACULTIES OF MAN, THEY cannot comprehend and conceive everything. THE QUESTION IS THEREFORE SETTLED, FOR "ALL THINGS ARE FULL OF WEARINESS" MEANS THAT THE EYES, EARS, AND MOUTH CANNOT COMPREHEND EVERYTHING.

50. Rabbi Chiya said: It is so. A man's speech cannot utter, nor the eyes see and the ears hear "and there is nothing new under the sun" (Kohelet 1:9). Come and behold: Even the ghosts and spirits of the Holy One, blessed be He, formed under the sun cannot say all that there is in the world, nor can the eye see or the ear hear. Solomon, who knew everything, therefore said this.

51. Come and behold: All actions in the world depend on many chieftains, FOR THERE IS NOT ONE HERB BELOW THAT HAS NOT A CHIEF OVER IT, WHO COMMANDS, "GROW." Yet all the people in the world do not know or care about THEIR ROOTS OR why they are in the world. For even King Solomon, who was wiser than any other man, could not grasp them.

52. He opened the discussion by quoting: "He has made every thing beautiful in its time: also He has set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work which the Elohim has made" (Kohelet 3:11): Come and behold: Happy are those who study the Torah and know how to observe with the spirit of wisdom. "He has made every thing beautiful in its time" REFERS TO all the works that the Holy One, blessed be He, performed in the world. Over every action in the world there is a grade in charge, either for good or for evil. THESE ARE THE 28 TIMES MENTIONED BY KOHELET, FOURTEEN FOR GOOD ON THE RIGHT IN THE SECRET OF THE SHECHINAH, AND FOURTEEN FOR EVIL ON THE LEFT, IN THE SECRET OF THE OTHER SIDE THAT PUNISHES MEN. From them, some grades go to the right and some to the left. When a man goes to the right, the deed he performs, the grade appointed over that RIGHT side, gives him help. If a man goes to the left and performs a certain deed, the chief of the LEFT side denounces him for that deed, conducts him to that side and leads him astray. Therefore when a man acts worthily, the chief of the right side helps him. The "in its time" referred to in the phrase, "beautiful in its time" tells us that the deed was properly connected to "its time," TO THE NUKVA CALLED TIME. THE SECRET OF THE FOURTEEN TIMES FOR GOOD IS THEIR BEING ON THE RIGHT. THROUGH THE PUNISHMENT OF THE FOURTEEN TIMES FOR EVIL, A MAN CHOOSES THE FOURTEEN TIMES ON THE RIGHT AND CLEAVES TO THE SHECHINAH. IT IS FOUND THEN, THAT HE DID EVERYTHING "BEAUTIFUL IN ITS TIME."

53. "...also He has set the world in their heart." This means that the world and all its actions are not bound to holiness but to the heart's desire when desire rises in man, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "KNOW THEREFORE THIS DAY, AND CONSIDER IT IN YOUR HEART" (DEVARIM 4:39). Happy are the righteous who draw BY THEIR HEART'S DESIRE good deeds that benefit them and the whole world, and who know how to be attached to the "time of peace" (Kohelet 3:8), THAT IS, TO THE TIME OF HIGH UNION CALLED PEACE. By the strength of charity that they give below, they cause the grade called all (lit. 'everything'), YESOD, to illuminate "in its time," THE NUKVA.

54. Woe to the wicked who do not know the time, NAMELY THE TIME OF PEACE, for the action and do not pay attention, so that they perform their actions for the sake of needed improvement in the world and correct the deed in its appropriate grade. THIS MEANS THAT THEY DO NOT ELEVATE THE MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) BY THEIR WORKS TO SUPERNAL UNION, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF "TIME OF PEACE." They do not do so, because they do not know this.

55. Therefore everything is given to man's desire, as it is written: "so that no man can find out the work which the Elohim has made from the beginning to the end." Because these deeds were not performed with the intention of correcting them according to their appropriate grades, that is, to include the deeds in their CORRESPONDING grade, they are accomplished according to man's desire, IN STUBBORNNESS. Of this, it is written: "I know that there is nothing good in them, but to rejoice, and to do good in his life" (Kohelet 3:12). "I know there is nothing good in them"-in the deeds that are not properly performed WITH THE PURPOSE OF CORRECTING-"but to rejoice" at whatever comes upon him, EITHER GOOD OR BAD, to thank the Holy One, blessed be He, "and to do good in his life." HE ASKS: WHY SHOULD HE REJOICE AT EVIL? HE ANSWERS, If the deed brought evil consequences because of the grade appointed over it ON THE LEFT SIDE, he should rejoice and be thankful FOR THE EVIL HE DESERVED, for he himself caused all this by going without knowledge as a bird falling into a snare. NOW THAT HE OBTAINED KNOWLEDGE BECAUSE OF THE PUNISHMENT, HE WOULD KNOW "TO DO GOOD IN HIS LIFE." ONE SHOULD, THEREFORE, REJOICE AND BE THANKFUL FOR PUNISHMENT.

56. HE ASKS: how do we know THAT A MAN IS WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE? HE ANSWERS, From the verse, "For man also knows not his time: like the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and like the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falls suddenly upon them" (Kohelet 9:12). HE ASKS: What is the time in "For man also knows not his time?" HE REPLIES: "his time" of the deed he has done, as it is written: "He has made every thing beautiful in its time." He is therefore "like the birds that are caught in the snare." Happy then are those who are occupied in the study of the Torah, who know the ways and roads of the Torah of the most High King, because they can walk in it on the path of truth.

57. Come and behold: A man should never open his mouth to speak evil, for he knows not who receives his word, and when a man does not know, he may stumble. When the righteous open their mouths, they do so peacefully. When Yosef addressed Pharaoh, he first said, "Elohim shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Rabbi Yehuda said: We have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, cares for the peace of the kingdom, as it is written: "and He gave them a charge to the children of Yisrael, and to Pharaoh the king of Egypt" (Shemot 6:13). AND THEY EXPLAINED IT, MEANING TO GIVE HONOR TO PHARAOH.

5. "Since Elohim has shown you all this"

Here the Zohar speculates on the hidden meaning of Yosef's successful interpretation of Pharaoh's dream, and the resulting prosperity for both himself and the people of Israel. The rabbis compare Yosef's experience to that of Daniel in Babylon. They proceed to describe Yosef's work as Pharaoh's Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Finance, and praise his wisdom and discretion in both posts. An interesting passage concerns God's ability to create demand in order to benefit those who are able to supply.

The Relevance of this Passage

A reading of this section helps us to recognize the links between causes and effects, and to govern our actions accordingly. In this way, when life makes demands on us, we can know they are only for our benefit.

58. Rabbi Chiya said: Pharaoh wished to test Yosef and therefore mixed THE WORDS OF his dream, but Yosef, who recognized the grades ALLUDED TO IN THE DREAM, looked into each matter and said: You have seen it this way and ARRANGED everything in a proper manner.

59. It is written: "And Pharaoh said to Yosef, 'Since Elohim has shown you all this, there is none so discreet and wise as you are.'" The phrase, "since Elohim has shown you" MEANS because you were there when I had this dream. Therefore, he said "all this", because you knew the dream and its interpretation.

60. Rabbi Yitzchak said: If this be so, then Yosef told everything-the dream and its interpretation-just like Daniel, who told the dream and its interpretation. He said to him, There is no resemblance between the cases. Yosef looked into the words of Pharaoh, who told THE CONTENT OF HIS DREAM through certain grades, and saw he was mistaken BECAUSE HE TOLD IT NOT ACCORDING TO THE ORDER THAT PREVAILS IN THE GRADES OF THAT DREAM. He said to Pharaoh, You have not seen it this way but rather that way, for the grades have a particular order. Daniel, on the other hand, did not derive anything from Nevuchadnetzar, but rather told him everything, the dream and its interpretation.

61. In relation to Daniel, the verse says: "Then was the secret revealed to Daniel in a night vision" (Daniel 2:19). HE ASKS: What is the "night vision?" HE REPLIES: It is Gavriel, who is a vision, a vision from a vision.

62. Come and behold: It is written, "and behold the glory of the Elohim of Yisrael came from the way of the east: and His voice was like the sound of many waters: and the earth shone with His glory" (Yechezkel 43:2). This is followed by: "And the appearance of the earth shone with His glory. And the appearance of the vision which I saw was like the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river K'var, and I fell upon my face" (Yechezkel 43:3). All the visions MENTIONED IN THE VERSE correspond to six grades. The vision of a vision, GAVRIEL, has a mirror that reflects the upper hues. Thus, THE SIX MIRRORS OF THE NUKVA reflected in this mirror, GAVRIEL. There are visions upon visions; every vision is on top of another and all within certain grades-

CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD-where they have dominion by the name of "night vision." All the dreams in the world are interpreted through them. They resemble those above them, THE SIX VISIONS OF THE NUKVA.

63. To Daniel, though "the secret revealed...in a night vision," he did not find it himself. Once the secret had been revealed, one of the grades of the "night vision" told him of the dream and its interpretation. But Yosef, from the words of Pharaoh, beheld the high grades TO WHICH THE DREAM ALLUDED, and revealed ITS INTERPRETATION TO PHARAOH.

64. PHARAOH, therefore, gave him command over the whole land of Egypt, because the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Yosef from His own. Because his mouth did not kiss transgression, it is said: "according to your mouth shall my people be ruled." Because his hand did not come near sinning, it is written: "and put it on Yosef's hand." Because the neck did not approach sin, it is written: "and put a gold chain about his neck." Because the body did not get nigh sin, it is written: "arrayed him in garments of fine linen." Because the foot did not ride to transgression, it is written: "he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had." Because his mind did not harbor SINFUL thought, he was called "discreet and wise" and because his heart did not reflect UPON SIN, "they cried before him Avrech (lit. 'bow the knee')." He received what was properly his.

65. It is written, "And Yosef went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt." Rabbi Chizkiyah asks: Why did he go through all the land of Egypt? HE ANSWERS, He did so to establish his rule OVER THEM, by their crying before him AVRECH. Another reason was to gather grain from every district. Rabbi Elazar said: Yosef gathered the grain of every district, "THE FOOD OF THE FIELD, WHICH WAS ROUND ABOUT EVERY CITY, LAID HE UP WITHIN IT," AND NOT IN ANOTHER PLACE so it would not rot, FOR IT IS THE NATURE OF A PLACE TO PRESERVE ITS FRUIT.

66. Rabbi Shimon said: The Holy One, blessed be He, created everything in such a manner AS TO BENEFIT YISRAEL. This He did because He wanted to fulfill His promise. Come and behold: First He supplied the world with its needs, and then He put man in it and gave him sustenance.

67. Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Avraham, "Know surely that your seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs...and afterwards shall they come out with great substance" (Beresheet 15:13-14). When Yosef arrived in Egypt, there was no great substance in it. TO CORRECT THIS, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, brought famine upon the world. People then brought silver and gold to Egypt until the land of Egypt was filled with silver and gold. After great substance was acquired, He brought Ya'akov to Egypt.

68. These are the ways of the Holy One, blessed be he: He first creates the medicine and then inflicts the wound. First He brought great substance TO EGYPT, and then He brought them into exile. He arranged matters and brought famine upon the whole world so that people would bring silver and gold from all over the world into Egypt.

69. Come and behold: For the sake of the righteous Yosef, he caused Yisrael to obtain riches-silver and gold-as it is written, "He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one who stumbled among their tribes" (Tehilim 105:37). This came upon Yisrael by the hand of a righteous man, all in order to make them merit the world to come.

70. He opened the discussion with the verse: "Live joyfully with the wife whom you love" (Kohelet. 9:9). Come and behold: This verse is explained according to a supernal secret; thus, "live joyfully (lit. 'see a life')" alludes to life in the world to come, for happy is he who merits it as he should.

71. The phrase, "with the wife whom you love," refers to the congregation of Yisrael, which is referred to with love in, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Yirmeyah 31:3). When is that? At the time the right side takes hold of it, as it is written: "Therefore with Chesed have I drawn you" (Ibid.), CHESED BEING THE RIGHT SIDE.

72. The verse continues with "all the days of the life of your vanity." This is because she, THE NUKVA, CALLED THE CONGREGATION OF YISRAEL WHEN IN GREATNESS, is attached to life, NAMELY TO BINAH CALLED LIFE, which is a world full of life. For the other world, THE NUKVA, is without life, being beneath the sun, ZEIR ANPIN. THUS, IT IS CALLED "LIFE OF

VANITY." But the rays of the sun do not reach this world; they have been gone from this world since the day the Temple was destroyed, as it is written, "the sun shall be darkened in his going forth" (Yeshayah 13:10). Its light has gone up and does not shine below, as it is written: "The righteous perishes..." (Yeshayah 57:1). THIS REFERS TO THE YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH POURS PLENTY DOWN INTO THIS WORLD, THE NUKVA. THERE IS NEED, THEREFORE, TO DRAW LIFE TO HER FROM BINAH.

73. The verse concludes with: "for that is your portion in life" (Kohelet 9:9), MEANING THE UNION BETWEEN the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, and the moon, THE NUKVA. THE NUKVA IS CALLED PORTION AND THE LIGHT OF THE SUN, LIFE. The sun should come into the moon and the moon into the sun, and they must not be separated. It is a man's responsibility TO EFFECT BY HIS ACTIONS THE SUPERNAL UNION, to come to them in the world to come.

74. The verse is followed by the words, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your strength, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sh'ol, where you go" (Kohelet 9:10). We have to study the verse, which reads: "Whatever your hand finds to do." Is there no longer any fear of punishment? Can a man do whatever he wishes and is able to do? HE ANSWERED, It is written: "Do it with your strength." Your strength is man's soul, which gives him strength to merit this world and the world to come.

75. Another explanation is that "your strength" is the wife we mentioned, THE CONGREGATION OF YISRAEL, who is a source of strength in this world and the world to come. A man should merit this world by means of that strength, so he will be able to draw strength from it in the world to come.

76. Why DO WE HAVE TO STRENGTHEN OURSELVES WITH GOOD DEEDS IN THIS WORLD? Because after a man leaves this world, he has no more power to do anything. He cannot say, from now on I will perform good deeds. Assuredly, this is true "for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sh'ol" and if a man does not acquire merit in this world he will not do so in the world to come. It has been explained that "he who has not laid up provisions for the journey from this world will have nothing to eat in the other world." There are some good deeds a man does in this world, whose fruit he may enjoy here in this world, but the main reward is sustenance in the world to come.

77. Come and behold: Yosef merited this world and merited the world to come, because he wished to be united with a wife who feared Hashem, THE NUKVA, THE SECRET OF THIS WORLD, as it is written, "and sin against Elohim" (Beresheet 39:9), THE NUKVA CALLED ELOHIM. He, therefore, deserved to be ruler over this world and to cause Yisrael to acquire merit.

78. It is written: "And Yosef gathered all the money" (Beresheet 47:14). So it should be, for the river which flows from EDEN, YESOD CALLED YOSEF, gathers everything, BY COMPRISING AND RECEIVING FROM ALL THE SFIROT, and comprises all kinds of riches. This is the secret of the verse: "And Elohim set them in the firmament of heaven" (Beresheet 1:17), FOR YESOD, CALLED FIRMAMENT, SHINES ON THE EARTH, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. All is as it should be, for surely Yosef, THE SECRET OF YESOD, should rule over the kingdom (Malchut,) THE NUKVA, AND SHOWER ABUNDANCE UPON HER.

79. Come and behold the verse: "And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had." HE ASKS: What is the second chariot? HE REPLIED: The Holy One, blessed be He, made the righteous governor because the world, THE NUKVA, is and should be sustained by him. The Holy One, blessed be He, has an upper Chariot-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT ABOVE THE CHEST OF ZEIR ANPIN-and a lower chariot-THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. The lower Chariot is called the second chariot, and Yosef who is called righteous, NAMELY YESOD, is worthy of riding the second chariot of the Holy One, blessed be He, as is his likeness in the world above.

80. Come and behold: "And they cried before him Avrech." HE ASKS: What is an Avrech? HE ANSWERS, He is the connection between the sun and the moon, THE SECRET OF YESOD, WHICH JOINS ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA. Everybody kneels to that place, FOR BOWING DURING PRAYER ALLUDES TO YESOD, WHO IS CALLED BLESSED (HEB. BARUCH) AND IS CALLED AVRECH AFTER THE KNEELING, WHICH IS DERIVED FROM THE VERSE, "AND HE MADE HIS CAMELS KNEEL (HEB. VAYAVRECH)" (BERESHEET 24:11), and he rules over the

whole world, THE NUKVA, and all the inhabitants of the world are thankful FOR THE PLENTY IT POURS ON THEM. All then proceeds according to the supreme mystery.

81. Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, created the kingdom of the earth in the likeness of the kingdom of heaven. Thus, the one resembles the other, FOR WHATEVER IS ON EARTH HAS A COUNTERPART IN HEAVEN. Whatever is manifest on earth appeared first before the Holy One, blessed be He, IN HEAVEN. Come and behold: The holy Malchut did not reach completion until it was united with the Patriarchs, for the Holy One, blessed be He, made the upper Malchut so it would shine from the secret of the fathers.

82. After Yosef, the Righteous, went down to Egypt, he drew the Shechinah to him, for the Shechinah follows only the righteous. Hence, Yosef first went down to Egypt and received all the wealth of the world as he deserved. Then the Shechinah went down to Egypt with all the tribes.

83. By keeping the HOLY Covenant, Yosef merited to be adorned in his place, THAT IS, TO BECOME A CHARIOT TO YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, and attained the upper kingdom and the lower kingdom. Whoever guards the Holy Covenant, is considered to be observing the holy Torah in its entirety, for the Covenant corresponds to the whole Torah.

6. "NowYa'akov saw that there were provisions in Egypt"

Rabbi Chiya offers a discourse on the subject of judgment, specifically the manner through which judgment is executed in this physical world. We learn that when a man transgresses, supernal justice-the laws of cause and effect-decrees that an immediate punishment should take place. However, The Creator, ever merciful, carries our burdens for us, and thus, He inserts time into the process, delaying the consequences of our crimes. This temporary postponement gives man the opportunity to repent and atone for his iniquities. Rabbi Shimon then explicates upon the power of sadness, how it banishes the Light of The Creator from our being. It therefore behooves a man to always maintain a positive outlook and pleased perspective, especially during trying times. As the Rabbi Yesa and Rabbi Chizkiyah embark on their travels, Rabbi Yesa reveals that every man has a definite and clear-cut spiritual path laid out for him. The Other Side, however, constantly diverts man from his true path so that he ends up traveling treacherous mountains, as opposed to a lush green, sun-soaked valley.

The Relevance of this Passage

When life appears to be calm and waters still, we must realize that The Creator is carrying all of our judgments for us. We should use these moments to repent and proactively uproot our negative traits. We should intensify and/or renew our commitments to the spiritual path before the weight of judgments becomes too great to bear and they come crashing down upon us without warning.

84. "NowYa'akov saw that there were provisions in Egypt." THIS VERSE IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND, BECAUSE THE SHECHINAH LEFT HIM WHEN YOSEF WAS SOLD. THEREFORE, HOW COULD HE HAVE SEEN THAT THERE WERE PROVISIONS IN EGYPT? Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "The burden of the word of Hashem concerning Yisrael. The saying of Hashem, who stretches out the heavens and lays the foundation of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him" (Zecharyah 12:1). We have to study this verse carefully. He asks: What is the meaning of burden in the various passages? HE ANSWERS, Whenever the word burden is used in reference to judging other nations, the word has a good meaning; whenever it is used in a reference to Yisrael, it has an evil meaning.

85. HE EXPLAINED, Wherever it speaks of judging the other nations, the word burden has a good meaning, because it is used literally, for the welfare of the idolatrous nations is a burden to the Holy One, blessed be He. But when judgment is upon them, He removes the burden He assumed for their sake. HENCE, WHEN BURDEN IS MENTIONED IN RELATION TO THEM, IT IS FOR GOOD. Wherever judgment has been pronounced upon Yisrael and the word "burden" is used, it is a burden on the Holy One, blessed be He, TO PUNISH YISRAEL. It is a double burden, BECAUSE IT IS A BURDEN FOR HIM WHEN HE DOES PUNISH THEM AND WHEN HE DOES NOT, IT IS A BURDEN FOR HIM. IF HE DOES NOT PUNISH THEM, THEY WILL REMAIN DEFILED BY SIN; IF HE DOES PUNISH THEM HE IS SORRY FOR THEIR

TROUBLES. THEREFORE WHEN "BURDEN" IS MENTION IN REGARD TO THEM, IT IS FOR EVIL.

86. HE ASKS: After the words: "who stretches out the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth," why is it added, "and forms the spirit of man within him?" Would not we know He "forms the spirit of man within him" IF IT WERE NOT WRITTEN? HE REPLIES: These words point at a certain grade, where all the spirits and souls of the world are found, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHERE THE SPIRITS AND SOULS STAND, AND FROM WHOM THE LOWER ONES RECEIVE.

87. Rabbi Shimon said: This verse is difficult. If it said: "forms the spirit of man", it would suffice, but what is the meaning of "within him?" HE ANSWERS, The secret of this verse is on the two sides, YESOD AND THE NUKVA. For from the river, which flows and comes out from EDEN, YESOD, all the souls come out and soar into one place, THE NUKVA. That grade, YESOD, "forms the spirit of man within him," WITHIN THE NUKVA, which resembles a woman, who conceives from a man, whose fetus presses her bowels until it is fully formed in her belly. Thus, He "forms the spirit of man within him," WITHIN THE NUKVA, and THE SPIRIT stands there TO BE FORMED until man enters the world, and she gives him THE SPIRIT.

88. Another explanation for "forms the spirit of man within him" IS THAT IT MEANS within man himself, NOT IN THE SUPERNAL NUKVA; for when a man is created, the Holy One, blessed be He, provides him with His soul. Only then is he born into the world. The spirit finds that it does not have enough room to expand within the body, so it stands on one side, NAMELY THE RIGHT, INSTEAD OF EXPANDING RIGHT AND LEFT.

89. When a man's body grows, the spirit also grows and gives it strength. When the body grows, the spirit allots it power with which to strengthen itself. Thus, He indeed "forms the spirit of man within him."

90. You may ask about THE MEANING OF the phrase: "forms the spirit of man within him." HE EXPLAINED, Because the spirit needs additional strength as support from above, the Holy One, blessed be He, "forms the spirit of man within him" and thus enables it TO EXPAND within man.

91. Come and behold: When that spirit needs help, it is perfected from above in accordance with man's worth and the condition of his body. It is also given an additional spirit, FOR WHOEVER WISHES TO BE PURIFIED IS HELPED. This is the meaning of "forms the spirit of man within him." MAN IS GIVEN AN ADDITIONAL PORTION OF SPIRIT THAT IS ABLE TO EXPAND WITHIN HIS BODY.

92. Come and behold: When Ya'akov lost Yosef, he lost the additional portion of the spirit that was in him, and the Shechinah departed from him. It is written later: "The spirit of Ya'akov their father revived" (Beresheet 45:27). HE ASKS: Was he dead until then? HE ANSWERS, Only the additional spirit was gone from him. His sadness caused his spirit to withdraw, AND THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, WHICH MAINTAIN THE SPIRIT WITHIN HIM, WERE GONE. The scripture, therefore, reads: "The spirit of Ya'akov their father revived"- THIS WAS BECAUSE THE FIRST THREE SFIROT HAD REVIVED.

93. It is written: "Now Ya'akov saw that there were provisions in Egypt," WHICH MEANS THAT HE SAW IT THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. HE ASKS: Why was he not yet informed THAT YOSEF WAS ALIVE AND WHY WAS THE SHECHINAH STILL GONE FROM HIM? When did he learn THAT THERE WERE PROVISIONS IN EGYPT? HE ANSWERS, "Ya'akov saw" MEANS THAT he saw the inhabitants of the country go to Egypt and bring provisions; HE DID NOT SEE THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

94. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Come and behold: King David deserved to be united with the Patriarchs and inherited a place among them, as it is written, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner" (Tehilim 118:22). (THE END IS MISSING).

95. Rabbi Yesa and Rabbi Chizkiyah were walking from Cappadocia to Lod with a Jew, who was carrying a skin-bottle of wine. As they were walking, Rabbi Yesa said to Rabbi Chizkiyah,

Open your mouth and give one of those beautiful expositions on the Torah that you deliver daily before the holy lamp.

96. He opened the discussion with the verse: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Mishlei 3:17). "Her ways are ways of pleasantness" refers to the ways of the Torah; for whoever walks in them, the Holy One, blessed be He, causes the pleasantness of the Shechinah to rest upon him and never to pass away. "Her paths are peace," for all the paths of the Torah are peaceful. Thus, he enjoys peace above and below-peace in this world and in the world to come.

97. The Jew said: This verse is like a coin in the pocket BECAUSE THE HIDDEN MEANING OF THE VERSE CONTAINS A SECRET. They asked him, How do you know this? He answered, I learned it from my father. He began his exposition. This verse concerns two matters, NAMELY WAYS AND PATHS, and two aspects, NAMELY PLEASANTNESS AND PEACE. HE ASKS: What are ways and what are paths? What is pleasantness and what is peace?

98. HE ANSWERED, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness" is referred to in the verse: "who makes a way in the sea" (Yeshayah 43:16), for wherever a way is mentioned in the Torah, it is a way open for all, a MATERIAL way accessible to everybody. Thus, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness" are the ways opened by the fathers, NAMELY, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET CALLED AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, AND YA'AKOV, who opened them up in the great sea and traversed it. LIGHTS SHINE from them and illuminate every corner across the whole length and breadth of the world.

99. The pleasantness is issued from the world to come, where all the lights shine and diverge in every direction, THAT IS, DIVERGE TO THE THREE COLUMNS-RIGHT, LEFT, AND CENTRAL. The goodness and light of the world to come, which the Patriarchs inherit, are called pleasantness. Another explanation is that the World to Come itself is called pleasantness. When it is aroused to illumination, every joy, goodness, light, and freedom are aroused. Thus, it is called pleasantness.

100. We have learned that when Shabbat comes, the wicked in Gehenom take a rest and obtain freedom and respite. At the end of Shabbat, it behooves us to arouse the supernal joy to save us from the punishment of the wicked, who are condemned from that moment onward. We should arise and say, "And let the pleasantness of Hashem our Elohim be upon us" (Tehilim 90:17), which alludes to the supernal pleasantness that cheers everything.

101. "And all her paths are peace." HE ASKS: What are her paths? HE REPLIES: They are the paths that descend from above, gathered by the Covenant, YESOD, which is called peace-household peace. It carries the paths into the great sea when it is agitated, and brings it peace. This is the meaning of the verse: "And all her paths are peace." Come and behold: Yosef was the Covenant of Peace, THAT IS, HE RECEIVED THESE PATHS and became ruler over the land, but Ya'akov, from whom the Shechinah departed, did not know it.

102. Nevertheless, Ya'akov had misfortune (Heb. shever) so he had to buy provisions (Heb. shever) in Egypt, and saw misfortune (Heb. shever) after misfortune in his sons going down to Egypt. Hence, "Ya'akov said to his sons, 'Why do you look at one another?'" (Beresheet 42:1); you should show yourselves as hungry people, who have not enough to eat.

103. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: Assuredly a mystery lies here, for whenever there is sorrow in the world, a man should refrain from being seen in the marketplace, so as not to be caught for his sins. THIS IS BECAUSE HIS ACCUSERS MIGHT SEE HIM IN A PUBLIC PLACE, ACCUSE HIM, AND REVEAL HIS MISDEEDS IN ORDER TO PUNISH HIM. YA'AKOV therefore asked them, "Why do you look at one another (also: 'why are you afraid')"; IT BEHOOVES YOU TO BE AWARE OF THE ACCUSERS. This has already been explained.

104. Another explanation of the verse: "Now Ya'akov saw that there were provisions in Egypt" IS THAT THE WORD SHEVER MEANS real provisions AND IS NOT AN ALLUSION TO A CALAMITY, AS WAS SAID EARLIER. The Holy One, blessed be He, sent famine into the world to bring Ya'akov and his sons there. Ya'akov, therefore, saw the people of the country bringing provisions from there.

105. "Now Ya'akov saw that there were provisions in Egypt." When Yitzchak died, Ya'akov and Esav came to divide his inheritance. Esav renounced his share of the land and

everything else BY LEAVING AND AVOIDING THE EXILE; Ya'akov received it all by suffering the exile; THAT IS, THIS WAS THEIR COMPROMISE. Ya'akov thus saw the calamity awaiting him and his sons in Egypt--the endurance of the exile. This is why Ya'akov asked his sons, "Why are you afraid" of the supernal justice? ARE YOU NOT AFRAID lest the accuser will find you? "I have heard that there are provisions in Egypt, go down there (Heb. redu)." It has already been explained that the numerical value of redu is 210, the number of years Yisrael stayed in Egypt.

7. "And Yosef was the governor of the land"

This passage speculates on the secret meanings of Yosef's triumph in Egypt. It tells us that his victory was also one against the hidden powers of evil on the Left--that is, "the Evil Inclination."

The Relevance of this Passage

Egypt is a metaphor for the human ego, our Evil Inclination, which is rooted in the Left Column. Strength and discipline to triumph over egocentric desires and evil tendencies are summoned forth in our souls as we scan the Hebrew Letters of this passage.

106. "And Yosef was the governor of the land." Rabbi Yesa opened the discussion with the verse: "And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies round about me: therefore I will offer in His tabernacle sacrifices with trumpet sound; I will sing, and I will make melody to Hashem" (Tehilim 27:6). Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, takes pleasure in a man, He raises him above all the inhabitants of the world and makes him ruler over them. All his enemies are subdued under him.

107. King David was hated and rejected by his brothers, and the Holy One, blessed be He, raised him above all the inhabitants of the world. He fled from SHAUL, his father-in-law, and the Holy One, blessed be He, raised him above all kingdoms, and everyone bowed and knelt before him. Yosef was rejected by his brothers, and afterward they all knelt and prostrated themselves before him, as it is written: "And Yosef's brothers came, and bowed themselves down before him with their faces to the earth" (Beresheet 42:6).

108. "And now (Heb. ve'ata) shall my head be lifted up." HE ASKS: What is the meaning of ve'ata? HE SAID: That of "as you (Heb. ve'ata)." Rabbi Yehuda said: We have learned that et (time) is a supernal grade; that time is the Hei IN THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH called ata (now). Ve'ata WITH THE LETTER VAV refers to ZEIR ANPIN and His court of justice, THE NUKVA, JUST AS THE VAV OF VE'ATA ALLUDES TO ZEIR ANPIN.

109. "And now shall my head be lifted up." I will lift up my head through dignity and dominion "above my enemies round about me" the other kings of the land. "Therefore I will offer in His tabernacle" refers to Jerusalem; "sacrifices with trumpet sound" that will sound throughout the world; "I will sing, and I will make melody" from the side of the trumpet sound, for from there, song and melody arise.

110. According to another explanation, "And now shall my head be lifted up" refers to the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA CALLED ATA, and the phrase: "Above my enemies round about me" refers to Esav and his ministers. "I will offer in his tabernacle" in THE MIDST OF Yisrael "sacrifices with trumpet sound (also: 'of breaking!)," as it is written: "The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit" (Tehilim 51:19), in order to remove Judgment from the world. "I will sing, to make melody" and I will thank the Holy One, blessed be He, continuously, forever.

111. Another explanation of "And now shall my head be lifted up" is that MY HEAD IS AN ALLUSION TO THE GOOD INCLINATION. He prayed that in every respect the Good Inclination SHALL BE LIFTED above the Evil Inclination, as it is written: "Above my enemies round about me", which is an allusion to the Evil Inclination that surrounds and hates man. "I will offer in His tabernacle sacrifices with trumpet-sound" refers to THE STUDY OF the Torah, which was given from the side of fire, as it is written: "From His right hand went a fiery law for them" (Devarim 33:2). Through the Torah shall his head be lifted up and his enemies subjugated before him, as it is written: "You have subdued under me those who rose up against me" (Tehilim 18:40).

112. Another explanation of the verse: "And now shall my head be lifted up" is that it means, that I shall be included with the fathers, for King David had cleaved to the Patriarchs in order to be united with them IN THE SECRET OF THE FOURTH LEG and to be lifted above and bound to them. "Above my enemies round about me" refers to those of the left side, all of them accusers intent upon destruction. WHEN HE IS LIFTED ABOVE THEM, the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, is united with the moon, THE NUKVA, and all becomes one.

113. Come and behold: It is written, "And Yosef was the governor of the land." YOSEF is the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, FOR YOSEF IS YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, which rules over the moon, THE NUKVA, shining upon and sustaining her. "...and he it was that sold to all the people of the land", as the river that flows and comes out FROM EDEN, YESOD CALLED YOSEF, supplies everybody with nourishment. From there the souls OF EVERY MEN emerge. Hence, everyone bows before that place, for there is nothing in the world that does not depend upon Mazal, YESOD, as has already been explained.

8. "And Yosef recognized his brothers"

The Zohar examines the nature of fear and sin, and tells us that negative sexual activity and masturbation lead to negativity and ruin. Fear and sin, it claims, allows our enemies to behave like Yosef's brothers and gives them an opportunity to punish us without mercy.

The Relevance of this Passage

A man's seminal fluids are the closest reflection of The Creator's essence in the physical world. For this reason, a man's seed brings forth life and generates profound pleasure, both of which are attributes of the Divine. However, negative forces, here to test and challenge us, need their own sustenance of Light, which they retrieve when a man wantonly spills his seed. Keeping our sexual relations within the spiritual boundaries of marriage--for the purpose of sharing with our spouse and for bringing new life into the world-- protects the Light from the onslaughts of the Other Side. The result is greater fulfillment and pleasure in every area of life.

114. "And Yosef recognized his brethren, but they recognized him not." Rabbi Elazar quoted the verse: "Why should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my persecutors (lit. 'my heels') compasses me about" (Tehilim 49:6). Come and behold: As was said by the sages, there are three classes of those who fear, yet do not know what they fear. But in addition to these three, there is he who fears, yet does not know what he fears, because he commits sins unknowingly. He therefore fears the days of evil.

115. HE ASKS: What are the days of evil? HE SAID: These are days meant for evil. It is the Evil Inclination called evil, which on certain days is given permission in the world to lead astray those who defile their ways BY SPILLING SEMEN IN VAIN. Whoever wishes to be polluted is defiled. They are called days of evil, reserved for PUNISHMENT FOR transgressions that a man treads under his heels.

116. Come and behold: Packs of fiends await to defile those who defile their ways. A man is led in the very way he chooses to walk. A man who wishes to be purified has many helpers.

117. We have learned that when a man wakes up in the morning, he should wash his hands with a laver, and he SHOULD BE WASHED by someone who has already washed, as has been explained. Come and behold: We have learned all this for the sake of the laver. THIS EXPOSITION WAS MEANT TO TEACH US THAT WE NEED A LAVER TO WASH OUR HANDS IN THE MORNING.

118. We also learned that a man should wash his right hand with his left hand, SO THAT THE LEFT WILL SERVE THE RIGHT and the right will thus be stronger than the left. The right should be laved by the left. The washing is expressly intended to ensure that THE RIGHT WILL RULE OVER THE LEFT. Therefore, when washing hands, it behooves one to wash the right with the left, thus causing the right to rule over the left, so as not to give the Evil Inclination an opening to rule at all.

119. Come and behold: When evil Judgment reigns, it does not refrain from harming EVEN THE RIGHTEOUS, FOR WHEN THE DESTROYER IS GIVEN SWAY, HE DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL. When the right rules over the idolatrous nations

to break them, the Holy One, blessed be He, feels pity for them and does not destroy them. YOU MAY SEE HERE THE GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COMPASSION OF THE RIGHT AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE LEFT.

120. Therefore, when one unknowingly commits sins that are tread under his heels, he is always afraid. King David was always guarded from such sins and, when he went to battle, he searched for them IN ORDER TO REPENT. He therefore was not afraid to wage war.

121. Come and behold: There were four kings, each of whom asked for a different thing. David said: "Let me pursue my enemies, and overtake them: neither let me turn back till they are consumed" (Tehilim 18:38). Why did he say that? Because he was guarded from sins THAT ARE TREAD UNDER THE HEELS and gave no opening to his enemies to rule. He therefore pursued them continuously, rather than having them chase him, catch him, and indict him for his sins.

122. Asa was more fearful. Although he searched for his sins, he was not AS THOROUGH as King David. He merely wished to pursue his enemies, but not to fight them, and hoped that the Holy One, blessed be He, would slay them. And so it came to pass, as it is written: "And Asa and the people who were with him pursued them. So Hashem smote the Kushim before Asa, and before Yehuda, and the Kushim fled" (II Divrei Hayamim 14:11-12). Of David, the scripture reads, "And David smote them from the twilight to the evening of the next day" (I Shmuel 30:17). But Asa merely pursued them, and the Holy One, blessed be He, slew them.

123. Yehoshafat, the King of Yehuda, also said: I can neither pursue nor kill them, but I shall sing hymns and you shall kill them. This was because he did not examine himself as Asa did. Yet the Holy One, blessed be He, did as He was requested, as it is written: "And when they began to sing and to praise, Hashem set an ambush against the children of Amon, Moav and mount Seir who were come against Yehuda; and they were routed" (II Divrei Hayamim 20:22).

124. Chizkiyah, the King of Yehuda, said: I can neither chant, pursue nor wage war. For he was afraid of the sins we mentioned THAT ARE TREAD UNDER THE HEELS. It is written: "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of Hashem went out and smote in the camp of Ashur 185,000: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses" (II Melachim 19:35). Chizkiyah was then at home lying in bed, and the Holy One, blessed be He, killed them.

125. How fearful were these righteous men on account of their sins? How much more fearful should the inhabitants of the world be? A man should therefore always be on his guard against these sins and search for them, so that the days of evil, which have no mercy on him, will not have control over him.

126. Come and behold: "And Yosef knew his brethren" means that when they fell into his hands, he felt pity for them, because he was whole. "...but they knew him not" REFERS TO Shimon and Levi, who came from the side of harsh Judgment and therefore did not have pity on him. For all those from the side of harsh Judgment have no pity on the people who fall into their hands. THEY ARE OF THE ASPECT OF THE DAYS OF EVIL, WHICH DO NOT PITY MEN, AS HAS ALREADY BEEN SAID.

127. David therefore said: "Why should I fear THE DAYS OF EVIL?" He did not say, "I feared" IN THE PAST TENSE, but rather "should fear" IN THE PRESENT TENSE, WHICH MEANS THAT HE IS STILL FEARFUL. Thus he said: I should always fear the days of evil, as we have said: "...the iniquity of my persecutors (lit. 'my heels') compasses me about." HE ASKS: What are "my heels?" HE ANSWERS, They are in the secret of the faith, NAMELY, IN HOLINESS, as it is written: "And his hand took hold on Esav's heel" (Beresheet 25:26). ESAV'S HEEL WAS IN THE SECRET OF THE FAITH, IN HOLINESS, BECAUSE YA'AKOV'S HAND TOOK HOLD OF IT. This heel (Heb. akev), OF WHICH IT IS WRITTEN: "THE INIQUITY OF MY HEELS COMPASSES ME ABOUT," represents the footprints (Heb. akevot) that follow the same transgression that a man constantly treads under his heels.

128. Come and behold the verse: "Woe to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope" (Yeshayah 5:18). The "cords of vanity" are the sins that he treads under his heels without thinking of it. They are then strengthened into "a cart rope." The sins become stronger and lead him astray in this world and the world to come.

129. Happy are the righteous, who know how to be guarded against their sins and always examine their deeds, so that no accuser will be found against them in this world nor turn them from their way in the world to come. The Torah prepares for them ways and paths on which to walk, as it is written: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

9. "And Yosef remembered the dreams"

The commentators stress the importance of remembering one's dreams and presenting them to a sympathetic audience of friends in order to obtain a favorable interpretation. The necessity of obeying every last precept of the Torah is also discussed. The rabbis use the example of King Solomon, who ruined his posterity by disobeying the injunction against polygamy. Rabbi Yosi comments on the verse "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing." That is to say, wealth gained in an impure manner will soon disappear, but the righteous life of Torah study endures.

The Relevance of this Passage

Dreams can assist us in our spiritual development. However, our dreams should only be interpreted by someone who loves us, since the interpretation itself influences its physical manifestation. The Light of this passage helps bring loving people into our lives when the need for dream interpretation arises. In addition, the passage allows our dreams to be derived from the highest realms of the spiritual atmosphere, ensuring positive and truthful messages. Pertaining to the verse "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing", the Zohar teaches us that a narcissistic, self-serving pursuit for wealth, power, and position will ultimately lead to ruin in some area of life. The influences emanating from the Hebrew verses imbue us with wisdom and strength to resist trading away life's true fulfillment-- marriage, children, friendship, and spiritual fulfillment--for the fleeting pleasure of ego gratification.

130. "And Yosef remembered the dreams which he had dreamed" (Beresheet 42:9). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse: "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles" (Mishlei 24:17). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, created man, so that he would be worthy of His glory, serve Him always, and be occupied with the Torah day and night, because the Holy One, blessed be He, ever takes delight in the Torah.

131. When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He put the Torah before him and taught him how to know its ways. How do we know this? From the words: "Then he saw it, and declared it; he established it, yea, and searched it out," which is followed by: "And to man he said: Behold, the fear of Hashem, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Iyov 28:27-28). Because he inquired into her, but did not keep her, he transgressed the command of his Master and was caught for his sin.

132. All those who transgress one precept of the Torah are caught for it. King Solomon, who was wisest among all the people in the world, transgressed only one precept of the Torah BY HAVING MANY WIVES and caused his kingdom to pass on from him BECAUSE, AS THE SAGES SAID, ASHMEDAI (ASMODEUS) MADE AN IGNORANT MAN OF HIM and caused his kingdom to be divided from the time of his sons. This is even truer for those who transgress MANY PRECEPTS OF the Torah.

133. HE ASKS: Yosef knew the Torah, AND HER WORDS "YOU SHALL NOT AVENGE, NOR BEAR ANY GRUDGE" (VAYIKRA 19:18). Why then, when his brothers fell into his hands, did he bring upon them all these things, when he knew the Torah his father had taught him? HE REPLIED: Heaven forbid TO THINK that Yosef took revenge upon them. He did it only to bring his brother Binyamin to him, for he longed for him. He did not leave his brothers wanting, as it is written: "Then Yosef gave orders to fill their sacks with grain" (Beresheet 42:25), so they would not come to grief.

134. Rabbi Yehuda continued WITH THE VERSE: "THEN HE SAW IT..." (IYOV 28:27). When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the Moon, THE NUKVA, He beheld her constantly, as it is written: "The eyes of Hashem your Elohim are always upon it" (Devarim 11:12), for she was constantly under His care. It is written: "Then he saw"; he saw that the Sun, ZEIR ANPIN, by looking AT THE NUKVA became illumined, FOR HE DOES NOT RECEIVE SIGHT,

THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, EXCEPT WHEN HE IS UNITED WITH THE NUKVA. He asks: In the phrase: "And declared it (Heb. vaysapera) (Ibid.)," what does "vaysapera" mean? HE ANSWERS, The same as in the verse: "The stones of it are the place of sapphires" (Heb. Sapir) (Ibid. 6); IT IS DERIVED FROM THE SFIROT AND ILLUMINATION.

135. "He established it" together with her mendings so she would be divided into twelve groups and be given to seventy angels. He fixed for her seven supernal pillars through which she would receive lights and exist in wholeness. The phrase: "And searched it out" MEANS HE SEARCHED HER OUT AND attended to her always SO THAT THE OTHER SIDE WILL NOT NOURISH ITSELF FROM HER.

136. He then warned man thus: "And to man he said, 'Behold, the fear of Hashem, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding'" (Iyov 28:28). Because of "the fear of Hashem," THE NUKVA is adorned with all the lower ones so they will learn to fear and know Hashem through her strength. SHE IS THEREFORE CHOCHMAH and "to depart from evil is understanding (Heb. binah)." The separation of pollution so it will not approach HOLINESS is the purpose of the existence of Binah, THAT IS, the knowledge and beholding of the glory of the highest King.

137. Rabbi Yosi rose one night to study the Torah. There happened to be a Jew there, whom he met in that house. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse: "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness (also: 'charity') delivers from death" (Mishlei 10:2). "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing" are those who are not occupied with the study of the Torah, but follow worldly matters and gather wicked treasures. Of them it is written, "But those riches perish by evil adventure" (Kohelet 5:13), because they are wicked treasures.

138. "But righteousness delivers from death" refers to those who are occupied with the study of the Torah and know how to study her ways, for the Torah is called the Tree of Life and Righteousness, as it is written: "And it shall be accounted righteousness in us" (Devarim 6:25). Another explanation of "but righteousness delivers from death" is that it refers to charity given to the poor. There are two ways to read and understand it: THE WORD RIGHTEOUSNESS may be understood as the Torah, or it may simply mean charity, yet all is one.

139. That Jew said you may read IN THE WORD RIGHTEOUSNESS the meaning of peace. Rabbi Yosi said to him, Assuredly, she is called peace. The Jew rose to study THE TORAH with him. The Jew quoted the verse: "He who tills his land shall have plenty of bread: but he who follows after vain persons shall have poverty enough" (Mishlei 28:19). This verse is difficult to understand. How could King Solomon, who was the wisest of all men, say that a man should strive to cultivate the earth, till it, and neglect everlasting life?

140. HE REPLIED: There is a mystery here. He then quoted the verse: "And Hashem Elohim took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to till (also: 'to worship') it and to keep" (Beresheet 2:15). It has already been explained that it refers to worship by sacrificing. Come and behold: "to till it" is the Upper King, THAT IS, IT REFERS TO THE DRAWING OF PLENTY OF BLESSINGS FROM THE UPPER KING, ZEIR ANPIN; and "to keep" is the lower king, THAT IS, IT REFERS TO THE KEEPING OF PLENTY RECEIVED BY THE LOWER KING, THE NUKVA. THE VERSE REFERS TO the upper world, ZEIR ANPIN, and the lower world, THE NUKVA. HE FURTHER EXPLAINS THAT "to till it" is in the secret of Remember, ZEIR ANPIN, and keep is in the secret of Keep, THE NUKVA. THEREFORE IN THE FIRST TABLES OF THE TESTIMONY IT IS WRITTEN: "REMEMBER THE SHABBAT DAY" (SHEMOT 20, 8), AND IN THE SECOND TABLES OF THE TESTIMONY IT IS WRITTEN, "KEEP THE SHABBAT DAY" (DEVARIM 5:12).

141. Therefore, "He that tills his land" (Mishlei 12:11) refers to the Garden of Eden, IN THE NUKVA, for man should work and draw blessings on it from ZEIR ANPIN above. When it is blessed and blessings pour on it from above, MAN is blest with it. Come and behold: When the priest blesses, he is also blessed, as it is written: "and I will bless them" (Bemidbar 5:27). Hence, "He that tills his land" TO DRAW PLENTY ON THE NUKVA, "shall have plenty of bread," nourishment from above, WHICH HE EARNS BY HIS WORK, FOR HE WHO BLESSES IS BLESSED. "...but he that follows vain persons," he who cleaves to the Other Side, which follows vain persons, surely "shall have poverty enough." Rabbi Yosi said to him, Happy are you to have merited this.

142. He then cited A VERSE that comes after THE VERSE, "HE THAT TILLS HIS LAND." IT IS, "A faithful man shall abound with blessings" (Mishlei 28:20), which alludes to a man who has faith in the Holy One, blessed be He, such as Rabbi Yesa Saba (the elder), who, though he had food for that day, did not set the table before praying for food before the holy King. After praying and asking for nourishment from the King, he would set the table. He always said: Let us not set the table until NOURISHMENT is given from the King's house.

143. "But he who makes haste to be rich shall not go unpunished" (Mishlei 28:20), because he did not want to study the Torah, which is life in this world and life in the world to come. Now is the time to be occupied with the Torah. Let us do so.

144. The man opened with the mystery of the dream. He said: "And Yosef remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them." HE ASKS ABOUT THE WORDS: "And Yosef remembered the dreams." Why did Yosef remember the dreams he had about them? What would have happened if he forgot them, as Yosef was wise and studied the verse, "a prudent man acts with knowledge: but a fool lays bare his folly" (Mishlei 13:16)?

145. HE REPLIES: When Yosef saw them bowing before him with their faces to the earth, he remembered the dream he dreamed about them, as it is written, "and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and bowed down to my sheaf" (Beresheet 37:7). For when he saw his brothers prostrating themselves before him, as it is written, "and Yosef's brothers came, and bowed themselves down before him with their faces to the earth", then, "Yosef remembered of the dreams which he had dreamed," that is, he saw them coming true. THUS, "AND YOSEF REMEMBERED THE DREAMS" MEANS THAT HE SAW THAT THEY CAME TRUE.

146. "And Yosef remembered the dreams which he had dreamed" can also mean that he was reminded of them because there is no forgetfulness before the Holy One, blessed be He. A man should remember a good dream, so it is not forgotten, for then it is realized. But if it is forgotten by him, it is forgotten ABOVE AND DOES NOT COME TRUE.

147. Come and behold: A dream that was not interpreted resembles an unopened letter, FOR THE DREAMER DOES NOT DERIVE ANY BENEFIT FROM IT. Come and behold: He who does not remember THE DREAM acts as if he did not know HOW TO INTERPRET IT. Therefore, whoever forgets his dream and cannot recall it, will find his dream unfulfilled. Yosef therefore remembered his dream and never forgot it, so it would come true. He waited for it all the time. He said to them, "You are spies" (Beresheet 42:9). Although he remembered the dream, he said nothing except, "You are spies."

148. Rabbi Yosi continued with the verse, "For a dream comes through a multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words" (Kohelet 5:2). HE EXPLAINED THAT "a dream comes through a multitude of business" means there are many who help the dream endure, including chiefs and grades upon grades, for some dreams are all truth and some contain both truth and lies, THAT IS, ONE PART WILL COME TRUE AND ANOTHER WILL NOT. But the truly righteous are shown no lies in their dreams; they are shown only truth.

149. Come and behold: It is written of Daniel, "Then to Daniel, in a vision of the night," NAMELY, IN A DREAM, "the secret was revealed" (Daniel 2:19) and "Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay upon his bed: then he wrote his dream" (Daniel 7:1). Had the dream contained lies, the book of Daniel would not be among the scriptures. But when the souls of the truly righteous ascend during sleep, only holy beings join them. These holy beings tell them true words, enduring words, that never lie.

150. You may say that King David never had a good dream. It may be concluded that he saw untrue things. YET IN FACT HE WAS FULL OF KINDNESS AND THE GRACE OF HASHEM. HE ANSWERS, Surely it was because he spent his days shedding blood and engaging in war. Thus all his dreams were bad dreams about destruction, waste, blood, and bloodshed, and not peaceful dreams.

151. It may be asked how a good man could POSSIBLY be shown a bad dream. HE REPLIES: Surely all the evil is destined to cleave to those who transgress the words of the Torah, and the punishment destined for them in the world of truth was seen BY KING DAVID, so that the fear of his Master will be upon him at all times. THIS SETTLES THE QUESTION, HOW HE COULD HAVE SEEN UNTRUE THINGS? HE SAW THEM IN RELATION TO SINNERS, FOR WHOM

THEY WERE REAL. HE WAS SHOWN THIS TO AROUSE THE FEAR OF HEAVEN IN HIM. It has been said with regard to the verse, "and Elohim does it, so that men should fear before him" (Kohelet 3:14) that it is a bad dream WHICH CAUSES A MAN TO BE FEARFUL. A righteous man is therefore shown a bad dream, as we have already said.

152. Come and behold; We have learned that when a man has a dream, he should speak about it,. He SHOULD SEEK AN INTERPRETATION before his friends, whose wishes will be favorable toward him and whose words will be expressed for his good. Thus THEIR wishes and words will be for the good. Their wishes, which is thought, NAMELY CHOCHMAH, is the beginning of everything, OF THE SFIROT, and the word, NAMELY, MALCHUT, is the completion of everything, OF THE SFIROT. Thus it is made whole by the supernal mystery, BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE SFIROT, and all of it comes true. MOREOVER, they ask for compassion for that man and ask that the good interpretation THEY GAVE will endure. Thus all is as it should be.

153. The Holy One, blessed be He, then lets each man interpret his dream according to his worth and grade. The Jew said: Assuredly, the dream is but for the righteous man, who sees dreams properly.

154. Come and behold: When a man sleeps in his bed, his soul departs and roams in the world above. It enters wherever it can, and camps of spirits that hover in the world meet the soul. If THAT MAN is righteous, THE SOUL ascends and sees good things. If he is not righteous, THE SOUL holds to the other side and is told lies or things that will happen in the near future.

155. Therefore, a man who is not righteous is shown a good but untruthful dream, so that he will turn from the way of truth. Once he turns, he is defiled, for whoever comes to be purified is purified, and whoever comes to be defiled is defiled. Assuredly this is so, as we have already learned.

156. They sat till dawn. Rabbi Yosi said: Surely the name of Yosef was not mentioned among the standards, as it is written, "the standard of the camp of Efraim" (Bemidbar 2:18), rather than, "the standard of the camp of Yosef." The reason for this is that he exalted himself above his brothers, as we have already learned.

157. The Jew said: Surely I have heard that Yosef is of the world of the male, BEING OF YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, and all the tribes were of the world of the female, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH. Yosef therefore had no part in the standards, being of the world of the male.

158. It is written, "We (Heb. nachnu) are all one man's sons" (Beresheet 42:11). HE ASKS: Why is it written nachnu instead of the standard form anachnu? Why is the Aleph missing? HE ANSWERS, Because the secret of the Covenant, WHICH IS YOSEF, was not among them, the Aleph was gone AND IT WAS WRITTEN NACHNU. Thus, because the Aleph is male and Bet is female, the Aleph, YOSEF, was gone and only the female LETTERS OF nachnu remained with the Shechinah, WHICH CONTAINS THE SECRET OF THE TRIBES.

159. They later said: "We (Heb. anachnu) are true men" (Beresheet 42:11) with the letter Aleph added. They said it, yet knew not what they said, for it was because of Yosef that they uttered the complete word anachnu. How do we know this? From the verse, "And they said, 'Your servants are twelve, we are (Heb. anachnu) brothers'" (Beresheet 42:13), including Yosef. Thus, when YOSEF was included, they said anachnu, and when he was not, they said nachnu.

160. Rabbi Yosi said: All the things we have said delighted the Holy One, blessed be He, because the Shechinah did not depart from here. This is in accordance with the verse, "Then, they who feared Hashem spoke to one another: and Hashem hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who feared Hashem and took heed of His name" (Malachi 3:16).

10. "And he put them all together into custody"

The verses relate the twelve signs of the zodiac to the twelve sons of Ya'akov and the twelve tribes of Israel. Yosef, who shows mercy to his treacherous brother, becomes a Patriarch. Rabbi Elazar speculates on the hidden meaning of this occurrence.

The Relevance of this Passage

Celestial influences arising from the twelve Signs impel, but they do not compel.

We have the power to rise above their influence. We transcend the signs and their corresponding negative influences as we visually connect with these ancient mystical texts.

161. "And he put them all together into custody for three days" (Beresheet 42:17). Rabbi Elazar asked: Why for three days? HE ANSWERS, These three days correspond to the days of Shchem, of which it is written, "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain" (Beresheet 34: 25).

162. Come and behold: It is written with regard to this, "And Yosef said to them on the third day, 'this do, and live'." This teaches us that he did not act toward them as they did toward Shchem. They made the people of Shchem accept upon them this (Heb. zot)-THE NUKVA CALLED 'THIS', and the secret of the covenant, BECAUSE THE COVENANT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF YESOD, IS ATTACHED TO HER. And when they were circumcised, they were killed and not one witness was left. But he said: It is written, "This do, and live," THAT IS, HE WILL LET THEM LIVE. The reason is that "I fear the Elohim" who keeps the Covenant. And everything he did was only for the sake of Binyamin, THAT IS, TO MAKE THEM BRING BINYAMIN.

163. "And they said one to the other, truly we are guilty" (Beresheet 42:21). The phrase, "one to another (lit. 'man to his brother')" refers to Shimon and Levi, just as in an earlier passage, "And they said one to another, behold, this dreamer comes" (Beresheet 37:19). Both verses refer to Shimon and Levi.

164. Come and behold: Who is the "man" and who is "his brother?" HE ANSWERS, The man is Shimon, who is here mentioned as man, as he is elsewhere, FOR EXAMPLE IN THE VERSE, "And behold, a man of the children of Yisrael came" (Bemidbar 25:6). In both verses, the man is Shimon. And since he repented, he cried and felt remorse for what he did and said to Levi, "Truly we are guilty." Therefore WHEN HE REPENTED, Shimon's sign became Taurus. THERE ARE TWELVE SIGNS THAT CORRESPOND TO THE TWELVE TRIBES, ARIES TO REUVEN, TAURUS TO SHIMON, AND SO ON. Shimon's sign is Taurus, just as Yosef's sign is, as it is written, "His firstling bullock, majesty is his" (Devarim 33:17).

11. "And took from them Shimon"

This passage comments on the mercy Yosef shows his brothers. The commentators assert that even idolaters are not punished if they live in peace. The secret meaning of circumcision and its relation to the Covenant are also discussed. Whoever is charitable in this world is free of harsh judgment in the next. Thus, like Yosef, we are encouraged to turn the other cheek and leave vengeance to the Lord.

The Relevance of this Passage

Judgments decreed against us are measured and meted out in accordance to the degree and severity of the judgments we pass on our friends and foes. Trust in The Creator encompasses certainty in the laws of cause and effect, which dictate that all our enemies will be correctly judged without our having to participate in the correction process. A person who has attained spiritual enlightenment accepts any wrongs committed against him as payment for negative actions he may have committed in the past. This wise perspective is stimulated by the Divine Light of this Hebrew script.

165. He therefore "took from them Shimon" (Beresheet 42:24) so that he would not indict him together with Levi. For when they came together, Shimon and Levi might bring accusations. The phrase, "and bound him before their eyes" means that he arrested him only in front of their eyes. When they left, he gave him food and drink.

166. It may be said that Yosef acted according to the verse, "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink" (Mishlei 25:21). FOR THIS REASON HE FED SHIMON, WHO WAS HIS ENEMY. How could the righteous Yosef have behaved in such a manner? As he verse ends with the words, "for you shall heap coals of fire

on his head, and Hashem shall reward you." IT IS NOT SEEMLY FOR A RIGHTEOUS MAN TO TAKE REVENGE UPON HIS BROTHER.

167. HE ANSWERS, Heaven forbid that Yosef had such intentions. His conduct toward him was only that of a man toward his brother, and in no other way. And not to him alone, but to all his brothers he behaved so, as it is written, "Then Yosef gave orders to fill their sacks with grain, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus it was performed" (Beresheet 42:25), all to be brotherly toward them.

168. Rabbi Yosi continued with the verse, "Though they are at peace, and likewise many, even so they shall be cut down, and it shall pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more" (Nachum 1:12). This verse has been explained as follows: When the people are peaceful, with no dissension in their midst, the Holy One, blessed be He, has pity on them, and Judgment has no sway. Even if they worship idols, if they are at peace, no judgment has power over them. It can also be explained in relation to the verse, "Efraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hoshea 4:17). IT MEANS THAT EVEN THOUGH THEY SERVE IDOLS, IF THEY ARE JOINED, LET HIM ALONE.

169. HE ASKS: What then is the meaning of the phrase, "even so they shall be cut down (also: 'shorn')?" HE ANSWERS, As it talks of peace in the beginning, here IT likewise TALKS of peace, which means charity. For charity is peace, and whoever promotes charity, promotes peace above and below. Hence the scripture reads, "even so they shall be shorn, and it shall pass away." The word "shorn" REFERS TO those who shear their money for charity. "EVEN SO" INDICATES THAT AS THE BEGINNING TALKS OF PEACE, HERE ALSO IT TALKS OF PEACE, NAMELY, CHARITY, AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED. Of the phrase, "It shall pass away," HE ASKS: Should it have been written: "they shall pass away" IN THE PLURAL, JUST AS IT IS WRITTEN, "THEY WILL...BE CUT DOWN." Why is it written, "it shall pass away?" HE REPLIES: The subject is wrathful judgment, just as in the verse, "until the indignation be overpast" (Yeshayah 26:20); IT MEANS until judgment passes away from them.

170. Another explanation is that the verse: "Thus says Hashem, though (if) they are a peace (also: 'whole')," refers to Yisrael, to whom the Holy One, blessed be He, gave an everlasting covenant, NAMELY, CIRCUMCISION, to keep always, so as to be whole on all sides-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCUT above and below, that are NETZACH AND HOD. If man does not guard the covenant at all times, he is defective in every respect. How do we know this? From the verse, "Walk before me, and be perfect" (Beresheet 17:1). Perfect means whole, and we derive from this that before the covenant was established in him, BEFORE HE WAS CIRCUMCISED, he was defective.

171. Therefore, "if they be whole" MEANS if they observe the precept OF CIRCUMCISION, and are therefore whole instead of defective; "and likewise many," NAMELY they will increase and multiply, for souls come into the world only through the covenant. "And they shall be cut down" REFERS TO THE FIRST PHRASE: "If they be whole" and constantly guard THE COVENANT, namely, "they shall be cut down" those who are circumcised, and accept upon hem the covenant. "CUT DOWN" IS DERIVED FROM SHEARING AND CUTTING. Then "it shall pass away", the filth of the foreskin that was upon them.

172. Another interpretation of "Thus says Hashem, 'If they be whole and likewise many'" is that these are the children of Ya'akov, who, as long as they were with Yosef, were whole, because they were joined with the covenant, WHICH IS YOSEF. "Even so they shall be cut down (Heb. nagozu)" MEANS when they went away and left Yosef and Shimon. NAGOZU IS DERIVED FROM PASSING AWAY, AS IN "IT IS SOON PAST (HEB. GAZ), AND WE FLY AWAY" (TEHILIM 90:10). Then "it shall pass away" means that then Judgment is passed upon them, as it is written, "and Hashem will pass through to smite Egypt" (Shemot 12:23). IN BOTH VERSES, PASS ALLUDES TO JUDGMENT.

173. Come and behold: There is harsh Judgment and mild Judgment. The harsh Judgment is strong, and the mild weak. When the mild Judgment is nourished from the harsh, it becomes powerful.

174. When judgment is executed upon Yisrael, it is mild and not strengthened by harsh Judgment. When executed upon idolatrous nations, the mild Judgment is strengthened by the supernal harsh Judgment. This is the meaning of the verse "and Hashem will pass (Heb. ve'avar) through to smite Egypt." The word "ve'avar" also means that he was filled with

wrath (Heb. evra) and indignation, which was supported by harsh Judgment. In this same verse, pass away MEANS THAT HE IS FILLED WITH WRATH, ALTHOUGH IT IS MILD JUDGMENT NOT POWERED BY HARSH JUDGMENT, BECAUSE IT IS EXECUTED UPON YISRAEL. And come and behold: When ten gather together in the synagogue and one of them leaves, then the Holy One, blessed be He, is angered with him. FOR THE BROTHERS OF YOSEF WERE TEN. AFTER THEY SEPARATED FROM YOSEF AND SHIMON THEY REMAINED NINE, AND THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BECAME ANGRY.

175. Another explanation of the verse, "Even so they shall be cut down (Heb. nagozu)" is that when evil actions are removed from them (HEB. NAGOZU, IN THE SAME MEANING AS "IT IS SOON PAST [GAZ]), then "it shall pass away." Who shall pass away? Rabbi Shimon answered, When the soul leaves this world, it is sentenced to several punishments before going to its place. Afterward, all the souls have to pass through and wash in the flowing Nahar Dinur (river of fire). Of whoever will rise and pass the river fearlessly, it is written, "Who shall ascend into the mountain of Hashem?" (Tehilim 24:3) The soul of the righteous passes without fear and "shall stand in his holy place" (Ibid.).

176. Whoever is charitable in the world and gives from his money to charity passes that place, NAHAR DINUR (THE RIVER OF FIRE,) without fear. The crier proclaims before the soul, "and though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more" (Nachum 1:12), WHICH IS THE LAST PHRASE IN THE VERSE. For whoever merited to pass Nahar Dinur (the river of fire) is free of judgments.

177. Come and behold: Why was all that passed between Yosef and his brothers RECORDED IN THE TORAH? HE ANSWERS, The Torah is of truth, all her ways are holy. There is not one word in the Torah that does not contain holy and supernal mysteries and ways in which men can be strengthened.

178. He opened the discussion with the verse, "Do not say, I will repay evil" (Mishlei 20:22). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, created man so he would strengthen himself in the Torah and walk the way of truth, staying on the right side and avoiding the left. Because MEN should walk on the right side, they have to increase love between them, AS LOVE IS OF THE RIGHT SIDE, and avoid hatred among them, AS HATRED IS OF THE LEFT SIDE, so as not to weaken the right, which is the place to which Yisrael cleave.

179. Come and behold: For this purpose, the Good Inclination and the Evil Inclination exist. Yisrael should make the Good Inclination master over the evil through good deeds. If a man turns to the left, the Evil Inclination overpowers the good, and the defective one, THE EVIL INCLINATION, is made whole through his sin, for the ugly one only becomes whole through men's sins.

180. A man should therefore be careful lest the Evil Inclination be made whole through his sins. He should always be guarded, to make whole the Good Inclination instead of the evil. Therefore, "Do not say, I will repay (also: 'complete') evil" BECAUSE THROUGH HATRED YOU SHALL INCREASE THE POWER OF THE LEFT AND COMPLETE THE EVIL INCLINATION. Only say, "wait on Hashem, and He will save you."

181. Another explanation of the verse, "Do not say, I will repay evil," is that it has the same meaning as the verse, "Whoever rewards evil for good" (Mishlei 17:13). One should not repay a person who did him good with evil, because "whoever rewards evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house." But even if a person caused him evil, he must not reward evil with evil, but "wait on Hashem, and He will save you."

182. This verse has been explained in relation to Yosef the Righteous, who did not wish to repay his brothers with evil when they fell into his hands, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "DO NOT SAY, I WILL REPAY EVIL; but wait on Hashem, and He will save you" (Mishlei 20:22). For he feared the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written, "This do, and live: I fear Elohim" (Beresheet 42:18). He always waited on the Holy One, blessed be He.

183. Rabbi Aba opened with the verse, "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out" (Mishlei. 20:5). "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, who gave counsel by bringing about events by the hands of Yosef to fulfill the decree of famine upon the world. "But a man of understanding will draw it out" refers to Yosef, who revealed the deep meanings of the

decree of the Holy One, blessed be He, over the world THROUGH THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM.

184. Come and behold: Yosef not only abstained from causing evil to his brothers, he also did kindness and truth by them. This is always the way of the righteous. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, always has compassion for them in this world and the world to come.

185. "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water" can also refer to Yehuda when he approached Yosef on behalf of Binyamin. The phrase, "a man of understanding will draw it out," refers to Yosef WHEN HE MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BROTHERS.

186. Rabbi Aba sat at the gate of the city Lod. He saw a man sitting on a ledge PROTRUDING from a mountainside. He was weary from the road, so he sat down and slept. While he was sleeping, he saw a snake coming toward him. A reptile emerged and killed the snake. When the man woke, he saw the dead snake. He stood up and the ledge, WHICH HAD BEEN TORN FROM THE MOUNTAIN, fell to the valley below. Thus, he was saved, FOR HAD HE RISEN A MOMENT LATER, HE WOULD HAVE FALLEN TOGETHER WITH THE LEDGE INTO THE VALLEY AND BEEN KILLED.

187. Rabbi Aba came to him and said: What have you done that the Holy One, blessed be He, performed for you two miracles-SAVING YOU FROM THE SNAKE AND FROM THE LEDGE THAT FELL-for these events did not happen without reason.

188. The man said: In all my days, I forgave and made peace with any man who did evil by me. If I could not make peace with him, I did not sleep on my bed before forgiving him and all those who grieved me. Thus, I did not harbor hatred all that day for the harm he did me. Moreover, from that day on, I tried to do kindness by them.

189. Rabbi Aba wept and said: This man's deeds exceed those of Yosef. As for Yosef, those WHO INJURED HIM were his brothers. Assuredly, he should have pitied them FROM BROTHERHOOD. But this one behaved so TO ANY MAN, so he is greater than Yosef and is worthy to have the Holy One, blessed be He, perform one miracle after the other for his sake.

190. He opened the discussion with the verse, "He that walks uprightly walks surely: but he that perverts his ways shall be found out" (Mishlei 10:9). "He that walks uprightly" refers to the man who walks the ways of the Torah. He will "walk surely" for no fiend in the world will be able to harm him. "...but he that perverts his ways shall be found out." HE ASKS: Who shall be found out? HE ANSWERS, He who deviates from the way of truth and plans to repay his friend EVIL FOR EVIL, THEREBY TRANSGRESSING THE STRICTURE IN THE VERSE, "YOU SHALL NOT AVENGE, NOR BEAR ANY GRUDGE" (VAYIKRA 19:18). The phrase, "shall be found out" means that he will be recognized by all the prosecutors, who will not forget the image of that man and will bring him account MEASURE FOR MEASURE. THE SCRIPTURE therefore READS, "shall be found out."

191. Come and behold: He who walks the way of truth is hidden by the Holy One, blessed be He, so that he will not be found nor recognized by the prosecutors, "but he that perverts his ways shall be found out" and will be known to them. Happy are the men who walk the way of truth, walk surely in the world, and have no fear in this world or the world to come.

12. "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Yosef's house"

The Zohar comments on the fear felt by Yosef's brothers. It meditates on the nature of sin and evil, and asserts that only by concentrating on the Day of Judgment at all times, and by avoiding wine, pride, and fornication, can we be free of the Evil Inclination. Whoever has sins on his hands is always afraid; thus, Joseph's brothers were full of fear when they were brought into his house.

The Relevance of this Passage

A literal interpretation of biblical text limits it to extremist views that can be misconstrued as puritanical. The Kabbalists of antiquity shed light on the deeper significance of the above verses. Fear of sin and the avoidance of wine, pride, and infidelity are not just moral values rooted in religious authority. Rather, there is a practical benefit to engaging in positive

behavior. Kabbalah teaches us how to elevate all physical activity to the level of the spiritual. For example, relations between a man and wife are made more passionate when a man directs his sexual drive exclusively towards his spouse, limiting carnal activity to the spiritual confines of his marriage. Similarly, wine draws down enormous spiritual Light when used as part of a blessing, but brings alcoholism and spiritual darkness when used for self-indulgent purposes. Our eyes are opened to these insightful truths as we peruse these passages.

192. "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Yosef's house" (Beresheet 43:18): Rabbi Yosi said: Woe to the men, who do not know nor reflect upon the ways of the Torah. Woe to them at the time the Holy One, blessed be He, will demand justice for their deeds, when the body and soul will rise to account for all they did before the soul separated from the body.

193. That day is the day of Judgment, when the books WHERE MEN'S DEEDS ARE WRITTEN are open, the prosecutors are in place, and the serpent is ready to bite. All the members of the body quiver before it, and the soul is separated from the body to roam and hover without knowing where it should go and to which place it will be raised.

194. Woe to that day, a day of ire and wrath. It behooves man, then, to face his Evil Inclination and remember that he will have to stand in the King's judgment and that he will be put beneath the ground to rot, while the soul will be separated from him.

195. We have learned that a man should always apply himself to arousing the Good Inclination against the Evil Inclination. If evil departs, that is fine; if not, he should study the Torah, for only the Torah breaks the evil inclination. If evil departs, that is fine; if not, man should remind him of his dying day in order to break him.

196. We have to study this further. The Evil Inclination is the Angel of Death. Why should the Angel of Death be broken just before the day of death, seeing that it is he who delights in killing MEN? Indeed, he leads them astray to bring DEATH upon them.

197. HE ANSWERS, Surely we have learned that it behooves man to be reminded of his dying day in order to break his heart, for the Evil Inclination dwells only in a place of intoxication and pride. When a broken spirit dwells in man, evil departs and does not stay with him. One should therefore be reminded of his dying day so that his spirit will be crushed and the Evil Inclination will go away.

198. Come and behold: The Good Inclination requires the joy of the Torah and the Evil Inclination the joy of wine, fornication, and pride. Therefore, a man should always vex him by mention of that great day, the day of judgment, the day of reckoning, for there is nothing that protects man except the good deeds that he performs in this world.

199. Come and behold: "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Yosef's house." With all their might and strength, one youth who brought them into Yosef's house MADE THEM afraid. How much more SHOULD WE BE AFRAID when the Holy One, blessed be He, will demand justice of man?

200. Hence, a man should strive in this world to be strengthened by the Holy One, blessed be He, and put his trust in Him. And though he sinned, if he fully repents, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, is able TO OVERLOOK A WRONG AND FORGIVE HIM. And the man could fortify himself in the Holy One, blessed be He, as if he had never sinned.

201. The tribes were afraid because they sinned in stealing Yosef. They would not have been afraid at all, had they not sinned. For man's sins break his heart and strength. Why? Because the Good Inclination is crushed within him, and he has no power to overcome the evil inclination. It is therefore written, "What man there is that is fearful and fainthearted" (Devarim 20:8), "that is fearful" of the sins upon his hands, which break a man's heart.

202. Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, exacted payments for generations for the tribes' sin OF SELLING YOSEF, for nothing is lost before the Holy One, blessed be He, and He demands payment from one generation to the next. Judgment stands before him constantly until exacted. And judgment abides where it should BE.

203. How do we know this? From Chizkiyahu, who sinned by revealing to the idolatrous nations the mysteries of the Holy One, blessed be He, which he should not have done. The Holy One, blessed be He, sent Yeshayahu, who said to him, "Behold, days are coming that all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon" (Yeshayah 39:6).

204. Come and behold what that sin caused. It exposed what was hidden and, once it was revealed, an opening was given FOR THE OTHER SIDE TO RULE. Therefore, blessing abides only in secret places, as has been already explained. Blessings dwell on all that is undisclosed. Once it is revealed, there is an opening for another place to have dominion over it.

205. It is written, "all that honored her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness" (Eichah 1:8). This alludes to the kingdom of Babylon, where a present was sent to Jerusalem, as it is written, "At that time, Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Chizkiyahu" (Yeshayah 39:1).

206. In the letters it was written, Peace be to Chizkiyah, the king of Yehuda, peace be to the great Elohim, and peace be to Jerusalem. Once he delivered the letter, he thought, I have not done well in greeting the servant before his master. He rose from his throne, took three steps, and retrieved the letter. He wrote another letter in its stead, saying, Peace be to the great Elohim, peace to Jerusalem, and peace be to Chizkiyah. These are "all that honored her."

207. Afterwards, they "despise her." Why did they "despise her?" "Because they have seen her nakedness", THAT IS, Chizkiyah showed it to them, and were it not for that, they would not have despised her. Because Chizkiyah was righteous, retribution was late in coming and came not in his days, as it is written, "But there shall be peace and truth in my days" (Yeshayah 39:8). Later, the Holy One, blessed be He, visited His children on account of that sin.

208. Similarly, the sin of the tribes was deferred until a later time, for judgment above had no power over them until the time arrived to exact payments. Thus, whoever has sins on his hands is always afraid, as it is written, "And you shall fear day and night" (Devarim 28:66). Therefore, "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Yosef's house."

13. "And he saw Binyamin"

Hope deferred is a heart sickness but desire fulfilled is a Tree of Life. Rabbi Chiya comments on this verse, to the effect that the negative angel Satan attends those who pray with a specific result in mind--but God quickly answers the prayers of the pure in heart. Thus, Benjamin came quickly to Yosef. The passage then digresses into a lament for the destruction of the Temple and the pains of Exile.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Evil Inclination exploits the action of prayer by stimulating feelings of self-righteousness. For this reason, most prayers go unanswered. A holier-than-thou attitude distinguishes the religious approach to prayer from the authentically spiritual perspective. The latter is replete with humility, while the religious approach fosters conceit and certitude in one's own purity and devotion. The cleansing power of this passage purifies our souls, so that we may humbly ask The Creator for what we truly need.

209. "And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Binyamin, his mother's son" (Beresheet 43:29). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick (lit. 'is a heart sickness'), but desire fulfilled is a Tree of Life" (Mishlei 13:12). From this verse, we have learned that a man should not, when he prays to the Holy One, blessed be He, check whether HIS SALVATION has come or not. What is the reason for this? When he looks for it, many accusers come to examine his deeds.

210. It is a secret that his examination during prayer causes a heart sickness. The sickness of heart is he who always stands by man to indict him above and below, NAMELY THE SATAN.

211. "But desire fulfilled is a Tree of Life." We have learned that he who wants the Holy One, blessed be He, to accept his prayer, should study the Torah, which is the Tree of Life. Then, "desire is fulfilled (lit. 'comes')." Desire is the grade presiding over all the prayers in the world, NAMELY THE NUKVA. It brings them before the highest King, ZEIR ANPIN. This verse says "comes" just as elsewhere it is written, "in the evening she comes" (Ester 2:14). IN BOTH VERSES, THE WORD COMES ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA. The meaning of "desire comes" is that she comes before the highest King TO BE JOINED WITH HIM in order to grant the wish of he WHO PRAYS TO FULFILL HIS REQUEST.

212. Another explanation of the verse, "Hope deferred is a heart sickness" is that it refers to a place where prayer is misdirected, A PLACE CALLED "SICKNESS OF HEART." It is slow in coming and is passed from hand to hand. Sometimes SALVATION never comes. Why? Because it is passed FROM HAND TO HAND by all the chieftains to be brought down into the world.

213. "...but desire comes is a Tree of Life": When hope is not passed by all the chieftains and Chariots FROM HAND TO HAND, the Holy One, blessed be He, gives it immediately. For when it is passed by the chieftains and Chariots, numerous accusers are given permission to examine it and look at the indictments before granting him HIS SALVATION. But whatever comes from the King's house and is given to man, whether he deserves it or not, is given to him at once. This is the meaning of the phrase, "but desire comes is a Tree of Life"; it comes immediately.

214. Another explanation of "hope deferred" is that it refers to Ya'akov whose hope to see Yosef was long deferred. And "but desire comes is a Tree of Life" refers to Binyamin, for only a short time elapsed between Yosef's request for him and his arrival; the time elapsed was short. It is written, "And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Binyamin, his mother's son." Why does the scripture read, "his mother's son?" Because he had his mother's image, he was her very image. Therefore the verse reads, "And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Binyamin, his mother's son."

215. Rabbi Yosi said: It is written earlier, "And Yosef saw Binyamin with them" (Beresheet 43:16), and now "he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Binyamin." What did he see here? HE ANSWERS, He saw through the Holy Spirit that Binyamin will have a place in the Holy Land along with his brothers, and that the Shechinah will dwell in the place of Binyamin and Yehuda, for he saw the Temple standing upon their portion. This is the meaning of the phrase, "And Yosef saw Binyamin with them." But Yosef, his brother, did not see HIMSELF sharing the portion IN WHICH THE TEMPLE WOULD STAND.

216. When "he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Binyamin, his mother's son" (Beresheet 43:29) AND SAW THE TEMPLE STANDING ON HIS PORTION, then it is written, "And Yosef made haste, for his affection was kindled towards his brother and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there" (Beresheet 43:30), BECAUSE HE SAW THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE.

217. Rabbi Chizkiyah quoted the verse, "The burden of the valley of vision. What ails you now, that you are wholly gone up to the housetops" (Yeshayah 22:1). Come and behold: It has been said that when the Temple was destroyed and consumed by fire, all the priests went up to the roofs of the Temple with all the Temple's keys in their hands. They said "until now we have been your treasurers, from now on take what is yours."

218. Yet come and behold: "The valley of vision" is the Shechinah who used to be in the Temple, and all the people in the world drew prophecy from her. And although the prophets used to prophesize from a different place, THAT IS, NETZACH AND HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, they used to draw their prophecies from her, THE NUKVA. BECAUSE NETZACH AND HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN GAVE PLENTY TO THE SHECHINAH, WHO GAVE THE ILLUMINATION OF NETZACH AND HOD TO THE PROPHETS, She is therefore named after prophecy "the valley of vision" it has been explained THAT SHE IS CALLED vision, because She reflects all the upper hues. THE FOUR HUES OF ZEIR ANPIN, CHOCHMAH AND BINAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT, ARE REFLECTED ONLY IN HER. SHE IS THEREFORE CALLED VISION.

219. "What ails you now, that you are wholly gone up to the housetops": When the Temple was destroyed, the Shechinah stood in all the places She used to inhabit and wept for Her apartment, for Yisrael who went into exile, and for all the righteous and the pious who

perished there. How do we know this? From the words, "A voice was heard in Rama, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children" (Yirmeyah 31:14). RACHEL WAS THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH, as we have already learned. The Holy One, blessed be He, then asked the Shechinah, "What ails you now, that you are wholly gone up to the housetops."

220. HE ASKS: Why does it say that "you are wholly?" It would have been sufficient to say that "you are gone up TO THE HOUSETOPS." What does wholly mean? HE REPLIES: It includes all the other legions and Chariots that all wept with Her for the destruction of the Temple. IT IS THEREFORE WRITTEN "THAT YOU ARE WHOLLY GONE UP TO THE HOUSETOPS."

221. Therefore, HE ASKED HER, "What ails you now..." She replied, My children are in exile and the Temple burnt, AND YOU DO NOT KNOW, and as for me, whatever shall I do here. She said: "You that are full of uproar, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: your slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle." "Therefore, said I, 'Look away from me; I will weep bitterly'" (Yeshayah 22:2, 4). We have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, replied: "Thus says Hashem; keep your voice from weeping..." (Yirmeyah 31:15).

222. Come and behold: Since the Temple was destroyed, not a day has passed without curses. This is because as long as the Temple existed, Yisrael could worship and offer burnt offerings and sacrifices. The Shechinah hovered about them in the Temple, as a mother about her children. All faces were shining, until blessings would abide above and below. Not a day passed without blessings and delight. Yisrael dwelt securely in their land, and all the world was nourished for their sake.

223. Now that the Temple is destroyed and the Shechinah has gone with them into exile, there is not a day without curses. The world is accursed, and joys do not dwell above or below.

224. In days to come, the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise the congregation of Yisrael, THE SHECHINAH, from the dust, as it is written, "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer" (Yeshayah 56:7). It is also written, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them" (Yirmeyah 31:8). Because at first, it is written, "She weeps sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks" (Eichah 1:2), they will afterward return weeping FROM THE EXILE, as it is written, "They shall come with weeping."

14. "As soon as the morning was light"

This verse speculates on the meaning of the phrase, "the morning was light." Drawing on many precedents from the Torah, it uses the phrase to define the healing powers of God, the bright future of the people of Israel, and the difficulties that will befall their enemies.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light of The Creator can heal all our ailments--but we must have certainty and trust in its power, and we must be conscious of sharing this energy with all those in need. These healing forces are summoned forth as we meditate upon the primordial letters of creation.

225. "As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses" (Beresheet 44:3). Rabbi Elazar said: We have to study this verse carefully. If they were sent, why should the Torah add "they and their asses?" HE ANSWERS, Because scripture reads, "and take us for bondsmen, and our asses" (Beresheet 43:18), the verse "the men were sent away, they and their asses" teaches us that they have not stayed, nor have their asses.

226. He opened the discussion with the verse, "And Avraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass" (Beresheet 22:3). That was the morning of Avraham, WHICH IS CHESED. It shone upon THE TRIBES due to Avraham, whose merit stood for them and enabled them to go in peace and be delivered from Judgment. For at that time, Judgment impended upon them to exact payment, and only the merit of Avraham's morning protected them. Thus they were sent from that place of Judgment, for it had no power over them at the time.

227. Rabbi Yehuda continued with the verse, "And he shall be as the light of the morning" (II Shmuel 23:4): This is the light of Avraham's morning, NAMELY, THE LIGHT OF CHESED. "When the sun rises" refers to the sun of Ya'akov, THE LIGHT OF TIFERET, as it is written, "the sun rose upon him" (Beresheet 32:32). "In a morning without clouds" means that morning, THE LIGHT OF CHESED, is not so cloudy, BECAUSE JUDGMENTS HAVE NO HOLD UPON IT, but "clear shining after rain," WHICH MEANS the brightness that comes through rain, the rain of the side of Yitzchak, THE LIGHT OF GVURAH, for that rain causes that, "the grass springs out of the earth" (II Shmuel 23, 4).

228. Another explanation of the phrase, "as the light of the morning," MEANS THAT by the light of Avraham's morning, THE LIGHT OF CHESED, "the sun rises," which is Ya'akov, whose light is as that of that morning OF AVRAHAM, BEING THE SECRET OF TIFERET, AND SHINES WITH COVERED CHASSADIM DRAWN FROM THE LIGHT OF CHESED. The "morning without clouds" is not dark but shining, for when morning, THE LIGHT OF CHESED, comes, no judgment has sway. All is illuminating on the side of Avraham, THE RIGHT SIDE, "in the clear shining after rain": This is the side of Yosef the Righteous, who showers upon the earth, THAT IS, YESOD, WHICH GIVES PLENTY TO THE NUKVA, to produce grass and all the goodness of the world.

229. Rabbi Shimon said: Come and behold: When night falls and spreads its wings upon the world, snow-white asses, WHICH ARE SPIRITS IN THE SHAPES OF FEMALE ASSES, ARE APPOINTED TO TAKE REVENGE ON THOSE WHO TRANSGRESS RELIGION AND THE LAW. They will come out and reign over the world. Numerous accusers are aroused on several sides to rule over the world. When morning breaks, they all vanish and lose their dominion. Each comes to its FIXED position and returns to its place.

230. Another explanation of the phrase, "the morning was light," is that when Avraham's morning breaks, THE REIGN OF THE RIGHT BEGINS. "... the men were sent away" refers to the accusers who rule by night, "they and their asses": These are the female asses THAT ARE APPOINTED OVER THOSE WHO TRANSGRESS religion and the law. They come from the side of defilement, being unholy, and do not rule and are not seen when morning comes. The female asses in charge of sinners are considered the same as male asses.

231. There are no upper grades that are not divided into right and left, into mercy and judgment. There are numerous grades, holy on the side of holiness and defiled on the side of defilement. All grades stand on top of each other.

232. Wherever Avraham's morning is awakened into the world, the forces of the left are gone and have no sway, for they cannot exist on the right side, only on the left. THEREFORE, WHEN MORNING ARRIVES, WHICH IS THE REIGN OF THE RIGHT, THEY ARE FORCED TO VANISH. The Holy One, blessed be He, made day and night to give each its own proper aspect, THE RIGHT TO RULE BY DAY AND THE LEFT TO RULE BY NIGHT. Happy is the portion of Yisrael in this world and the world to come.

233. Rabbi Chiya said: "But to you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in its wings" (Malachi 3:20). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, will cause to shine upon Yisrael the sun, which, from the day the world was created, He concealed from the wicked in the world, as it is written, "And from the wicked their light is withheld" (Iyov 38:15).

234. The Holy One, blessed be He, stored that light, for when it first came out, it shone from one end of the world to the other. But when He looked upon the generations of Enosh, the generation of the Flood, the generation of the Tower of Babylon and all the wicked ones, He stored the light.

235. When Ya'akov came to contend with Esav's minister, who bit his thigh, he limped. It is then written, "the sun rose upon him" (Beresheet 32:32). What sun is this? It is the sun that was stored away, which has healing in it, to heal his thigh. When he was healed through that sun, it is written, "And Ya'akov came to Shalem (lit. 'whole')" (Beresheet 33:18), meaning he was whole in his body and healed.

236. The Holy One, blessed be He, will therefore uncover that sun in the future and shine upon Yisrael, as it is written, "But to you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall arise," the sun of righteousness being the sun with which Ya'akov was healed. It is "with

healing in its wings," because everybody will then be healed. When the children of Yisrael rise from the dust, many will be lame and blind. The Holy One, blessed be He, will shine the healing sun upon them, as it is written, "with healing in its wings."

237. That sun will then shine from one end of the world to the other. Yisrael will be cured, but the idolatrous nations will be burned by it. Concerning Yisrael, the verse reads, "Then shall your light break forth like the morning, and your health shall spring forth speedily; and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of Hashem shall be your rearguard" (Yeshayah 58:8).

15. "And to Yosef were born two sons, before the years of famine came"

The subject of this final passage is the nature of "the days of evil." These are not the days of old age, Rabbi Yitzchak explains, but the "illumination of the left." Man should remain chaste in a bad time and not have children, since these "strange" children would descend from the left side--thus, Yosef had his sons before the famine struck. Neither should a man go forth into the marketplace during the days of evil, since the world is full of "satanic accusers" lying in wait for the unwary.

The Relevance of this Passage

A man and woman's thoughts during sexual relations help determine the purity of their unborn child's soul. The purer our thoughts at the moment of conception, the finer the grade of soul that is drawn from the Upper Worlds. Because of social pressures and our Evil Inclination, purifying and controlling our thoughts is a formidable task. The cleansing attributes of the Hebrew letters in this passage help us to prevail over the world's negative influences, and to elevate our thoughts and desires. We draw Light to our children, which helps purify their souls.

238. Let us return to the subject: "And to Yosef were born two sons before the years of famine came" (Beresheet 41:50). Rabbi Yitzchak quoted the verse, "And the remnant of Ya'akov shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from Hashem, like the showers upon the grass, that tarries not for man, nor waits for the sons of men" (Michah 5:6). Come and behold: Every day, when light breaks, a bird awakens on a tree in the Garden of Eden and crows three times. The twig is straightened, and the crier loudly warns: Whoever among you see but see not; exist in the world, yet do not know why; do not care for the glory of their Master; and do not study the Torah even though it stands before you, it is better for you never to have been born. Why should you exist without understanding? Woe to you, when the days of evil shall bestir themselves against you and banish you from the world.

239. HE ASKS: What are the days of evil? Can they be days of old age? Not so, for days of old age, if man has children and grandchildren, are good days. What, then, are days of evil?

240. They are mentioned in the verse, "Remember now your creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come" (Kohelet 12:1). These are not days of old age. The mystery here is that when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He did it through the letters of the Torah. Each letter came before Him, until they came to be established by the letter Bet, WHICH IS IN THE SECRET OF BLESSING (LIT. 'BERACHAH'), FOR WHICH REASON THE WORLD WAS CREATED BY IT. All the alphabets along with their various permutations, THE 231 INWARD ALPHABETS AND THE 231 BACKWARD ALPHABETS, AS WE KNOW, are means WITH WHICH to create the world, HAVING RECEIVED THE SECRET OF BLESSING FROM THE LETTER BET.

241. After the letters were permuted INTO AN ALPHABET IN WHICH THE LETTERS Tet and Resh appear together, the Tet ascended and would not settle together WITH RESH. The Holy One, blessed be He, rebuked her and said: Tet, Tet, why do you ascend and not settle in your place?' She replied: You have made me the first letter in the word Tov (good), and the Torah opened by saying "that it was good" IN THE VERSE, "AND ELOHIM SAW THE LIGHT, THAT IT WAS GOOD" (BERESHEET 1:3). How could I be united with RESH, WHICH IS THE FIRST LETTER IN THE WORD Ra (EVIL)?

242. He said to her, return to your place, for you have need OF THE LETTER RA. For I wish to create man and include both of you together in him. Then he will be created, but with you on the right and her on the left. The letters Tet and Resh settled together again.

243. The Holy One, blessed be He, then divided them, AND SEPARATED THEIR ILLUMINATION, THE ONE BEING WHOLLY GOOD AND THE OTHER WHOLLY EVIL. And He created for each certain days and years, THE SECRET OF THE 28 TIMES IN KOHELET, the ones to the right and the others to the left, fourteen TIMES FOR GOOD AND FOURTEEN FOR EVIL. The ones to the right are called days of good, and the ones to the left are called days of evil. Solomon said: "before the evil days come" and encompass man on account of the sins he committed. Once the days of good and days of evil were created, TET AND RESH settled together again to be included within man.

244. David therefore asked: "Why should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my persecutors compasses me about" (Tehilim 49:6), the days of evil assuredly. There is a mystery in that THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT is called days of famine and years of famine, and THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT is called days of plenty and years of plenty.

245. The secret is that one should not draw forth the source of the holy covenant, THAT IS, NOT PERFORM MARITAL DUTY, in days or years of famine. Yosef, therefore, the secret of the covenant, closed his spring in the year of famine and did not allow it to multiply in the world. HENCE THE WORDS, "AND TO YOSEF WERE BORN...BEFORE THE YEARS OF FAMINE CAME" (BERESHEET 41:50). When the year of famine reigns, it behooves man to withhold the spring of his holy covenant and not enable THE LEFT to multiply in the world.

246. Rabbi Shimon said: It is a very deep mystery that when the year of famine, THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, has sway, it behooves man to stop his source FROM BEGETTING CHILDREN FOR TWO REASONS: (1) If he does not stop his source, he would draw upon the baby a spirit from the LEFT side, and (2) He would thus give a place to that side, thereby strengthening the side of defilement in this world at the expense of the side of holiness. Regarding this secret, the scripture also reads, "For three things the earth quakes" (Mishlei 30:21).

247. For that reason, Yosef the Righteous, who is the secret of the Covenant, ascended to stop his source during the year of famine, so as not to mingle at all WITH THE LEFT and prevent it from ruling OVER THE RIGHT. Of whoever lets his source flow at that time, it is written, "They have dealt treacherously against Hashem: for they have begotten strange children" (Hoshea 5:7), for the children HE BEGETS DURING THE YEARS OF FAMINE are by necessity strange children. ACCORDING TO THE FIRST REASON GIVEN BY RABBI SHIMON, HE DRAWS UPON THE BABY A SPIRIT OF THAT SIDE. Assuredly, "They have dealt treacherously against Hashem" BECAUSE, ACCORDING TO THE SECOND REASON, THEY LET THE LEFT BE STRONGER THAN THE RIGHT AND THUS BETRAYED THE NAME OF HASHEM. Therefore, happy is the portion of holy Yisrael, who did not replace a place of holiness with that of impurity.

248. Another explanation of the verse, "And to Yosef were born two sons before the years of famine came" is that ever since the year of famine came to rule, WHICH IS LEFT WITHOUT RIGHT, he closed his spring and raised up his source, so as not to give children to the side of defilement or exchange a holy place for an impure one, THEREBY INCREASING DEFILEMENT AT THE EXPENSE OF HOLINESS. A man should await for his Master to come and rule over the world, as it is written, "And I will wait upon Hashem, that hides His face from the house of Ya'akov, and I will hope for Him" (Yeshayah 8:17).

249. Happy are the righteous who know the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, observe the precepts of the Torah, and follow their course, as "the ways of Hashem are right, and the just do walk in them: but the transgressors shall stumble in them" (Hoshea 14:10) and "But you that did cleave of Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4).

250. The Holy One, blessed be He, therefore admonished Yisrael to sanctify themselves, as it is written, "You shall be holy: for I Hashem your Elohim am holy" (Vayikra 19, 2). HE ASKS: Who is "I?" HE ANSWERS, It is the Holy One, blessed be He, the sacred kingdom of heaven, NAMELY THE NUKVA, while the kingdom of the idolatrous nations is called other, as it is written, "For you shall worship no other El, for Hashem, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous El" (Shemot 34:14).

251. Come and behold: "I" is the government of this world and of the world to come, and everything depends upon it, AS EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON THE NUKVA. Whoever cleaves to the "I", NAMELY TO THE NUKVA, has a portion in this world and the world to come.

252. Whoever cleaves to the other one, THE NUKVA OF THE HEATHEN, perishes from the world of truth, has no part in the world to come and takes part in the impurity of this world. Yet he takes part in the defilement of this world, for the kingdom of the heathen has numerous legions of accusers through whom it rules over this world.

253. Therefore Elisha, the other who descended and clove to that grade, THE KINGDOM OF THE HEATHEN CALLED OTHER, was driven from the world to come. He was not given permission to repent, but was expelled from the world of truth, for which reason he was named other.

254. Thus, a man should separate himself from all these sides in order not to be defiled by that side and thereby merit this world and the world to come. Thus, THIS NUKVA OF HOLINESS is a blessing and that NUKVA OF THE HEATHEN is a curse. The one is plenty and the other famine. They are direct opposites, as has already been explained.

255. At the time of the year of famine, WHEN THE NUKVA OF THE HEATHEN REIGNED, no man should have been seen in the marketplace or let flow his source to beget children to another El, as has already been explained.

256. Happy is the man who is careful to walk the way of truth and constantly cleaves to his Master. It is written, "To Him shall you hold fast, and by His name shall you swear" (Devarim 10:20). Note that it is not written, "in Him shall you swear," but rather "in His name," WHICH IS THE NUKVA CALLED NAME. What then is the meaning of the words, "you swear?" HE REPLIED: As we have explained, "YOU SWEAR (HEB. TISHAVE'A)" MEANS cleaving to the secret of faith, THE NUKVA CALLED SHEVA (SEVEN) SO NAMED AFTER THE SEVEN SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT-WHICH SHE RECEIVES FROM BINAH, AS WILL BE EXPLAINED PRESENTLY.

257. There are seven grades above IN BINAH THAT ARE superior to all and constitute the secret of the wholeness of faith. THE ULTIMATE PERFECTION OF THE NUKVA IS TO ASCEND AND CLOTHE THESE SEVEN GRADES-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT OF BINAH. The secret of the seven grades below, IN THE NUKVA HERSELF, is their union and connection with the SEVEN UPPER ONES, so they become one. It is therefore written, "Seven days and seven days, namely, fourteen days" (I Melachim 8:65). All is one, bound as one, FOR THE SEVEN OF THE NUKVA, WHEN THEY ARE WHOLE, ASCEND AND CLOTHE THE SEVEN OF BINAH, AND THEY ARE BOUND AS ONE. And "by His name shall you swear" (Devarim 6:13) ALLUDES TO THE SEVEN above and below-THE JOINING OF THE SEVEN OF BINAH WITH THE SEVEN OF THE NUKVA INTO ONE.

258. Of whoever joins these SEVEN LOWER ONES with the SEVEN UPPER ONES, it is written, "Hashem shall open to you His good treasure, the heaven" (Devarim 28:12), those treasures THE SEVEN OF BINAH above and THE SEVEN OF THE NUKVA below. The seven days OF BINAH and the seven days OF THE NUKVA are as one, and it is written, "His good treasure, the heaven" and "and seven...to the seven which were upon the top of it" (Zecharyah 4:2). All of them are one.

259. Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yosi were walking together when they saw an armed man wearing fringes, THE TZITZIT. Rabbi Chiya said: This man is either a completely righteous man WHO WEARS A FRINGED TALIT EVEN WHILE TRAVELING or is a deceiver of men WHO CARRIES ARMS AND MIGHT BE A ROBBER, YET WEARS THE TALIT TO DECEIVE PEOPLE AND CAPTURE THEM.

260. Rabbi Yosi said: The pious have said to judge every man in a favorable sense. We have learned that when a man who sets out on a journey is afraid of robbers, he should meditate upon three things: a present, a war, and a prayer. How do we know this? From Ya'akov, who prepared himself for these three things, and was provisioned for presents, a war, and a prayer, AS IT IS WRITTEN THAT HE "SENT" (BERESHEET 32:4) ESAV A PRESENT, HE DIVIDED THE PEOPLE WITH HIM INTO TWO CAMPS LEST "ESAV COME...AND SMITE IT" IN WAR, AND HE PRAYED TO HASHEM, "DELIVER ME, I PRAY YOU, FROM THE HAND OF MY BROTHER." This man who is walking is wearing the Talit to pray and has arms for war. If he

has these two, it is not necessary to look to see if he has the third, THE PRESENT. IF HE HAS THE FIRST TWO, HE MUST HAVE THE THIRD.

261. When he approached them, they greeted him but he did not answer. Rabbi Chiya said: It seems as if one of the three THINGS which should be upon him is absent. BECAUSE HE DOES NOT RESPOND TO OUR GREETINGS OF PEACE. THIS MEANS THAT he did not prepare a present, as a present comprises peace. Rabbi Yosi said: It may be that he is praying or reciting his study so as not to forget it.

262. They walked with him, yet he did not talk to them. Later Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yosi stepped aside to study the Torah. When the man saw they were studying the Torah, he approached them and gave them greetings of peace.

263. He said: Gentlemen, what did you think of when you greeted me but I did not answer. Rabbi Yosi said: WE THOUGHT you were engaged in prayer or study. He replied: May the Holy One, blessed be He, judge you favorably.

264. This I shall tell you. I met a man one day when I was walking along the road. I greeted him, but he turned out to be a robber, who fell upon me and grieved me. Had I not overcome him, I would have come to harm. Since that day, I vowed to greet only a man whom I knew was RIGHTEOUS, lest he might otherwise molest and overcome me. Moreover, it is forbidden to greet an evil man, as it is written, "There is no peace, says Hashem, for the wicked" (Yeshayah 48:22).

265. When you greeted me, I did not respond for I suspected that YOU WERE NOT RIGHTEOUS. WHY? Because I did not see any tzitzit on you. I THEREFORE DID NOT RETURN YOUR GREETING. Besides, I was repeating my studies AND THUS COULD NOT ANSWER YOU ANYWAY. But now that I see you are righteous, the way is clear before me.

266. He then quoted the verse, "A psalm of Asaf. Truly Elohim is good to Yisrael, to such as are of a clean heart" (Tehilim 73:1). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, made right and left in order to rule over the world. The one, RIGHT, is called good, and the other, LEFT, is called evil. Man includes them both, and in all THINGS comes closer TO HASHEM, AS THE SAGES SAID, 'WITH YOUR TWO INCLINATIONS, THE GOOD INCLINATION AND THE EVIL INCLINATION.'

267. The idolatrous nations are included within evil, the left, which was created for the defilement of their side, as they are uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh. But of Yisrael, it is written, "Truly Elohim is good to Yisrael."

268. You may say He is good for all Yisrael, but that is not true. He is good only to those who were not defiled with evil, as it is written, "To such as are of a clean heart." For of good and evil, good is for Yisrael alone, and evil is for the idolatrous nations alone. "Truly" He is "good to Yisrael", so they cleave to THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. Thus, Yisrael cleaves to the supreme mystery, ZEIR ANPIN, in the secret of faith, THE NUKVA, so that all shall become one. THAT IS, BY ACHIEVING GOOD, THEY SUCCEED IN UNITING ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA AS ONE AND THEN CLEAVE TO THEM.

269. Rabbi Yosi said: Happy are we not to have mistaken you, for it is the Holy One, blessed be He, who sent you to us. He continued, Since good is meant for Yisrael, it will then have a portion in this world and the world to come to see the sight of glory eye to eye. It is written, "For they shall see eye to eye, Hashem returning to Tzion" (Yeshayah 52:8). Blessed be Hashem forever. Amen and amen.

VOLUME 06 - VAYIGASH

1. "And Yehuda came near to him"

Rabbi Elazar discusses the role and meaning of the letters of the Aleph-Bet. Just as the Torah begins with Bet, so was the world and man created with this letter. The Nukva, we are told, is as the Father, always standing by to bless. The relationship between The Creator and the Nukva is also discussed in some detail, along with its importance for the recitation of blessings.

The Relevance of this Passage

Because Bet is the first letter in the word blessing, Bet was chosen to be the instrument of Creation. The Hebrew letters are very much like DNA--they are the spiritual genetic information through which all existence comes into being. Connecting to the letters through this passage brings renewal, rejuvenation, and the connection with the creative forces of divinity that give rise to the universe as a whole.

1. "Then Yehuda came near to him" (Beresheet 44:18). Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "You are our father, though Avraham be ignorant of us, and Yisrael acknowledge us not. You, Hashem, are our Father, our Redeemer; your name is from everlasting" (Yeshayah 63:16). This verse has already been explained, yet come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He did each day the work befitting it. When the sixth day arrived--the time for Adam to be created--the Torah came before Him and said: 'Adam, whom you want to create, will provoke you. Unless You curb Your wrath, it would be better for him not to be created.' The Holy One, blessed be He, asked: 'Am I called long-suffering for no reason?'

2. All was created through the medium of the Torah, and constructed by means of the Torah. AND AS THE TORAH BEGINS WITH THE LETTER BET, SO WAS THE WORLD CREATED WITH THE LETTER BET. For before the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world--THE NUKVA--all the letters were presented before him one by one, in reverse order.

3. Tav came before him and said: 'Would you create the world through me? The Holy One, blessed be He, responded: "No, for many righteous people are destined to die through you, in accordance with the verse, "and set a mark (Heb. tav) upon the foreheads of the men" (Yechezkel 9:4). We have also learned this from the verse, "and begin with my sanctuary" (Ibid. 6), in which the word 'sanctuary' should be read as 'sanctified'-WHO ARE THE RIGHTEOUS. The world therefore will not be created through you."

4. The three letters Shin, Kuf, and Resh came before him, each on its own. The Holy One, blessed be He said: 'It is not worthwhile to create the world by you, for you are the letters which combine to create the word 'lie' (Heb. sheker), and no lie deserves to rise before me," as has already been explained.

5. Then came the letters Pey and Tzadik, and so on until the letter Caf. Once Caf descended from the Crown (Heb. keter), the higher and lower worlds shook until all was established using the letter Bet, a sign of blessing (Heb. beracha)--and the world was created and constructed by it.

6. You may say that Aleph is the first letter, and THAT THE WORLD should have BEEN CREATED THROUGH IT. HE ANSWERS: True, but because the word damned (Heb. arur) begins with the letter Aleph, the world was not created through it. Thus, although Aleph pertains to a Supernal Secret, the world was not created by means of it, so that no opening--NAMELY, POWER AND STRENGTH--could be given to Other Side, called 'damned'. Rather, the world was constructed and created by Bet.

7. Come and behold: "You are our father" means that this world--THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'YOU'--was constructed and created in this grade, MARKED BY BLESSING. SIMILARLY, THE WORLD WAS CREATED AND CONSTRUCTED THROUGH BET, WHICH WAS A SIGN OF BLESSING. Man was also created through it--THROUGH THE SIGN OF BLESSING--and was issued into the world. THEREFORE, IN THIS RESPECT, THE NUKVA WAS

CONSIDERED THE ROOT OF MAN, AND WE ADDRESS HER AS 'YOU ARE OUR FATHER'--THAT IS, 'YOU ARE OUR ROOT'. HUMANKIND TOO WAS CREATED WITH THE MARK OF BLESSING.

8. The verse, "though Avraham be ignorant of us," means that although the world is sustained by him, THE SECRET OF CHESED--AS IT IS WRITTEN, "THE WORLD IS BUILT BY CHESED" (TEHILIM 89:3)--he nevertheless did not care for us as he did for Yishmael, as it is written, "O that Yishmael might live before you" (Beresheet 17:18). The verse continues, "and Yisrael acknowledge us not," for all the blessings he should have conferred on his sons, he let this grade--THE NUKVA--have to bless all. THUS, ACCORDING TO THE VERSES, "AND THIS IS THAT WHICH THEIR FATHER SPOKE TO THEM" (BERESHEET 49:28), THE NUKVA--CALLED 'THIS'--SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THEIR FATHER AND BLESSED THEM. ALSO WHEN HE BLESSED EFRAIM AND MENASHE, HE SAID, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "THE ANGEL WHO REDEEMED ME FROM ALL EVIL"--NAMELY, THE NUKVA- "BLESS THE BOYS" (BERESHEET 48:16).

9. "You, Hashem, are our Father"--NAMELY, THE NUKVA--always standing by to bless and care for us, like a father taking care of the needs of children; "our Redeemer; your name is from everlasting," for You (THE NUKVA) are our Redeemer--she is called 'the angel who redeemed'. Thus, in the phrase, "our Redeemer; your name is from everlasting," "your name" is assuredly THE NUKVA CALLED 'THE NAME OF HASHEM'. We have learned that we should not stop between reciting the blessings, "who has redeemed Yisrael," and the Amidah; or between the blessing of the hand Tefilin and that of the head Tefilin--as has already been explained.

2. Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah

Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yehuda explore the idea that all details in the lower world have a counterpart in the Upper World, and that the creation of Adam is the culmination the entire process of creation. The rabbis then discuss the nature of the emanations known as the Sfirot of The Creator, which gives rise to an extraordinary description of the qualities of the human soul. The three grades of the soul--Ruach, Nefesh, and Neshamah--are discussed and eventually agreed upon.

The Relevance of this Passage

Every action in this physical dimension has a corresponding influence in the Upper Worlds. In truth, both worlds are actually one reality; they are like reflections in a mirror. This passage stimulates the high spiritual realms in which the Light is aroused and then reflected back to us in the physical world to refine and perfect our souls. Perfection refers to the subjugation of the ego, and the transformation of the selfish desire to receive into a desire to receive for the sake of sharing. Because sharing is the nature of the Light, when we share we take on the nature of The Creator. In effect, we "become God." When a stone is returned to the mountain from which it was hewn, oneness is again achieved between the part and the whole. There is no distinguishing feature separating them any longer. This God-like nature is awakened within us as we connect to this passage.

10. Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yehuda were studying the Torah one night. Rabbi Yitzchak said: We have learned that when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, He made the lower world after the pattern of the Supernal World, and MADE the one correspond to the other. EVERY DETAIL IN THE LOWER WORLD HAS A COUNTERPART IN THE UPPER WORLD. And He is its Glory, both above and below.

11. Rabbi Yehuda said: Assuredly it is so, and He created Adam above all, WHO INCLUDES AND COMPLETES ALL THE PARTS OF CREATION. This is the meaning of, "I have made the earth, and created man upon it" (Yeshayah 45:12). Surely HE DOES NOT NEED TO REMIND US that He made the earth--so why is it written, "I have made the earth?" Because I "created man upon it," who exists to complete its unification into one wholeness. THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSE, AND ITS PERFECTION IS MAN.

12. He opened the discussion with the verse: "Thus says El, Hashem, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which comes out of it; He that gives breath (also: 'soul') to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein" (Yeshayah 42:5): This verse has already been explained. Nevertheless, "Thus says El, Hashem, He that created the heavens," refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, high

above--NAMELY, BINAH--who "created the heavens," (ZEIR ANPIN), FOR BINAH continuously improves ZEIR ANPIN BY EMANATING AND GIVING HIM MOCHIN. "He that spread forth the earth, and that which comes out of it" -- namely, the Holy Land, the Bundle of Life, THE NUKVA --"gives a soul to the people upon it," is the land, THE NUKVA, that confers souls.

13. Rabbi Yitzchak said: It is all above IN BINAH. HE DISAGREES WITH RABBI YEHUDA, WHO SAID THAT THE PHRASE, "GIVES A SOUL TO THE PEOPLE UPON IT," ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA. For from there, BINAH, the soul of life comes out into the land, THE NUKVA. The land receives the soul and issues it to all, as the river that flows (ZEIR ANPIN) RECEIVES FROM BINAH, holds all the souls and issues them to everyone in the land, THE NUKVA. She receives and distributes them to all MEN WHO ARE WORTHY OF HER.

14. Come and behold: when the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, he gathered his dust from the four directions of the world. He created him on the site of the Lower Temple, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and then drew upon him the soul of life from the Upper Temple--THE SECRET OF BINAH.

15. The soul consists of three grades and therefore has three names, just like the Supernal Secret, Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah. The Nefesh, as has been explained, is the lowest of them all AND COMES FROM THE NUKVA, THE LOWEST OF THE TEN SFIROT. The Ruach is its sustenance. It rules over the Nefesh, being of a higher grade, AND IS DRAWN FROM ZEIR ANPIN to sustain it well in everything--BOTH IN CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM. The Neshamah is the supreme existence--NAMELY, THE LIGHT OF BINAH, WHICH IS HIGHER THAN THE LIGHT OF ZEIR ANPIN AND THE LIGHT OF THE NUKVA, THE RUACH, AND THE NEFESH. It reigns over all, being a holy grade superior to all--TO RUACH AND NEFESH.

16. The three grades, NEFESH, RUACH, AND NESHAMAH, are included within men, who attain them by serving their Master. Thus first, man has a Nefesh with which to be corrected. But when he is intent on purification through this grade, man is corrected and crowned with a Ruach, the holy grade that dwells on the Nefesh, with which the deserving man is adorned.

17. Once he is elevated by Nefesh and Ruach and attains correction through proper service to his Master, Neshamah, a supernal, holy grade that reigns over everything, dwells on him so that he may be adorned by the highest holy grade and be perfect in everything, on all sides, and thereby merit the world to come. He is then beloved of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written: "That I may cause those who love me to inherit substance" (Mishlei 8:21). "...those who love me" refers to those in whom the holy souls abides.

18. Rabbi Yehuda asked: If this is true, why is it written, "all in whose nostrils was the breath (Lit. 'the Neshamah') of life..." (Bereshheet 7:22)? IF THOSE WHO ATTAIN NESHAMAH ARE THE LOVERS OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHY DID THEY DIE DURING THE FLOOD? He replied: Surely THEY LOVED THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. From all those in whom there was a holy Neshamah, none--such as Chanoch or Yered, or the other righteous Ones--remained to protect the earth so it would not be destroyed in their merit. This is the meaning of, "all in whose nostrils was the breath (lit. 'Neshamah') of life, of all that was on the dry land, died"--they all had already died and departed from the world, and no one remained then to protect the world.

19. Come and behold: There are grades upon grades, Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah, grade above grade; first Nefesh, being the lowest grade, as we said, then Ruach, which dwells on Nefesh and is above it. Neshamah is the highest grade, as has already been explained.

20. Nefesh is David's Nefesh, THE NUKVA, which receives the Nefesh from the river that flows (NAMELY, FROM ZEIR ANPIN). Ruach stands over the on Nefesh, which cannot exist without the Ruach, which dwells between fire and water, NAMELY, TIFERET, THE CENTRAL COLUMN BETWEEN GVURAH, CALLED 'FIRE', AND CHESED, CALLED 'WATER'. From here Nefesh is nourished.

21. Ruach depends for its existence on yet a higher grade called 'Neshamah', which is the origin of both Ruach and Nefesh, NAMELY, THE LIGHT OF BINAH, FROM WHICH ORIGINATES THE LIGHT OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'RUACH', AND THE LIGHT OF THE NUKVA CALLED 'NEFESH'. The Ruach is nourished from them. When Ruach travels, Nefesh also travels, and all is one. They approach each other, Nefesh to Ruach and Ruach to Neshamah, and are all one.

22. Come and behold: "...came near to him" refers to the one world approaching the other world, THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE LOWER WORLD, THE NUKVA, THE ASPECT OF NEFESH CALLED 'YEHUDA', TOWARD THE UPPER WORLD, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE ASPECT OF RUACH CALLED 'YOSEF', so that all becomes one. Because both Yehuda and Yosef were kings, they approached each other and joined together.

3. "For the Kings were assembled"

Rabbis Yehuda and Chiya discourse on the meeting of the Kings, Yehuda and Yosef, which symbolizes the union of the Supernal World--Zeir Anpin--and the Lower World of Malchut. The section explores the significance of the unity of Male and Female, and the conditions most conducive atonement for sins. The positive effects of the symbolic meeting of the Kings is emphasized.

The Relevance of this Passage

Humanity shares important attributes of the moon: like the moon, we generate no light of our own. Just as lunar light is derived from the sun, man's spiritual Light is derived from the bordering dimension known as Zeir Anpin. Light can only flow when these two worlds are enjoined, just as a lamp can only illuminate when connected to electrical current. On a metaphysical level, woman corresponds to Malchut and male denotes the realm of Zeir Anpin. Intimate relations between man and woman thus join Malchut and Zeir Anpin in this world as well as in the Upper Realms. This pleasure that accompanies this union is the Light of the Upper Worlds filling Malchut. When our consciousness is directed towards revealing this spiritual Light during sexual relations, the entire world is brightened and elevated. This section of Zohar raises our consciousness so that we can transform the sexual act into a force for bringing down Light, rather than as a tool of darkness. Moreover, the Light that is evoked through sexual union shines around the world as we meditate upon this passage.

23. Rabbi Yehuda began the discussion with the verse, "For the kings were assembled" (Tehilim 48:5): These are Yehuda and Yosef, who were both kings. The two of them came together to dispute, because Yehuda became surety for Binyamin and pledged himself before his father in this world and the world to come. He therefore came to argue with Yosef on account of Binyamin, so he would not be banned from this world and the world to come, as it is written, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shall you require him: If I bring him not to you, and set him before you" (Berehsit 43:9), "...then I shall have sinned to my father for ever" (Beresheet 44:32) in this world and the world to come.

24. Therefore, "the kings were assembled, they came on together" means that they quarreled together and were angry with each other because of Binyamin. Then, it is written, "As soon as they saw, they were astounded; they were affrighted; they rushed away. Fear took hold of them there" (Tehilim 48:6), of all them who were there.

25. "...and pain, like a woman in travail" (Tehilim 48:7), for they were fearful lest they would kill or be killed on account of Binyamin. For Yosef was sold by Yehuda and was lost to his father. Now that he became surety for Binyamin, he was fearful lest he would perish. Thus, it is written, "Yehuda came near to him."

26. Another explanation of the verse, "the kings were assembled," is that Yehuda and Yosef came to debate with each other as kings. They met to discuss, the one with the other--the one about Binyamin and the other about Binyamin. [THIS PARAGRAPH IS REDUNDANT, AND THE EXPLANATION IS CONTINUED IN THE NEXT PARAGRAPH.]

27. Rabbi Yehuda said: "...the kings" alludes to the secret of faith, THE NUKVA. For when desire was revealed and union adorned IN MALE AND FEMALE, both the MALE AND FEMALE worlds were joined together--the one, ZEIR ANPIN, to open the treasure, TO SPREAD IT, and the other, THE NUKVA, to gather and collect PLENTY within it. Then "the kings were assembled, they came on together," both worlds, the Supernal World, ZEIR ANPIN, and the Lower World, THE NUKVA.

28. "...they came on together (also: 'passed')," for no sin in the world is atoned for until THE MALE AND THE FEMALE are united, as it is written, "and forgives (lit. 'passes upon') the

transgression" (Michah 7:18), and also "they passed together," the sins passed, because, WITH THE ILLUMINATION OF UNITY, all faces shine and all sins are atoned for.

29. Rabbi Chiya said: The secret of this verse applies to correction through offering, for when a sacrifice is offered, everyone receives their provision, each according to what he deserves, and then all is joined as one, all faces shine, and one bond prevails--NAMELY, ONE UNION. Then, "the kings were assembled" to atone for transgressions and make them pass away. When, "the kings were assembled," MALE AND FEMALE, and were connected, "they passed together"--NAMELY, they atoned for their sins so as to cause all faces to shine and make all of one accord.

30. "As soon as they saw, they were astounded" (Tehilim 58:5-6). HE ASKS: Could it be that the kings SAW AND WERE ASTOUNDED? HE REPLIED: NOT THEY, but the accusers, who delight in executing justice, according to orders they receive. When the kings were assembled with mutual wishes, "they saw" the wish of both worlds, MALE AND FEMALE, and "they were astounded, they were affrighted; they rushed away" because all the accusers were subdued and passed out of the world, for they cannot rule. Both their existence and their government were then interrupted.

31. Rabbi Elazar said: "Then Yehuda came near to him." Why? HE ANSWERS: This is how it ought to have been, for he became surety, as it is written, "For your servant became surety for the boy." The secret is that Yehuda and Yosef should have approached each other simultaneously, because Yosef is righteous, NAMELY, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN and Yehuda is a king, NAMELY, MALCHUT, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Therefore, "Then Yehuda came near to him," because their coming together produced many benefits for the world, resulted in peace among all the tribes, peace between themselves--BETWEEN YEHUDA AND YOSEF--and caused the spirit of Ya'akov to revive, as it is written, "the spirit of Ya'akov their father revived" (Beresheet 45:27). Hence, their joining together was needed by all sides, above and below.

4. "Beautiful for situation"

Next, Rabbi Aba further clarifies the meaning of this important passage, relating it to Yosef, then to the Sfirot, and finally to "the Great King." In a beautiful manner, he shows how the secret of faith itself is embodied here.

The Relevance of this Passage

Ten dimensions [Sfirot] comprise our reality. The dimension known as Yesod neighbors our physical realm and it is the gateway through which all the spiritual energy of the Upper World flows into our world. Our connection to Yesod is strengthened by virtue of this passage, infusing our lives with tremendous amounts of positive energy.

32. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth: Mount Tzion, the uttermost parts of the north, the city of the Great King" (Tehilim 48:3). This verse is the secret of faith: "Beautiful for situation" is Yosef the Righteous, of whom scripture says, "And Yosef was good looking, and well favored" (Beresheet 39:6); he is "the joy of the whole earth," the gladness and joy above and below; "Mount Tzion, the uttermost parts of the north" is his portion (YOSEF'S PORTION), where the tabernacle of Shilo stands; "Mount Tzion" is Jerusalem, NAMELY, THE NUKVA; "the uttermost parts of the north" is assuredly above and below, FOR BOTH THE UPPER TEMPLE, THE NUKVA, AND THE LOWER TEMPLE ARE CONSIDERED TO BE OF THE ASPECT OF THE NORTH, NAMELY, THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT OF BINAH, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH.

33. "...the city of the Great King" is a place prepared for the Great King, the most high King residing over the Holy of Holies, from whom all Light, Blessings, and Joy comes, so that all faces shine and the Temple is blessed. When it is blessed, the whole world is also blessed.

5. Sixty breaths

Rabbis Yehuda and Yosi, later joined by Rabbi Elazar, discuss the meaning of King David and midnight prayer. They are joined by a "commoner," Chizkiyah, whose name means, "strengthened by The Creator." He clarifies the meaning of David praying after midnight, and

explores the grades of life and death, arriving at the profound understanding that it is through wisdom alone that everything in the world exists. We are introduced to the concept of the continually evolving nature of Heaven--and thus, to the continually evolving nature of perfection. Through a discussion of the Three Columns and some secrets of the Patriarchs, the rabbis return to King David, to the meaning and concept of his being alive in the present, and how such a miraculous event is possible.

The Relevance of this Passage

The mystical Light aroused during midnight prayer is invoked in our lives. This Light strengthens our soul and opens us to receive greater wisdom through spiritual learning and growth. Kabbalistic wisdom itself, including these very words, is also the sum and substance of spiritual Light. Therefore, each new lesson and each new insight makes us wiser and more pure.

34. Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yosi met in the village of Chanan. While they were sitting at the inn, a man came with a baggage-laden mule and entered the house. Rabbi Yehuda was then saying to Rabbi Yosi: We have learned that King David slept like a horse and had little sleep. If this is true, how did he wake up at midnight? The portion OF SIXTY BREATHS OF A HORSE'S SLEEP is very brief, so he would have awakened before even a third of the night was over.

35. He replied: When night fell, he used to sit with the princes of his house to execute justice and study the Torah, WHICH MEANS, THAT HE DID NOT GO TO SLEEP WHEN NIGHT FELL, BUT CLOSER TO MIDNIGHT. He then slept until midnight, when he woke and rose to worship his Master with songs and hymns.

36. The man interposed and asked: Is this what you think? This is the secret of the matter: King David is alive and exists forever and ever. King David was careful to avoid a foretaste of death; and because sleep is a sixtieth part of death, King David, whose domain is the Living, slept only sixty breaths. For up to sixty breaths less one, it is living; from then on, man tastes death, and the side of the impure spirit reigns over him.

37. King David guarded himself from tasting death, lest the side of the impure spirit obtain control over him. For sixty breaths minus one are the Secret of Supernal Life. The first sixty breaths are the supernal sixty breaths, whose secret is that life depends on them. From then downward, it is the secret of death.

38. Therefore King David would measure the night UNTIL MIDNIGHT, so as to remain alive, lest the foretaste of death dominate him. At midnight, David would be in his domain, IN HIS GRADE, WHICH IS LIFE AND EXISTENCE, BY WAKING UP AND UTTERING CHANTS AND HYMNS. For when midnight stirred and the Holy Crown, THE NUKVA, was awakened, David did not wish to be found connected to another domain, the domain of death.

39. When midnight comes Supernal Holiness is awakened, but man is asleep in his bed and does not awaken to regard the glory of his Master; he becomes attached to the secret of death and cleaves to another domain, TO THE OTHER SIDE. King David therefore always woke at midnight, careful of the glory of his Master, alive before the Living One, and he would never sleep long enough to taste death. Thus, he slept like the sixty breaths of a horse-sixty breaths LESS ONE.

40. Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yosi came and kissed him, FOR HE REVEALED A NEW EXPLANATION CONCERNING MIDNIGHT PRAYER. They asked him: What is your name? He replied: Chizkiyah (lit. 'strengthened of Hashem'). They said to him: May you be strengthened and may your study of the Torah be augmented. They sat down. Rabbi Yehuda said: Since you have started, tell us more of the Supernal Mysteries to which you have made reference.

41. He opened the discussion with the verse, "Hashem by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding (Heb. tevunah) He established the heavens..." (Mishlei 3:19). Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, He saw that it could not exist, FOR THE UNIVERSE WAS CREATED UNDER THE REIGN OF THE LEFT COLUMN, THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH WITHOUT CHASSADIM, AND CHOCHMAH CANNOT ILLUMINE WITHOUT CHASSADIM. THEREFORE IT COULD NOT EXIST until He created the Torah, THE

CENTRAL COLUMN CALLED 'ZEIR ANPIN', ALSO CALLED 'TORAH'. HE CAUSED THE TWO COLUMNS, RIGHT AND LEFT, TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN EACH OTHER, AND CHOCHMAH WAS INCLUDED WITHIN CHASSADIM. THEN CHOCHMAH ILLUMINATED, from the Torah--NAMELY, FROM THE CENTRAL COLUMN--all the laws issued by the Upper and Lower Worlds, which are supported by it. THIS IS THE MEANING OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI AND ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN: as it is written, "by wisdom founded the earth...." HE FOUNDED THE EARTH BY WISDOM, CLOTHING CHOCHMAH IN CHASSADIM, SO THAT THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH REMAINED IN THE WORLD. Through wisdom everything in the world exists, and everything derives from it, AS IT IS WRITTEN, "IN WISDOM HAVE YOU MADE THEM ALL" (TEHILIM 104:24).

42. Another explanation of "Hashem by wisdom founded the earth" is that the Upper World, TEVUNAH, was created only by Chochmah, and the Lower World, THE NUKVA, was created only by the lower Chochmah, CHOCHMAH CLOTHED BY THE NUKVA. Thus it seems that they were all issued from the upper and lower Chochmah. "...by understanding (Heb. tevunah), He established the heavens..." HE ASKS: What does it mean by "established"? HE ANSWERS: "...established" REFERS TO TEVUNAH, WHICH ESTABLISHES ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'HEAVEN', every day. They were not mended at one time; rather, He perfects them day by day.

43. This is the secret of the verse, "and the heavens are not clean in His sight" (Iyov 15:15). Could you think it a derogation of the heavens? On the contrary, it is to the advantage of the heavens: for it is because of the love and great passion that the Holy One, blessed be He (WHO IS TEVUNAH), bears for the heavens (ZEIR ANPIN), that He views them as not perfect enough. It is for the love of them and because of His desire to shine continuously upon them. HE EXPLAINS: The world to come, TEVUNAH, radiates scintillating light every day without cessation to illuminate them always. Therefore, they are "not clean in His sight." It does not say 'not clean,' but rather, "not clean in His sight." THIS INDICATES THAT, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE IN REALITY CLEAN, BECAUSE OF HIS DESIRE TO SHOWER ABUNDANCE UPON THEM, THEY ARE NOT CONSIDERED CLEAN TO HIM, AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED. Thus, THE SCRIPTURE READS, "by understanding He established the heavens."

44. HE ASKS: What are the heavens IN THE VERSE, "BY UNDERSTANDING HE ESTABLISHED THE HEAVENS"? HE REPLIS: They are the secret of the Patriarchs-CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. The secret of the Patriarchs is Ya'akov, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, TIFERET, who includes them all--AS THE CENTRAL COLUMN INCLUDES THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT, THE SECRET OF AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. For it is Ya'akov, the most splendid of the fathers, who causes THE NUKVA to shine on the world.

45. When he ascended to the world to come, THAT IS, ASCENDED AND CLOTHED YISRAEL AND SABA, CALLED 'THE WORLD TO COME', THE SECRET OF COVERED CHASSADIM, WHICH IS WHY THERE IS NO PLACE IN HIM FOR THE REVELATION OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH; a branch came out from him, beautiful to the sight, BY THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH, CALLED 'SIGHT' AND 'VISION'. And all the lights, BOTH CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM, radiated from it, as did the abundance and the anointing oil needed to illuminate the land, THE NUKVA. What is THIS BRANCH? It is Yosef, the Righteous, who gives abundance, THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, to the whole world, which is sustained by him, BY THE ILLUMINATION OF CHASSADIM. Therefore whatever the Holy One, blessed be He, does has meaning, and all is as it should be.

46. While they were talking, Rabbi Elazar came. When he saw them he said: Assuredly the Shechinah is here. What are you discussing? They told him what happened WITH THE MAN AND HIS WORDS. He said: He spoke well. HE NOW EXPLAINED ABOUT the sixty breaths. THE SIX HOURS BEFORE MIDNIGHT PERTAIN TO LIFE, both above IN THE UPPER WORLD WHERE THE SECRET OF THE CHEST-AND-ABOVE OF THE NUKVA IS, and below IN THIS WORLD. From then on, after midnight, there are sixty other breaths, which are CHESED-GVURAH-TIFERET-NETZACH-HOD-YESOD OF THE CHEST-AND-BELOW, all on the side of death, and the grade of death is upon them. They are called 'Dormita' ('sleep'), and all of them taste of death.

47. King David therefore cleaved to the sixty breaths of life, NAMELY, THE SIX HOURS BEFORE MIDNIGHT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF ABOVE THE CHEST, WHERE THE POWER OF JUDGMENT AND DEATH, WHICH IS IN THE CHEST, CANNOT REACH. But afterward, he slept not at all. This is the meaning of, "I will not give sleep to my eyes, slumber to my eyelids" (Tehilim 132:4). Thus THAT MAN spoke well, as David should be considered alive. He is on

the side of the living and not on the side of death. Then, they all joined together to study the Torah.

48. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse: "Hashem the Elohim of my salvation, when I cry in the night before you" (Tehilim 88:2). Come and behold: King David used to rise at midnight and study the Torah and delight the King and the Queen with songs and praises. This is the joy of Faith on the earth, for it is the praise of Faith, THE SHECHINAH, that is seen on earth.

49. For numerous holy angels joyously begin to sing above, praising at night on all sides, EVEN IN THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, FOR THEN THE NUKVA REIGNS, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "SHE RISES ALSO WHILE IT IS YET NIGHT" (MISHLEI 31:15). It is likewise below on earth, for the Holy One, blessed be He, takes pleasure in whoever on earth praises Him at night, and all the holy angels who praise the Holy One, blessed be He, listen to the man who praises THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, at night on earth. For this chanting increases the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, from below, and sings joyously in unison.

50. Come and behold: King David wrote, "Hashem the Elohim of my salvation," which means, when is HASHEM the Elohim of my salvation? He is my salvation by day, after I first sang to You by night. Then is He my salvation by day.

51. Come and behold: Whoever sings the praises of the Torah during the night before his Master is strengthened by day on the right side, WHICH IS CHESED. THIS MEANS THAT THE CHOCHMAH HE RECEIVED BY NIGHT THROUGH THE LEFT IS CLOTHED DURING THE DAY BY CHESED, THE RIGHT SIDE. For a thread of grace comes out from the right side. It is drawn upon him, and he is strengthened by it. David therefore said: "Hashem the Elohim of my salvation, when I cry in the night before you."

52. Thus, he said: "The dead cannot praise Yah" (Tehilim 115:17), because it is the living who should praise the Living, and not the dead, as it is written, "The dead cannot praise Yah." "But we will bless Yah" (Ibid.), for we are living and have no part of death. Chizkiah said: "The living, the living, he shall praise you, as I do" (Yeshayah 38:19), for the living has a connection with the Living. So is King David living, and he came near the One who lives forever. And whoever approaches THE ONE LIVING FOREVER, is living, as it is written: "But you that did cleave of Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4), and "And Bnayahu the son of Yehoyada, the son of a living man, of Kavtze'el" (II Shmuel 23:20).

6. "And you shall eat and be satisfied, and bless"

Chizkiyah resolves the apparent contradiction that exists in the scriptural injunction that we should not eat before the first prayer of the morning, and the injunction urging us to give the blessing only after the meal. This leads to greater appreciation of the weighty task that The Creator has taken on in providing his children with longevity and nourishment. We learn that the providing depends on Mazel (Eng. 'luck', here imbued with an astrological dimension), not merit--a complex and difficult mystery that is somewhat clarified here, leading to both a firmer grasp of the inherent mysteries that lie within the mystical union of Male and Female, and also to a clarification of the secrets contained within the vitally important act of Yosef and Yehuda approaching one another.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Hebrew word Mazel is usually translated as "luck", but it really means "sign"--as in the signs of the constellations. We are born into this world under a specific celestial influence, as determined by deeds in past lives. We can rise above any negative influences of these signs by evoking the Light through prayer, blessing, and meditation upon these mystical passages of the Zohar.

53. The Jew then continued with the verse, "And you shall eat and be satisfied, and bless Hashem your Elohim" (Devarim 8:10). HE ASKS: Do not we bless the Holy One, blessed be He, before eating? Indeed we should rise early in the morning to recite His praises in the proper order, before we greet any other in the world. It is also written, "You shall not eat anything with the blood" (Vayikra 19:26), WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED, AS it is

forbidden to eat before blessing one's Master. Yet now it is written, "And you shall eat and be satisfied, and bless," WHICH MEANS IT BEHOOVES ONE TO BLESS ONLY AFTER THE MEAL.

54. HE ANSWERS: The blessings we recite before eating are prayers for unity BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE, while those we recite after eating HAVE TWO PURPOSES--(1), to show proper satiation before the grade of faith, THE NUKVA, AND (2), to bless her properly, so that THE GRADE OF FAITH shall be well watered, blessed and filled with joy from the supernal life as much as needed, and thus will confer sustenance upon us.

55. For providing man's food is as heavy a task for the Holy One, blessed be He, as the cleaving of the Sea of Reeds (the Red Sea). Why? Because all nourishment of the world come from above. We have learned that children, longevity, and nourishment depend NOT UPON MERIT, but upon mazal. Therefore daily sustenance is a heavy task for Him, for it depends upon mazal, from whence children, longevity, and sustenance are derived. Daily sustenance is hard for Him, because one does not have them before being blessed BY MAZAL.

56. Similarly, arranging marriages is a heavy task for Him, and everything, CHILDREN AS WELL AS LONGEVITY AND SUSTENANCE, occurs because the firmament is a curtain that serves no purpose. All the more so CHILDREN, LIFE, AND SUSTENANCE, which abide above in another place. It therefore needs to be blessed TO RECEIVE FROM THENCE.

57. Come and behold: The arranging of marriages is hard for this grade, THE NUKVA, for when union occurs, WHICH BEGETS SOULS, all the souls emerge from the upper mazal, which is the river that flows FROM EDEN--NAMELY, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. And when there is a desire TO DRAW from below upward--TO WIT, TO DRAW CHOCHMAH, WHICH IS ONLY DRAWN FROM BELOW UPWARD--the souls soar TO THE NUKVA and become in this grade comprehensive of male and female together. They are then separated, so that each goes its appointed place. Later the grade finds it hard to reunite them--THE MALE AND THE FEMALE--as before, because they are only united through men's behavior, and everything depends on what is above.

58. Therefore marriages are as hard for Him to arrange as the cleaving of the Red Sea, for the Red Sea was cleaved to open high roads above that then opened and cleft ways and roads below.

59. Therefore everything depends on the high region, FOR THE NUKVA HAS NOTHING OF HERSELF AFTER SHE IS DIMINISHED, and we should bless her, and give her strength from above, so she will be blessed AND RECEIVE from above, FROM ZEIR ANPIN, and be well strengthened. Therefore it is written, "and bless Hashem," with the particle 'Et' before 'Hashem', FOR IT ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA CALLED 'ET'.

60. We should show before this place, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, satisfaction and shining faces, and to the Other Side, when it reigns in the world, it behooves us to show ourselves famished, for the grade OF THE OTHER SIDE is hunger, and we should look hungry before it instead of well-fed, because satiation does not rule over the world BECAUSE OF IT. It is therefore written, "And you shall eat and be satisfied, and bless Hashem your Elohim," AS WHEN HOLINESS REIGNS, THERE IS PLENTY IN THE WORLD. Rabbi Elazar said: Assuredly it is so, and so should it be THAT PLENTY ABOUNDS WITH THE RULE OF HOLINESS, AND FAMINE WITH THE REIGN OF THE OTHER SIDE.

61. Rabbi Yehuda said: Happy are the righteous, whose coming together brings peace into the world, for they know how to bring unison and approach each other to increase peace in the world. For until Yosef and Yehuda came near each other, there was no peace. Once they came near each other, peace increased in the world. Joy abounded above and below, when Yosef and Yehuda approached each other, and all the tribes joined Yosef. The coming together caused peace to abound in the world, as we have explained in relation to the verse, "Then Yehuda came near to him."

7. "And Yosef could not restrain himself"

We receive an introduction to the types of men who descended from Adam, and how each type can bring merit and benefit to the others--just as the beneficiary or "carrier" of charity gains merit in the same degree as the giver. This powerful analogy leads to further

discussion of the relationship between "Charity Carrier" and the analogous Sfirot that exist above our physical realm. To assist our understanding of its inherent mystery, unity is explored as it exists within a theme of mating--specifically the mating of the Holy One with Yisrael. In the illumination following this supreme Union, all can be blessed.

The Relevance of this Passage

When a man and woman join together in sexual union within the spiritual confines of marriage, their connection creates a stirring above: the Lower World embraces the Upper World and Divine Light fills all. But the man and woman must be pure of thought and joined by love. Their union must be accompanied by a consciousness to share pleasure for the purpose of creating Light for each other and the world.

62. "Then Yosef could not restrain himself before all them that stood by him ..." (Beresheet 45:1). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor" (Tehilim 112:9). Come and behold: The Holy One, blessed be He, created the world and made Adam ruler over it-to be king over all.

63. From man, four types of men branched out-some righteous and some wicked, some stupid and some wise. Of these, some were rich and some poor. They can bring merit and benefit to each other. The righteous can benefit the wicked BY CAUSING THEM TO REPENT THEIR SINS; the wise can benefit the foolish BY TEACHING THEM SENSE; the rich can benefit the poor BY SUPPORTING THEM IN THEIR NEED. Through these actions, man merits life everlasting and attaches himself to the Tree of Life. THEREFORE, THE SCRIPTURE READS, "HE HAS DISTRIBUTED FREELY, HE HAS GIVEN TO THE POOR." Moreover, this charity he dispenses stands forever, NAMELY, THE NUKVA ESTABLISHED BY IT IS CALLED 'EVER', as it is written, "and his charity endures for ever" (Tehilim 112:9).

64. "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor." Rabbi Elazar said: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, He established it upon one pillar named righteous, NAMELY, YESOD. The righteous is the support of the world; THAT IS, HE SUPPORTS THE NUKVA CALLED 'WORLD'. It is he who gives water, NAMELY, THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, and food, THE ILLUMINATION OF CHASSADIM, to all, as it is written, "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and branched into four streams" (Beresheet 2:10). THIS IS YESOD NAMED 'RIVER'.

65. In the verse, "and from thence it was parted," what is the meaning of the word 'parted'? HE ANSWERS: It is the food and drink from that river that the garden receives, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. Then drink is further distributed into the four directions of the universe, SO THAT ALL INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD RECEIVE WATER FROM HER AND NONE REMAINS THIRSTY. How many wait for food and drink from there, as it is written, "The eyes of all wait upon you; and you give them their food in due season" (Tehilim 145:15). Thus, the verse, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor," alludes to the righteous, YESOD, WHICH DISTRIBUTES AND GIVES ALL OF CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM, AND SUPPORTS ALL THE POOR OF THE WORLD. The verse, "and his charity endures for ever," refers to the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA CALLED 'CHARITY', which, because SHE RECEIVES EVERYTHING FROM YESOD, stands united in the secret of peace. THUS, SHE STANDS FOREVER. "The wicked man shall see it, and be vexed," (Tehilim 112:10) alludes to the kingdom of the idolatrous, MALCHUT OF THE OTHER SIDE, WHICH THEN ENVIES THE MALCHUT OF HOLINESS.

66. Come and behold: The kingdom of heaven, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, is the Temple. It shelters all the poor under the shadow of the Shechinah; the righteous. YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN is called 'charity collector', because he bestows sustenance upon everybody, NAMELY, THE POOR UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE SHECHINAH. Therefore the charity collectors receive as much a reward as those who gave them donations, BEING A CHARIOT TO YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'CHARITY COLLECTOR', WHICH INCLUDES ALL THE SFIROT ABOVE IT.

67. Come and behold: "Then Yosef could not restrain himself before all them that stood by him," who waited to receive food and drink from him. YESOD, CALLED 'YOSEF', COULD NOT RESTRAIN ITSELF FROM SHOWERING ABUNDANCE UPON THEM. IN THE VERSE, "And no man stood with him, while Yosef made himself known to his brethren," the words "with him"

allude to the congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, WITH WHOM NO ONE STOOD; "WHILE..." REFERS TO THE TIME OF MATING, AS MATING IS CALLED 'KNOWLEDGE'; "his brethren" are the other Chariots and Legions, of whom it is written, "For my brethren and companions' sakes" (Tehilim 122:8), BECAUSE HE MATED WITH THE NUKVA SO HE COULD GIVE THEM ABUNDANCE. WE LEARN FROM THE VERSE THAT "WHILE YOSEF MADE HIMSELF KNOWN"--WHEN YOSEF UNITED WITH THE SHECHINAH--HE DID IT FOR HIS BROTHERS' SAKES, SINCE "TO" MEANS "FOR THE SAKE OF." Another explanation of "And no man stood with him" concerns the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, approached the congregation of Yisrael to mate with her. The verse, "while Yosef made himself known to his brethren," refers to the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, joined Yisrael, THAT IS, WHEN THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WAS UNITED WITH YISRAEL, "NO MAN STOOD" OF THE OTHER NATIONS "WITH HIM," WHEN HE MATED WITH THE NUKVA. For they alone received THE ILLUMINATION OF UNION, without connection to the other idolatrous nations. Hence it is written, "On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly" (Bemidbar 29:35), for at that time the Holy One, blessed be He, is united with Yisrael alone, of whom it is written, "for my brethren and companions' sakes..."

68. Rabbi Yisa continued: Of the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, raises the congregation of Yisrael from the dust AT THE TIME OF REDEMPTION and wishes to take vengeance on the idolatrous nations, it is written, "And of the peoples there was no man with me" (Yeshayah 63:3). As it is written, "And no man stood with him," and "and he bore them and carried them all the days of old" (Ibid. 9).

69. "Then Yosef could not restrain himself" (Beresheet 45:1). Rabbi Chizkiyah quoted, "A song of ascents To you I lift up my eyes, O You Who dwells in the heaven" (Tehilim 123:1). This verse has already been explained, yet come and behold: It is written here, "To You I lift up my eyes;" and elsewhere, "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains" (Tehilim 121:1). WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? The one is above and the other below. HE EXPLAINED: "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains" above, TO ZEIR ANPIN, to draw blessings from the Supernal Mountains above ON THE NUKVA, AS IN THE SECRET OF 'THE MOUNTAINS ARE NONE OTHER THAN THE PATRIARCHS,' WHO ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, from whom blessings are drawn upon the congregation of Yisrael. "To You I lift up my eyes," FROM DOWN BELOW IN THE NUKVA, is to yearn and wait for the blessings that come down FROM ZEIR ANPIN TO THE NUKVA.

70. "You who dwells in the heavens" (Tehilim 123:1). HE ASKS: IF IT REFERS TO THE NUKVA, WHY DOES IT SAY "IN THE HEAVENS," WHICH ARE ZEIR ANPIN? HE REPLIED: Because all the strength, power, and support OF THE NUKVA is in heaven, SHE RECEIVES THEM FROM ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'HEAVEN'. For when the Yovel (Jubilee), BINAH, opens the springs of all the gates-THE ABUNDANCE OF THE FIFTY GATES OF BINAH-they are all in heaven, ZEIR ANPIN. And when heaven receives all the lights from the Yovel (Jubilee), it nourishes and feeds the congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, through a certain righteous One, YESOD.

71. Because YESOD is aroused toward her, many stand on all sides to drink and be blessed from there, TO RECEIVE FROM THE ILLUMINATION OF THE UNION, as it is written, "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from EI" (Tehilim 104:21). She then ascends TO MATE in utmost secrecy, as is proper, and receives from her husband delicacies that she deserves. And all those on all sides WHO WAIT TO RECEIVE FROM HER remain alone, AND DO NOT RISE WITH THE NUKVA, as it is written, "And no man stood with him," and, "and he cried, 'Cause every man to go out from me.'" Only after she receives delicacies from her husband, NAMELY, AFTER MATING, is everybody given food and drink, as it is written, "they gave drink to every wild beast: the wild asses quench their thirst" (Ibid. 11).

8. "Why have you dealt ill"

Moshe and Eliyahu both said to The Creator, "Why have you brought evil?" This indicates the power of the evil side over the people of the covenant. We learn that the Prophet Eliyahu did not die, and continues to act as messenger to the people of the covenant to this present day. Neither Moshe nor Eliyahu died, we're told, but were instead brought directly into heaven immediately after shedding their bodies. The rabbis refer to a particular strength acquired by the soul when it is confronted by the powerful desire existing between man and women, and how, more than any other human, the soul of Eliyahu was on the side of the male.

The Relevance of this Passage

The people of the covenant are endowed with the most intense desire to receive. They can bring more Light to this world than all other nations combined, but they can bring also more darkness if they are ruled by their Evil Inclination. The strength to both recognize and subdue our negative impulses is impressed into our soul. We further receive the purifying Light of Moshe and Eliyahu, whose influences help us rise above the desires of our physical body. We touch the divine realm of immortality and infuse our lives with this sacred and eternal energy.

72. Rabbi Yosi opened a discussion of Eliyahu with the verse, "And he cried to Hashem, and said: 'Hashem my Elohim, have You also brought evil upon the widow with whom I lodge, by slaying her son?'" (I Melachim 17:20). Come and behold: There were two who said harsh words to the Holy One, blessed be He-Moshe and Eliyahu. Moshe asked: "Why have You dealt ill (lit, 'evil') with this people?" (Shemot 5:22), and Eliyahu answered, "have You also brought evil...by slaying her son?" They both said the same thing.

73. HE ASKS: Why DID THEY BOTH SAY, "WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT EVIL?" HE ANSWERS: Because permission was given to the Other Side to rule over Yisrael. MOSHE SAID "dealt evil", which means gave permission to the Other Side of evil to reign upon them. Eliyahu said "brought evil," WHICH ALSO MEANS THAT you allowed the Other Side to take his soul. This is why he said "brought evil." All is one mystery-"BROUGHT EVIL" IS THE SECRET OF GIVING SWAY TO THE OTHER SIDE CALLED 'EVIL'.

74. Come and behold: Eliyahu said, "have You also brought evil upon the widow with whom I lodge", because the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Eliyahu, "behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain you" (Shemot 5:9). Whoever nourishes and sustains the needy, especially in days of famine, is united with and cleaves to the Tree of Life, and draws life unto himself and his children, as has already been explained. Now, Eliyahu said: Whoever sustains one soul in the world merits life and merits to be united with the Tree of Life. Yet now the tree of death, the evil side, has power over the widow, whom You commanded to sustain me. Hence HE SAID, "have You brought evil."

75. HE ASKS: What if you say that no evil is brought on man by the Holy One, blessed be He. HE ANSWERS, Come and behold: When a man walks to the right, the Holy One, blessed be He, always protects him, and the Other Side cannot have mastery over him. Evil is subdued before him and cannot rule. When the protection of the Holy One, blessed be He, is removed because he cleaved to evil, then evil sees him unprotected, obtains power, and comes to destroy him. Then it is given permission to take away his soul.

76. Moshe said: "why have You dealt ill," because the evil side was given permission to reign over Yisrael, who became its slaves. Another explanation of "why have You dealt ill" is that he saw many FROM YISRAEL die and be given to the side of evil.

77. Come and behold: When good, the right, is stirred, then gladness, goodness, and blessings abide, all in secrecy, as has already been explained in connection with THE SONS OF YA'AKOV, who said 'Blessed be the name of his kingdom for ever and ever' in a whisper. There is secrecy because union is then carried out properly. THUS IT IS CLEAR WHY YOSEF SAID: AT THE TIME OF UNION, "CAUSE EVERY MAN TO GO OUT FROM ME"--AS UNION HAS TO BE PERFORMED IN SECRECY.

78. Rabbi Chiya asked: How could Eliyahu, who, once he decreed the Holy One, blessed be He, executed such as the one that heaven will not let dew or rain fall, be afraid of Izevel, who threatened him with the words, "and more also, if I make not your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time" (I Melachim 19:2). How could he take fright and immediately run for his life?

79. Rabbi Yosi replied: It has been explained that the righteous do not wish to trouble their Master, where harm is obvious to the eye. Shmuel, for example, asked, "How can I go? If Shaul hears it, he will kill me. And Hashem said: Take a heifer with you ..." (I Shmuel 16:2). For the righteous do not wish to trouble their Master about obvious damage. Eliyahu, too, when he saw danger, did not wish to bother his Master.

80. He said to him, I have heard here that scripture does not say of Eliyahu, 'he feared (Heb. vayira) and went for his life,' but rather, "when he saw (Heb. vayar) that" (I Melachim 19, 3), which means he saw something. What did he see? He saw that the Angel of Death has been following him these many years, yet he was not delivered into his hands. And now he "went for his life (lit. 'Nefesh')," which means that he went to the source of the sustenance of the Nefesh, which is the Tree of Life, to cleave to it, SO THE ANGEL OF DEATH WOULD NO LONGER FOLLOW HIM.

81. Come and behold: It is written everywhere else "to his Nefesh," yet here it is written, "for his Nefesh." I have heard a secret from Rabbi Shimon, who said that all the souls in the world come from the same river, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. They are all received by the Bundle of Life, THE NUKVA, and the female conceives from the male when the two sides are both desirous-the female of the male, AND THE MALE OF THE FEMALE. When the male has GREATER passion than the female, the souls are of greater endurance, because everything depends on the desire and passion of the Tree of Life, ZEIR ANPIN. Eliyahu, who came from that passion OF THE MALE more than other people, endured AND DID NOT DIE.

82. It is therefore written "for his Nefesh", instead of "to his Nefesh," for to (Heb. et) implies the female, THE NUKVA CALLED 'ET', BUT 'FOR' ALLUDES TO THE MALE. You might say THAT IT IS WRITTEN, "for the woman He said" (Beresheet 3:16), WHO IS A FEMALE. HE REPLIED: It includes male and female, for when THE FEMALE is included within the male, then it is written, "for the woman He said," whereas "to the woman" indicates the female alone, not included with the male. Similarly, "for his Nefesh" indicates the male alone, whereas "to his Nefesh" indicates the female alone. Because Eliyahu is of the side of the male more than all other people in the world, he endured more than the others and did not die as did the other inhabitants of the world. For he comes from the Tree of Life and is not made of dust AS ARE THE REST OF MEN. He therefore ascended and did not die as do other people, as it is written, "and Eliyahu went up by a storm of wind into heaven" (II Melachim 2:11).

83. Come and behold the verse: "...a chariot of fire, and horses of fire" (I Melachim 2:11). The spirit shed the body, and he did not die the way of other men. He remained a holy angel like other sacred supernal beings, carrying messages in the world like an angel. It has already been explained that the miracles performed by the Holy One, blessed be He, are carried out by him.

84. Come and behold the verse: "...and he requested for himself (lit. 'to his Nefesh') that he might die" (I Melachim 19:4), whereas previously it is written, "and went for his life (lit. 'for his Nefesh')" (Ibid.), which we have already explained alluded to his endurance. Here it is written, "to his Nefesh to die," to indicate the tree where death dwells, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "HER FEET GO DOWN TO DEATH" (MISHLEI 5:5). There the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to him, as it is written, "Go out and stand upon the mountain" (I Melachim 19:11), followed by the words, "and after the earthquake a fire; but Hashem was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice," which alludes to the innermost place, from where all lights radiate.

85. It is written, "And when Eliyahu heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle...And, behold, there came a voice to him, and said: What are you doing here, Eliyahu? And he said: I have been very jealous" (Mishlei 5:5). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "How long will you be jealous for me." You have closed the door so that death will never have power over you and the world cannot tolerate your presence with My children, WHOM YOU ACCUSE. He answers, "because the children of Yisrael have forsaken your covenant" (Ibid. 14). He said: Upon your life, wherever people will observe the Holy Covenant, THAT IS, CIRCUMCISION, you shall be present.

86. Come and behold what Eliyahu caused by his words. It is written, "Yet I will leave seven thousand in Yisrael, all the knees that have not bowed to the Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him" (Mishlei 5:18). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, 'From now on, the world cannot endure you along with my children, BECAUSE YOU BRING ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THEM.' "...and Elisha the son of Shafat of Avel-mechola shall you anoint to be prophet in your place" (Ibid. 16). Thus, there will be another prophet for my children, and you shall go to your place.

87. Come and behold: Any man who is jealous for the Holy One, blessed be He, is not subject to the power of the Angel of Death as are other men. Instead, peace is upon him, as was said of Pinchas: "Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace" (Bemidbar 25:12).

9. "And he fell on his brother Binyamin's neck and wept"

The neck is like the Tower of David: it is not of this world, but rather of the celestial Jerusalem. Yosef weeps because he foresaw the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the tribes of Yisrael. He is able to see such things because the Holy Spirit dwells in him -- although it does not dwell with his brothers. The destruction of the great Temple darkens the whole world, we learn. This was the painful foreknowledge Yosef was obliged to carry with him.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our planet contains many spiritual energy centers. These serve as portals through which the supernal Light of the Upper Worlds flows into our dimension. Israel, we are told, is the energy center of the entire planet. The city of Jerusalem is the energy source of Israel. The Holy Temple is the primal source of energy for Jerusalem. And the Holy of Holies is the Fountainhead of spiritual energy for the Temple. Reading this passage connects us to Jerusalem, the Temple, and ultimately to the Holy of Holies. This ensures that all our prayers, deeds, and meditations draw their appropriate Light from this wellspring of spiritual energy.

88. "And he fell on his brother Binyamin's neck and wept; and Binyamin wept on his neck..." Rabbi Yitzchak said: It has been already explained that he wept for the first Temple and for the second Temple--THAT WILL BE BUILT ON BINYAMIN'S PORTION AND BE DESTROYED.

89. He opened the discussion with the verse, "Your neck is like the Tower of David built with turrets, on which there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men" (Shir Hashirim 4:4). HE ASKS: What is the "Tower of David?" It is the Tower of David IN JERUSALEM that was built by David, NAMELY, THAT STANDS inside Jerusalem. Yet "the Tower of David" IN THE SCRIPTURE IS NOT THIS "TOWER OF DAVID," BUT is the celestial Jerusalem--NAMELY, THE NUKVA--about which it is written, "The name of Hashem is a strong tower: the righteous runs into it, and is set up on high" (Mishlei 18:10). HE ASKS: Who "is set up on high"-THE RIGHTEOUS OR THE TOWER? HE ANSWERS: the tower is, for into it the righteous (YESOD) runs.

90. "Your neck" is the Lower Temple, WHICH RESEMBLES THE TOWER OF DAVID, WHICH IS THE NUKVA AND IS SO CALLED because it is beautifully built, like the neck. As the neck symbolizes the beauty of the whole body, so the Temple symbolizes the beauty of the whole world.

91. The phrase, "built with turrets (Heb. talpiot)" means a hill on which all the children of the world look TO PRAISE AND TO PRAY. It has been explained that the word 'talpiot' consists of the letters Tel-Piot (lit. 'a mound of mouths'). It is a mound which all the mouths of the world praise and pray.

92. The phrase, "on which there hang a thousand bucklers", (ibid.) refers to the thousand reconstructions fixed upon it, THAT IS, ON THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH HINTED AT BY THE NUMBER ONE THOUSAND. AND "all shields of mighty men" are called thus because they come from the side of harsh judgment.

93. As all a woman's jewels hang round her neck, so do all ornaments of the world hang about and dwell within the Temple. It has already been explained that the verse, "We are pursued to our necks" (Eichah 5:5) alludes to the Temple, which is the neck and beauty of the world. "We are pursued to our necks; WE LABOR, AND HAVE NO REST," that labored building it twice--THE FIRST TEMPLE AND THE SECOND TEMPLE--"and have no rest," for we were not allowed any. The Temples were destroyed and not rebuilt.

94. As when the neck is destroyed the whole body perishes, when the Temple was destroyed and darkened, the whole world became dark too, and the sun, heaven, earth, and stars did not shine.

95. For that reason-FOR THE TWO TEMPLES THAT WERE DESTROYED-Yosef cried. After he wept for this, he wept for the tribes that went into exile. For shortly after the Temple was destroyed, all the tribes were sent into exile and dispersed among the nations, as it is written, "And he kissed all his brethren, and wept on them," meaning, on account of their GOING INTO EXILE.

96. He wept for everything-for the Temple that was twice destroyed and for his brothers, the ten tribes, who went into exile and were scattered among the nations. "...and after that his brethren talked with him," not 'wept'. He wept because HE SAW the Holy Spirit come upon him; but they did not weep, because the Holy Spirit did not dwell upon them--THEY DID NOT SEE IT.

10. "And the report was heard in Pharaoh's house"

The Rabbis comment on the role of the voice in prayer. The hidden relationship between voice and Sfirot is explained by the fact that an inner voice can be heard, just as an outer one can--but the inner voice relates to the Sfirah of Zeir Anpin in a manner the heard voice does not. There are, we learn, many different voices, and those including the letter Vav ?, are heard differently from those without it. The rabbis conclude that when The Creator raises up the voice that is now without the Vav, the People shall come home from their long exile to worship Him at Jerusalem's holy mountain.

The Relevance of this Passage

Human speech is intimately tied to the Divine. The voice can summon forth both dark and Light forces. Different words and blessings resonate with the numerous supernal worlds that dwell on high, each realm bringing forth a particular ray of Divine Light to illuminate our existence. The ancient Kabbalists composed words and prayers that would radiate the brightest of Light in this world. This passage helps us stimulate the Light that shines in all supernal worlds. It inspires us to use our outer and inner voice to produce only positive energy.

97. "...and the report (lit. 'voice') was heard in Pharaoh's house." Rabbi Aba began the discussion with the verse, "My soul longs, indeed, it faints for the courts of Hashem: my heart and my flesh cry out from the living El" (Tehilim 84:3). Come and behold: When a man prays before his Master, he should first recite his daily blessings, and say his prayers at the proper times.

98. In the morning, he is to be united with the right of the Holy One, blessed be He, WHICH IS CHESED. At Minchah (the afternoon prayer) he is to be united with the left OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. It behooves man to pray daily, so as to be united with the Holy One, blessed be He, as has already been explained. When he prays before his Master, he must not speak out loud, for whoever speaks out loud will find his prayer is not accepted.

99. Why? Because the prayer is not an audible voice (Heb. kol), nor is the audible voice a prayer. What is then a prayer? It is a different voice that is attached to the voice that is heard. What is the voice that is heard? It is Kol spelled with the letter Vav, whereas the voice attached TO THE VOICE THAT IS HEARD is kol without the letter Vav.

100. Thus, a man should never speak out loud when he prays, but pray in a whisper, WHICH IS AN ASPECT OF THE NUKVA, THE SECRET OF PRAYER. BY OUR PRAYERS WE UNITE THE STILL VOICE WITH ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS THE AUDIBLE VOICE. This prayer is always accepted, BECAUSE IT IS DESIROUS OF BEING UNITED WITH ZEIR ANPIN. This is learned from the words, "and the voice was heard", spelled without the letter Vav, in which the words "is heard" MEANS IT WAS ACCEPTED. This is a prayer said in a whisper, as is written of Chanah, "but her voice was not heard" (I Shmuel 1:13). This is the prayer that the Holy One, blessed be He, accepts-a prayer that is made willingly and intentionally, and is properly performed by a man concerned with the unity of his Master every day in the proper manner.

101. Rabbi Elazar said: A secret voice is the supernal voice, NAMELY, THE VOICE IN BINAH, from which all voices are derived. But a voice without the letter Vav is the prayer below, NAMELY, THE NUKVA, about to rise and be elevated to the Vav, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, and be joined with him--TO RECEIVE CHASSADIM FROM HIM.

102. Come and behold: "and the voice was heard." This is the voice without the letter Vav, NAMELY, THE NUKVA WHEN SEPARATED FROM ZEIR ANPIN-the voice that weeps for the first Temple and the second Temple. It is "heard" as it is written, "A voice was heard in Rama" (Yirmeyah 31:14). HE ASKS: What is "in Rama (lit. 'on high')?" HE REPLIED: It is the Supernal World, the world to come, BINAH. This is derived from "between Rama and Bet-el" (Shoftim 4:5), which means, "from everlasting to everlasting (lit. 'from world to world')." THAT IS, FROM BINAH CALLED 'RAMA', THE SUPERNAL WORLD, TO THE NUKVA CALLED 'BET- EL', THE LOWER WORLD. HERE TOO, "in Rama" refers to the Supernal World, BINAH, for when it was heard in Rama, then it is written, "And on that day did Hashem Elohim Tzva'ot call to weeping, and to mourning" (Yeshayah 22:12).

103. "...and the voice was heard high" above, THAT IS, THE NUKVA WENT HIGH UP TO THE LEFT COLUMN OF BINAH, AND THEN BOTH TEMPLES WERE DESTROYED. Why WERE THEY DESTROYED? Because the letter Vav was gone from THE NUKVA, FOR IT CLOTHED THE RIGHT OF BINAH, AND THE NUKVA CLOTHED THE LEFT OF BINAH. THUS THEY WERE SEPARATED FROM END TO END. Then it is written, "Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted for her children because he is not" (Yirmeyah 31:14). ALL HER LIGHTS WERE STOPPED, AND BECAUSE SHE THEREFORE HAD NOTHING TO GIVE TO HER CHILDREN, THEY WENT INTO EXILE. HE ASKS: WHY DOES THE VERSE READ, "because he is not," instead of, 'they are not'--THAT IS, IN THE PLURAL. HE REPLIED: It is written, "he is not," as we explained, because her husband is not with her. If her husband, ZEIR ANPIN, had been with her, she would have been comforted for her children, HER LIGHT WOULD HAVE NOT BEEN STOPPED, and her children would not be in exile. But because "he is not" with her, she is not comforted for her children, and they were removed from her.

104. Come and behold: "in Pharaoh's house" alludes to on high, BINAH, which is the house from which the lights and candles are revealed. It alludes TO THE SFIROT OF THE NUKVA CALLED 'CANDLES'. All that was hidden, is there revealed. THEREFORE BINAH IS CALLED 'THE HOUSE OF PHARAOH'. The Holy One, blessed be He, then brings out all the lights and candles to shine on the voice spelled without the letter Vav, WHICH IS THE NUKVA.

105. Come and behold: When the Holy One, blessed be He, raises this voice, THE NUKVA, from the dust, it will join the Vav, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. Then all that was lost TO YISRAEL at the time of exile will be returned to them. They will feast upon the supernal lights added to them from the Supernal World, as it is written, "And it shall come to pass on that day, that a great shofar shall be blown, and they who were lost in the land of Ashur, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, shall come and worship Hashem in the holy mountain at Jerusalem" (Yeshayah 27:13).

11. "Take wagons...for your little ones"

The rabbis explore the meaning of the separation of The Creator and the Shechinah--the female Divine presence--from the people of Yisrael. This parallels the separation of Yosef from Ya'akov. Ya'akov's realization that Yosef is alive continues this parallel, revealing what will come about when The Creator and the Shechinah reunite with the people.

The Relevance of this Passage

The energy summoned forth through meditation upon these Hebrew letters hastens the ultimate unification of the Shechinah and The Creator--the souls of man and the Divine. In addition, we arouse the Light of protection and joy that emanates from the Shechinah.

106. "Now, you are commanded, do this: take wagons out of the land of Egypt" (Beresheet 45:19). Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion with the verse, "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you that love her, rejoice for joy with her" (Yeshayah 66:10). Come and behold: When the Temple was destroyed and Yisrael were exiled from their land because of their sins, the Holy One, blessed be He, was gone up high and did not notice the destruction of the Temple or His exiled people. The Shechinah then went into exile with them.

107. When He descended, He saw that his House was burnt. He looked for His people and behold, they were in exile. He asked for the Lady, NAMELY, THE SHECHINAH, and learned that she was exiled. Then, it is written, "And on that day did Hashem Elohim Tzva'ot call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth" (Yeshayah 22:12). And OF THE SHECHINAH, it is written, "Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for

the husband of her youth" (Yoel 1:8), because "he is gone," NAMELY, HER HUSBAND. For he went away from her, and they are apart.

108. Even heaven and earth themselves mourned, as it is written, "I clothe the heavens with blackness and I make sackcloth their covering" (Yeshayah 50:3). All the high angels mourned for Her, as it is written, "Behold, the mighty ones shall cry outside; the angels of peace weep bitterly" (Yeshayah. 33:7). The sun and moon were in mourning, their lights darkened, as it is written, "the sun shall be darkened in his going forth" (Yeshayah 13:10). Everyone high and low wept for Her and mourned, because the Other Side reigned over Her, on the Holy Land.

109. He opened the discussion with the verse, "you son of man, thus says Hashem Elohim to the land of Yisrael: An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land" (Yechezkel 7:2). This verse contains a deep mystery. What does "to the land of Yisrael: an end" mean? Does it mean an end to the land of Yisrael? HE ANSWERS: Surely this is true, as we have learned. There is an end on the right and an end on the left. HE EXPLAINED: An end on the right, as it is written, "at the end of days (lit. 'right')" (Daniel 12:13), and an end on the left, as it is written, "He puts an end to darkness, and searches out all perfection" (Iyov 28:3). This is the end of all flesh, as we have learned.

110. The end on the right is written of in the verse, "to the land of Yisrael an end." "...the end is come UPON THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE LAND" refers to the end on the left. The end on the right is the end through the Good Inclination, and the end on the left is the end through the Evil Inclination, which happened when, through the increase in sins, it was decreed that the evil kingdom would be given permission to rule and destroy His house and Temple, as it is written, "Thus says Hashem Elohim! An evil, a singular evil, behold, is come" (Yechezkel 7:5).

111. Therefore there was mourning above and below, for reign was given to the end of the left. Thus, because the Kingdom of Holiness, the kingdom of heaven, was humbled and the kingdom of evil prevailed, it behooves any man to mourn with it, THE HOLY KINGDOM, and be abased with it. Also, when the Holy Kingdom rises, and the world rejoices, he shall also rejoice with her, as it is written, "rejoice for joy with it, all you that did mourn for her" (Yeshayah 66:10).

112. Come and behold: It is written of Egypt "a very fair heifer" (Yirmeyah 46:20), and it is because of the secret of this heifer that Yisrael were under its rule for many years--THAT IS, FOR THE 210 YEARS THEY LIVED IN EGYPT. Because Yisrael would eventually rule over it in the future, they were now given a hint of this IN THE VERSE, "TAKE wagons (also: 'heifers') OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT FOR YOUR LITTLE ONES..."

113. Rabbi Elazar said: Yosef reminded Ya'akov, about breaking the heifer's neck that he went away from him when they were studying this text. It has been explained that the ritual of the heifer was carried out when a man was found slain, but the killer was not known. The heifer is then offered to pacify the evil spirits, so they would not recognize him or rule over THE LAND.

114. Come and behold: All men die by the Angel of Death, except someone who is killed by other men before the time has arrived FOR THE ANGEL OF DEATH to take hold of him and TAKE HIS SOUL, for the Angel of Death does not have dominion over man until he is given permission FROM ABOVE.

115. Therefore the Angel of Death has the right to rule over him, as it is written, "and it be not known who has slain him" (Devarim 21:1). He also has permission, since it is unknown WHO HAS SLAIN THE VICTIM, to accuse that place, THE NUKVA. Therefore "the elders of that city shall take a heifer" (Ibid. 3), in order to remove judgment from that place and to fortify it against the Accuser's power, so it shall be saved from him.

116. Come and behold: When Yosef parted from his father, he was sent without escort or without food, and whatever happened then happened. When Ya'akov said: "Yosef is without doubt torn in pieces" (Bereshheet 37:33), he added, "For I will go down to my son mourning into Sh'ol" (Ibid. 35), for I caused him TO BE KILLED, HAVING SENT HIM WITHOUT ESCORT. I CANNOT SAY, "OUR HANDS HAVE NOT SHED THIS BLOOD" (DEVARIM 21:7) CONCERNING THE BREAKING OF THE HEIFER NECK, WHICH MEANS, "WE HAVE NOT SENT HIM

UNESCORTED." I also knew his brothers hated him, yet I sent him TO THEM. YOSEF reminded him OF THAT BY SENDING THE WAGONS (BOTH 'WAGONS' AND 'HEIFERS' ARE WRITTEN 'AGALOT' IN HEBREW).

117. Rabbi Yehuda responded that the wagons were sent by the command of Pharaoh, as it is written, "and Yosef gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh" (Beresheet 45:21). HOW CAN YOU THEN SAY THAT YOSEF GAVE THEM A HINT BY SENDING THE WAGONS? RABBI ELAZAR replied: It is derived from the exact meaning of the verse, "Now you are commanded, do this," WHICH IS REDUNDANT, AS IT WAS PREVIOUSLY WRITTEN, "AND PHARAOH SAID TO YOSEF, SAY TO YOUR BRETHREN..." YET "Now you are commanded" has a specific meaning and is therefore spelled with the letter Hei AT THE END. THIS TEACHES US THAT ITS EXACT MEANING IS that Yosef asked him TO GIVE HIM WAGONS. Thus, "and Yosef gave them wagons (also: 'heifers'), according to the commandment of Pharaoh," FOR IT WAS YOSEF WHO GAVE, WHO ASKED OF PHARAOH. WHY DID HE DEMAND WAGONS OF PHARAOH? BECAUSE HE WISHED TO REMIND HIS FATHER OF THE PASSAGE OF THE BREAKING OF THE HEIFER NECK. Ya'akov therefore did not believe it until he saw the wagons AND TOOK THE HINT, as it is written, "and when he saw the wagons which Yosef had sent to carry him, the spirit of Ya'akov their father revived."

118. Rabbi Shimon said: First it is written, "and the spirit of Ya'akov their father revived," and then it is written, "and Yisrael said: It is enough; Yosef my son is still alive." WHY DOES THE VERSE START WITH YA'AKOV AND FINISH WITH YISRAEL? HE REPLIED: First the Torah calls him Ya'akov because the Shechinah took part in the vow THAT THE TRIBES TOOK NOT TO REVEAL THAT Yosef was sold. THE SHECHINAH WAS THEREFORE GONE FROM YA'AKOV ALL THAT TIME. Now that the Shechinah has come back to him, it is written, "and the spirit of Ya'akov their father revived," which is the secret of the Shechinah, CALLED 'THE SPIRIT OF YA'AKOV'. After THE SHECHINAH was established in him, the high grade went from the grade of Ya'akov to the grade Yisrael. From this we learn that the high grade is not awakened above until there is an awakening below. For here it is written, "and the spirit of Ya'akov their father revived first," WHICH REFERS TO THE AWAKENING BELOW, and then it is written, "and Yisrael said," WHICH IS THE AWAKENING ABOVE.

119. "And Elohim spoke to Yisrael in the visions (Heb. mar'ot) of the night" (Beresheet 46:2): The word mar'ot is spelled without the letter Vav, WHICH MAKES IT SINGULAR, THUS ALLUDING TO THE GRADE OF THE NUKVA CALLED 'VISION', AND ALSO 'NIGHT'. Come and behold: The verse, "and offered sacrifices to the Elohim of his father Yitzchak" (Beresheet 46:1), is written first to awaken the left CALLED 'YITZCHAK' in the secret of love TO THE NUKVA, NUPTIAL LOVE THAT IS DRAWN FROM THE LEFT. Then "Elohim spoke to Yisrael in the visions of the night,"WHICH MEANS THAT HE WAS REVEALED TO HIM, by the grade we mentioned, THE NUKVA, called "visions of the night."

120. "And he said: I am the El, the Elohim of your father." HE ASKS: Why DID HE MENTION HIS NAME? HE ANSWERS, Because the holy side above is wont to do so. But the side of defilement does not mention the name of the Holy One, blessed be He. Yet every side of holiness is mentioned by name. "I will go down with you into Egypt" (Beresheet 46:4). From here we understand that the Shechinah accompanied him into exile, and wherever Yisrael went into exile, the Shechinah went with them, as has already been explained.

121. Come and behold. HE ASKS: How many wagons were there? HE REPLIED: There were six, like the "six covered wagons" (Bemidbar 7:3). According to another explanation there were 60. All is one secret, FOR SIX ALLUDE TO THE SIX SFIROT-CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD-AND SIXTY ALSO ALLUDES TO THE SIX SFIROT, EACH OF WHICH INCLUDED TEN, WHICH TOTALS SIXTY. HE COMMENTED, First it is written, "the wagons which Yosef had sent" (Beresheet 45:27) and then, "the wagons which Pharaoh had sent" (Beresheet 46:5). HE ANSWERS, All the wagons that Yosef sent were in proper number, and those Pharaoh sent were supernumerary, not part of the secret or part of the reckoning.

122. All the wagons reached YA'AKOV-THE WAGONS YOSEF SENT AND THE ADDITIONAL ONES PHARAOH SENT. It is therefore written, "which Yosef had sent" and "which Pharaoh had sent." When Yisrael will come out from exile, it is written, "And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an offering to Hashem" (Yeshayah 66:20), FOR THEN ALL THE NATIONS WILL BRING AN OFFERING TO HASHEM LIKE PHARAOH DID.

12. "And Yosef made ready his chariot"

The rabbis continue to expound the nature of separation and its ultimate ending. We see the many ways of the Holy One, and we come to understand that His actions in Pharaoh's Egypt are fully explicable through the principles of Kabbalah, as is the potent image of the chariots evoked in the Torah's story. The rabbis conclude this section with Yisrael taking possession of the land of Goshen--an act seen as exemplifying the unworthiness of the Egyptians, who failed in their fight for the land.

The Relevance of this Passage

We have free will to choose our path in life. Two paths are always available ? the path of darkness, personified by Egypt, and the path of Light, denoted by the people of Yisrael and by Torah. We have no control or influence over the consequences and rewards that accompany these paths. We can, however, choose the path that we walk. Our self-destructive impulses impel us to constantly choose the negative path, and the negative energy blanketing our world often blinds us to the folly of our choices. The Light emitted by these verses helps brighten the spiritual landscape, revealing the doorways through which we must pass in order to attain peace, prosperity, and fulfillment.

123. "And Yosef made ready his chariot." Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion with the verse, "And over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of a firmament, like the color of the terrible ice, stretched out over their heads above" (Yechezkel 1:22). This verse has already been explained, yet come and behold: There is an animal (lit. 'living creature') above another animal, and a holy animal standing over the heads of the other animals.

124. There is an animal over all the other animals. It rules over them all, for when it gives OF ITS STRENGTH and shines upon them, they all travel about, derive STRENGTH FROM IT, and rule one over the other.

125. And there is an animal over the lower ones, NAMELY, over the other animals below. They are all sustained by it, and the four winds of the world are impressed upon it certain faces shine upon each wind. It has power over the four winds. It has been explained that there are three of this wind and three of that wind, and so on, to the four winds of the world.

126. There are a series of firmaments one on top of the other, and a firmament that reigns over them. They all look to it. It is written, "And under the firmament their wings were held straight, the one toward the other" (Yechezkel 1:23), for they are all in command over what is in their charge. THE RIGHT RADIATES FROM ABOVE DOWN, AND THE LEFT FROM BELOW UP. And there is the spreading of a rope's measurement between them.

127. There are THREE FIRMAMENTS to every wind, nine on each of the four sides of the world, 36 FIRMAMENTS in all. When they are united, they become one, NAMELY, ONE FIRMAMENT, in the secret of the one name --THE NUKVA CALLED 'NAME'--within the whole, as it should be.

128. When they are shaped like a throne, it is written, "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it" (Yechezkel 1:26). It has been explained that when the precious stone, THE NUKVA, is fixed into the throne that stands upon its four legs, and when the image of a man is upon the throne, ZEIR ANPIN, to be united with him, THEN THE THRONE WHICH IS THE NUKVA IS JOINED WITH THE MAN ABOVE IT, ZEIR ANPIN, and is fully blessed by him.

129. When it, THE FIRMAMENTS AND THE ANIMALS THAT ARE THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, is fixed to form a Chariot for that man, ZEIR ANPIN, then it is written, "And Yosef made ready his chariot," who is the Righteous--YOSEF OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED 'YOSEF THE RIGHTEOUS' --"and went up to meet Yisrael his father, to Goshen", Yisrael is the secret of Adam (man), THE MAN UPON THE THRONE, ZEIR ANPIN. "...to Goshen" is derived from their approaching (Heb. gisha) to be joined and united.

130. "...and presented himself to him (lit. 'and he was seen to him')." THE WORDS "WAS SEEN" ARE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND, FOR THEY MEAN THAT HE WAS SEEN AND THEN

GONE. WHAT DOES THE VERSE MEAN? HE SAID: When the sun reflects on the moon, the moon shines, and illuminates all those below IN THE WORLD. In the same manner, as long as Supernal Holiness, THE LIGHT OF ZEIR ANPIN, hovers above the Temple below, THE NUKVA, the Temple shines and stands erect. But here it is written, "and he was seen to him," which means that the light was seen to her and then gone, and after THE SUPERNAL LIGHT OF ZEIR ANPIN was gone from her, THE SCRIPTURE READS, "and wept on his neck a good while," for they all wept for the Temple that was destroyed. THE SCRIPTURE ADDS, "a good while," which means until the last exile.

131. When Ya'akov looked and saw that all was completed below BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE as it is above BETWEEN ABA AND IMA, he said: "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive," which means, you live by the secret of the Holy Covenant called "the One who lives forever." Thus, he said, "you are still alive." He had already said before, "It is enough; Yosef my son is still alive" (Beresheet 45:28), he being the secret of the Living One, as has already been explained.

132. Come and behold: "and Ya'akov blessed Pharaoh" (Beresheet 47:10). Rabbi Yosi said: We do agree that Pharaoh was AN EVIL KLIPAH ACCORDING TO HOMILETIC INTERPRETATION, even though it was explained in regard to another mystery THAT HE IS NOT AN EVIL KLIPAH BUT DESCENDS FROM IMA OF ATZILUT.

133. Yet come and behold: "I compare you, my love, to a mare of the chariots of Pharaoh" (Shir Hashirim 1:9). Come and behold: There are Chariots on the left in the secret of the Other Side, and Chariots on the right on the side of holiness. The ones OF HOLINESS correspond to the others. The holy ones are of mercy, and those OF THE OTHER SIDE are of judgment.

134. When the Holy One, blessed be He, executed judgment on Egypt, He did it exactly the same way as the Chariots OF THE OTHER SIDE and in the same manner as that side. As it kills and takes souls, so the Holy One, blessed be He, did the same, as it is written, "that Hashem slew all the firstborn" (Shemot 13:15), ALTHOUGH HE IS USUALLY MERCIFUL. IN THE SAME WAY, whatever He did in Egypt was in the very same manner. Therefore it is written, "I compare you, my love," because she is compared TO THE CHARIOTS OF PHARAOH IN KILLING AND TAKING THE SOULS OF MEN the same way THE CHARIOTS OF PHARAOH, WHO IS THE OTHER SIDE, kill, as it is written, "I am Hashem, I am He and not another." Later, it is written, "Who is this that comes from Edom, with crimsoned garments from Botzrah?" (Yeshayah 63:1). FOR THEN TOO, HASHEM WILL KILL THEM, AND NO MESSANGER.

135. Come and behold: It is written, "And Yisrael dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen; and they took possession of it, and grew and multiplied exceedingly" (Beresheet 47:27). "And took possession of it" means as a permanent heritage. "And they took possession of it" because they, AND NOT THE EGYPTIANS, were worthy of taking possession of it, as has already been explained. "...and grew and multiplied exceedingly" because surely they had nothing to vex them and they lived in royal luxury AS LONG AS THE TRIBES WERE ALIVE. They therefore grew and multiplied exceedingly.

Blessed be Hashem forever and ever.

VOLUME 07 - VAYECHI

1. "And Ya'akov lived"

Rabbi Yosi opens a discussion on the meaning of the quotation, "And Ya'akov lived," which has high mysteries contained in it, because Ya'akov arrived at a hitherto unprecedented prophecy "and lived" in Egypt, among his exiled descendants. Rabbi Yosi next questions how this is possible when the name Ya'akov indicates smallness, while Yisrael indicates greatness. Rabbi Elazar responds by pointing out that scripture indicates Ya'akov purchased his birthright, which is tantamount to greatness. Rabbi Shimon further states that Ya'akov, not Yisrael, was chosen by God to be a sapphire in the Throne of Glory. Ya'akov's name was then changed to Yisrael, to reflect the Mercy of Judgment, since judgment is the cause of the revelation of mercy, and those banished to Egypt were judged and shown mercy by God. Rabbi Shimon concludes by saying that the whole of Ya'akov's life was 147 years, divided into three periods of exile, the first of which was seven years. The number seven is significant because it represents atonement by the holy children, exiled "seven times," according to the number of sins they perpetrated.

The Relevance of this Passage

The phrase "and he lived" is a code alluding to the fact that Ya'akov had attained a lofty level of spirituality and prophecy. This feat was achieved during his sojourn in Egypt, which itself is a code word representing negativity and the materialism of our physical existence. In most sections of Zohar, the names Ya'akov and Yisrael are two designations for the patriarch, indicating two levels of his spirituality, Ya'akov being a lower level and Yisrael signifying a higher one. However, in this particular section of Zohar, the name Ya'akov is used to indicate an exalted spiritual level. The reason for this is to convey the different form of Light that is aroused when one ascends out of negativity and darkness. Hence, the underlying purpose of this passage is to imbue the reader with the spiritual fortitude necessary to elevate and climb out of any darkness or negativity currently in their life.

1. "And Ya'akov lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years" (Beresheet 47:28). Rabbi Yosi said: Ya'akov's heart saw through prophecy in Egypt that his descendants would suffer many exiles-NAMELY HE SAW ALL THE EXILES from then until now, until the End, and the Time of the Coming of Mashiach.

2. Ya'akov arrived at the prophecy of "and lived" only in Egypt. It was an excellent prophecy, the like of which was never prophesied before. None of the prophets was worthy of it except for him and Moshe ALONE. It is written of Moshe: "For no man shall see me, and live" (Shemot 33:20). Of Ya'akov, it is written: "And Ya'akov lived" REFERRING TO the prophecy which descends from the shining mirror, TIFERET.

3. Ya'akov wanted to prophecy concerning the exiles of his sons in the land of Cna'an and in any land wherein they dwelt WHICH came from the land of Egypt; TO WIT, ALL EXILES ARE INCLUDED WITHIN EGYPT. His heart broke, as it is written: "Now Ya'akov saw that there was corn (also: 'breaking') in Egypt" (Beresheet 42:1).

4. Hence, when it came to pass that "Ya'akov lived in Egypt," he did not rejoice, because this land was the bond of the nations; TO WIT, ALL THE FILTH OF THE NATIONS LIES THERE. ALSO, the sapphires of the Throne of Glory, THE SECRET OF THE CAPTIVE SPARKS OF CHOCHMAH AMONGST THEM, CALLED SAPPHIRES ACCORDING TO THE SECRET MEANING OF THE VERSE: "AND ABOVE THE FIRMAMENT THAT WAS OVER THEIR HEADS WAS THE LIKENESS OF A THRONE, IN APPEARANCE LIKE A SAPPHIRE STONE" (YEHEZKEL 1:26). Nobody came TO SIFT THEM, neither from the upper nor from the lower, save the living. This is the secret of: "For no man shall see Me, and live" (Shemot 33:20).

5. There are High Mysteries in this verse, and we friends wonder about them, for it says that Ya'akov lived instead of Yisrael, TO WIT 'AND YISRAEL LIVED.' FOR THE NAME YA'AKOV INDICATES SMALLNESS, AND THE NAME YISRAEL INDICATES MOCHIN OF GREATNESS, WHILE "AND LIVED" ALLUDES TO THE LIGHT OF CHAYAH, WHICH IS THE MOCHIN OF GREATNESS. IT SHOULD HAVE SAID: 'AND YISRAEL LIVED.' How do we know that Yisrael INDICATES MOCHIN OF GREATNESS? From the verse: "Yisrael is holy to Hashem" (Yirmeyah 2:3), HOLY BEING AN ALLUSION TO GREATNESS. It also says, "Yisrael is My son, My

firstborn" (Shemot 4:22), FIRSTBORN BEING AN ALLUSION TO GREATNESS. THUS, THE NAME YISRAEL IS MENTIONED WITH RELATION TO GREATNESS AND NOT YA'AKOV, WHICH IS A NAME OF SMALLNESS, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET MEANING OF THE VERSE: "HOW SHALL YA'AKOV STAND? FOR HE IS SMALL" (AMOS 7:2). Rabbi Elazar, the son of Rabbi Shimon, said: Yet scripture says, "and he sold his birthright to Ya'akov" (Bereshheet 25:33), FOR WITH THE BIRTHRIGHT, WHICH IS GREATNESS, THE NAME YA'AKOV IS MENTIONED. THUS IT IS NO QUESTION WHY IT SAYS "AND YA'AKOV LIVED" INSTEAD OF 'AND YISRAEL LIVED.'

6. His father Rabbi Shimon said to him: When Yisrael were righteous men of truth and gave charity, they were not afraid, save Ya'akov alone, WHO, THE VERSE TELLS US, WAS AFRAID, SAYING: "FOR I FEAR HIM" (BERESHEET 32:12), WHILE YISRAEL IS A NAME OF GREATNESS, WITHOUT FEAR. IT IS due to the good deeds YISRAEL did, and the kindness amongst them THAT THEY HAD NO FEAR.

7. When they sinned and were exiled because of their transgressions and evil deeds, they could not bear THE FEAR that they would really stay forever IN EXILE for their sins. Thus came the aspect of Mercy and Judgment joined WHICH IS THE MEANING OF THE NAME Yisrael, and put them in exile.

8. Well asked, son, IN RELATION TO THE VERSE, "AND HE SOLD HIS BIRTHRIGHT TO YA'AKOV." But whoever looks into it will know that Ya'akov attached to "and lived" represents holiness, LIKE THE NAME YISRAEL. In relation to this secret, it has been said that Ya'akov was chosen by the Holy One, blessed be He, to be a sapphire in the Throne of Glory, INSTEAD OF YISRAEL.

9. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion, saying: "Yet with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Yeshayah 57:15). "The heart of the contrite ones" is Ya'akov, as it says "AND YA'AKOV LIVED," FOR from beneath the grade prophecies and blessings descended upon him even in Egypt.

10. We have learned that Rabbi Aba said: The heart sees that, while Ya'akov lived in Egypt, his prophecy was not sublime, for the land was detested.

11. Come and behold: he did not deserve to bless any of his sons, and had no spirit with which to bless, except in Egypt. When he did, he blessed each of them according to a mystery, which is, "Now Ya'akov saw that there was corn (also: 'breaking') in Egypt. Ya'akov said to his sons, 'Why do you look at one another?'" Come and see, prophecy was given only to the broken-hearted, as it is written: "Go down there, and buy (also: 'break') us from there, that we may live, and not die" (Bereshheet 42:2).

12. Rabbi Yosi said: Under the Holy Throne of Glory is Ya'akov as a sapphire, THE SAPPHIRE pertains to his aspect of Judgment. Then scripture came and said: "And he said: 'Your name shall be called no more Ya'akov but Yisrael: for you have contended with Elohim and with men, and have prevailed" (Bereshheet 32:29). Now we find that Ya'akov found out there was Judgment within him, as it is written: "The sun rose upon him" (Ibid. 32). And the secret of the matter is: "Woe to us! For the day declines, for the shadows of the evening are lengthened" (Yirmeyah 6:4).

13. Rabbi Shimon said: When they were banished from Jerusalem, and the daily offering was no more, and the foe defiled the Temple, Malchut, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, could not then bear the children of Yisrael and their sins. Only THE GRADE OF THE NAME, Yisrael COULD SUFFER THEM, because it is two-sided of Mercy and Judgment. SINCE THE JUDGMENT IS THE CAUSE OF THE REVELATION OF MERCY, THEREFORE THE JUDGMENT IS ALSO CONSIDERED AS MERCY.

14. The words, "Your name shall be called no more Ya'akov but Yisrael," when clearly understood, mean that Yisrael is superior to Ya'akov, AND THEREFORE HE BLESSED HIM WITH THE NAME YISRAEL. And it is for them that the staff of Moshe was engraved with the Holy Name on both sides, the one of Mercy of Judgment, THE GRADE OF YISRAEL, and the other Judgment of Judgment, THE GRADE OF YA'AKOV.

15. This is the secret of: "He has not beheld iniquity in Ya'akov nor has He seen perverseness in Yisrael" (Bemidbar 23:21), WHICH MEANS HE DID NOT BEHOLD INIQUITY IN YA'AKOV, BUT DID SEE PERVERSENESS. YET IN YISRAEL, EVEN PERVERSENESS HE DID NOT BEHOLD, FOR IN IT JUDGMENT IS ALSO CONSIDERED MERCY. HE EXPLAINS, We are thrown into exile amidst enemies, and the Shechinah is gone from the King, ZEIR ANPIN, and separated from Him. EVENTUALLY He will cause the Shechinah to dwell among us and redeem us, FOR BANISHMENT BRINGS US TO REPENT, AND REPENTANCE BRINGS REDEMPTION. THEREFORE, JUDGMENT IN YISRAEL CHANGES INTO MERCY. THEREFORE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "NOR HAS HE SEEN PERVERSENESS IN YISRAEL," WHICH IS ALL MERCY. BUT THE GRADE OF YA'AKOV IS NOT SO, FOR IT CONTAINS PERVERSENESS. HENCE THE ANGEL BLESSED HIM: "YOUR NAME SHALL BE CALLED NO MORE YA'AKOV BUT YISRAEL," WHICH CONTAINS BOTH JUDGMENT AND MERCY, EXILE AND REDEMPTION, AND IS WHOLLY MERCIFUL. This is the secret of the verse, "Thus says Hashem, the King of Yisrael, and His redeemer, Hashem Tzva'ot" (Yeshayah 44:6): and lived, living. "Thus says Hashem, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool" (Yeshayah 66:1).

16. Within the upper grade YISRAEL two legs, NETZACH AND HOD, live. NETZACH IS CALLED "AND LIVED (HEB. VAYECHI, VAV YUD CHET YUD)" AND HOD 'LIVING (HEB. CHAI, CHET YUD),' BOTH INCLUDED WITHIN THE WORD FOR "AND LIVED." HE EXPLAINS: Large Yud contains small Yud, large Chet contains Tav; there are Vav and Yud in Vav, and in Yud - Vav and Dalet. This comes from the upper one, YISRAEL.

17. THESE ARE THE TWO DIVISIONS INCLUDED within the precious stone SAPPHIRE underneath the Throne of Glory, which is in the land of Egypt. For it is written, "And Hashem shall smite Egypt" (Yeshayah 19:22), which is the second division, while the verse, "For your dew is as the dew on herbs" (Yeshayah 26:19) is the first division.

18. The second division, WHICH ALLUDES TO the exile, is therefore connected with the first division, WHICH ALLUDES TO REVIVAL AND REDEMPTION. Come and see the verse, "O house of Ya'akov, come, and let us walk in the light of Hashem" (Yeshayah 2:5), WHICH MEANS that the letters indicating the exile they were sentenced to for their sins, according to Truth and Justice, have a remedy within the Torah. And IF YOU KEEP IT, you shall come out of the filth and mud, which is exile; and walk by the light of Hashem, WHICH IS RESURRECTION AND REDEMPTION. SINCE THE EXILE CAUSED THE RETURN TO TORAH WHICH LEADS TO THE REDEMPTION, SO WE FIND BOTH DIVISIONS IN ONE LETTER.

19. THE LETTERS Aleph and Resh-Tzadi of Eretz (lit. 'land') are the land which sadly goes INTO EXILE, by the decree of the book of the Torah; TO WIT, THE FOUR HUNDRED YEARS MENTIONED IN THE DECREE 'BETWEEN THE PIECES.' They are divided by land into Aleph and Resh-Tzadi. It may be found by the decree of the book of Torah that Resh-Tzadi come together in exile, MEANING THAT THEY WERE IN EXILE IN EGYPT RESH-TZADI (=290) YEARS; WHICH, TOGETHER WITH LEPH (OF ALEPH =110), AMOUNTS TO FOUR HUNDRED YEARS. What is the Egyptian exile? Avraham was told his children would be in exile for four hundred years, yet if you count it, it amounts to 290 years only.

20. "And Yosef died, being a hundred and ten years old" (Beresheet 50:26). Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "Behold, the young woman is with child, and she will bear a son, and shall call his name 'Immanuel' (lit. 'El is with us')" (Yeshayah 7:14). Pregnancy and birth ARE MENTIONED IN THIS VERSE, AND were fulfilled in exiles, bad troubles and evil times, FOR THE VERSE CONTINUES: "FOR BEFORE THE CHILD SHALL KNOW HOW TO REFUSE THE EVIL AND CHOOSE THE GOOD, THE LAND...SHALL BE DESERTED..." (IBID.16). And though THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, will be with us during these years, AS INDICATED BY THE CHILD'S NAME, IMMANU-EL, WHICH IS THE NAME OF THE SHECHINAH, YET The Shechinah trembled and separated from Her husband, ZEIR ANPIN, and stayed with us in exile. THOUGH THE SHECHINAH IS WITH US, SHE SUFFERES PAIN AND EXILE, AND IS ALONE. SO THERE IS PREGNANCY THAT PRECEDES THE BIRTH OF EXILE. "A hundred and ten years old," is the further impression CONSIDERED THE PREGNANCY OF THE EXILE. THE VERSE wishes to point that out of the EGYPTIAN exile, one hundred and ten years passed AS PREGNANCY, WHILE 290 years WERE THE EXILE ITSELF. In all, there are four hundred years WHICH THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, SPOKE OF TO AVRAHAM, IN THE DECREE OF 'BETWEEN THE PIECES.' The exile of Ya'akov started only when Yosef died. In connection to this it was said: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate be set up, there shall be a thousand (Heb. eleph) two hundred and ninety days" (Daniel 12:11).

21. "So the whole age of Ya'akov was a hundred and forty seven years" (Beresheet 47:28). THE 147 YEARS OF YA'AKOV'S LIFE CONTAIN the secret of the number of correction by exile the descendants will endure, who were exiled under strict Judgment into three exiles. The first one in Egypt is likened to seven years. Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion saying: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles, and by the hinds of the fields" (Shir Hashirim 2:7). HERE TOO, THE NUMBER SEVEN (HEB. SHEVA), OF YA'AKOV'S LIFE, IS DERIVED FROM THE OATH (HEB. SHEVUAH), NOT TO AWAKE THE LOVE, UNTIL REDEMPTION PLEASES.

22. Rabbi Shimon said: From this WE LEARN THE EXPLANATION TO THE NUMBER SEVEN. IT IS WRITTEN, "Hashem appeared to me from afar, saying: I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Yirmeyah 31:3). FROM AFAR, NAMELY, IN EXILE, BECAUSE GREAT LOVE IS REVEALED ONLY BY EXILE. Here lies the secret, that exile is the means of the children of Yisrael to be freed from exile AND THAT HIS LOVE WILL BE REVEALED TO US. Scripture wishes to point, BY THE NUMBER SEVEN OF YA'AKOV'S LIFE, that the holy children who were exiled for their sins will be sentenced for many years, which will amount to "seven times... according to your sins" (Vayikra 26:21). IT ALSO SAYS, "If Kain shall be avenged sevenfold" (Beresheet 4:24), WHICH NUMBER FIXES THE DAMAGE THEY MADE, AND REVEALS THE LIGHT OF REDEMPTION. THIS IS during the first exile in Egypt, which is the shortest OF THE EXILES.

23. The second exile is in Babylon, likened to forty years FROM YA'AKOV'S LIFE IN RELATION TO the seven IN EGYPT, for it is longer than it.

24. The third exile is the longest, likened to the hundred years OF YA'AKOV'S LIFE, IN RELATION TO the forty years OF THE BABYLONIAN EXILE.

2. "And the time drew near...and he called his son Yosef"

Rabbi Chizkiyah begins by explaining that Yisrael saw the torture of exile upon his descendants, and consequently, his soul began to die. Yisrael then gathered his exiles and told them that if they wished to be absolved of their sins, they must behave according to truth and justice in the eyes of God. Rabbi Shimon then explains why Yisrael called only Yosef his son and not all the other exiles. This is because all the children of Yisrael were called Yosef. Rabbi Chizkiyah then refers to the secret of the Vav as including Ya'akov, Yosef, and others, as well as the six Sfirot.

The Relevance of this Passage

Yisrael's action of talking to the people of the exile is a code for the great patriarch calling upon all generations, including the readers of this passage, and awakening them to the power of the Light and the path to eternal freedom, fulfillment, and the final redemption. When Yisrael calls only the name Yosef, the Zohar is indicating a direct reference to the Sfirah/dimension of Yesod, the portal and funnel through which the supernal Light flows into our world. The name Yosef refers to the Light that is flowing from Yesod to us--the reader and all the people who remain in exile in our current generation. This Light now becomes part of our being.

25. "And the time drew near for Yisrael to die" (Beresheet 47:29). Rabbi Chizkiyah said: He saw this trouble of exile upon his children, and his soul drew near death. He did not remain alive when he descended his grades because of the sins of Yisrael. YISRAEL, ZEIR ANPIN, did not go into exile with them, LIKE THE SHECHINAH, WHO WENT INTO EXILE WITH THEM. HE ASKS: Happy is the portion OF YISRAEL, for if He, ZEIR ANPIN, would not have gone down with them into exile, they would have remained among the nations WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO ESCAPE. Why then does it say, "Why, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer?" (Yeshayah 50:2). "Was there none to answer" alludes to the children of Yisrael, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN; "when I came, was there no man": This is the Shechinah. "Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness" SO ZEIR ANPIN DID COME DOWN ALSO WITH THEM INTO EXILE? HE ANSWERS: The Holy One, blessed be He, gave a portion to the children of Yisrael, so that no other minister would rule over them; THUS HE IS WITH THEM IN EXILE. ALSO when they went into exile, The Shechinah is with them, but ZEIR ANPIN is far away from the Shechinah.

26. "And he called his son Yosef, and said to him, if now I have found favor in your sight." He examined all his sons and said to them, I see many evil troubles come upon your children, and ONE SHOULD find supernal Mercy.

27. If you wish to be delivered from all these troubles, swear before me, and we shall have the Master of the universe AS WITNESS between us, that you will conduct yourself according to truth and justice, and behave like your fathers. You shall teach it to every generation that will come after you. If you shall do so, you shall escape all the troubles that will come upon you.

28. Rabbi Shimon said: TO EXPLAIN AWAY THE DIFFICULTY THAT HE CALLED ONLY YOSEF HIS SON AND NOT ALL THE TRIBES, THE WORDS OF RABBI SHIMON ARE BROUGHT HERE. "And establish justice in the gate: it may be that Hashem Elohim of Tzeva'ot will be gracious to the remnant of Yosef" (Amos 5:15), for all the children of Yisrael are called Yosef.

29. THE ZOHAR RETURNS TO THE WORDS OF YA'AKOV: 'If you shall do so, you shall bury not one of my children in Egypt, but return safely with me to your land.'

30. It is written: "Put, I pray you, your hand under my thigh" (Beresheet 47:29). HE ASKS: What is "your hand"? He opened the discussion saying: "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty warrior: your glory and your majesty" (Tehilim 45:4). ALSO "YOUR HAND UNDER MY THIGH" ALLUDES TO A SWORD, WHICH IS a sword of Grace and Truth, the two Sfirot which do not separate from each other; NAMELY YESOD WHICH CONTAINS THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM AND THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH, CALLED TRUTH AND BRIGHTNESS OF COUNTENANCE. Therefore it says, "Love and Truth shall go before you" (Tehilim 89:15), "The anger of Hashem divided them" (Eichah 4:16). And if His children were good and did what they accepted upon them, not one of the children would have died in Egypt, for each kindness that the Holy One blessed be He decrees upon men is on the condition they will be good. As David said: "That Hashem may continue His word which He spoke concerning me, saying: 'If your children take heed to their way, to walk before Me in Truth'" (I Melachim 2:4). But if not, He shall not.

31. Come and behold: better is the spirit of the father than the spirit of the son, for the spirit of the father is that of the son, spirit drawn from spirit. THUS WE FIND THE FATHER'S SPIRIT IN RELATION TO HIM IS THAT OF THE ROOT IN RELATION TO ITS BRANCH. But if another air OF THE OTHER SIDE contributes to the spirit of the son, he is not born whole, but rendered defective by that air OF THE OTHER SIDE; NAMELY "a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffs up the wind in her desire" (Yirmeyah 2:24).

32. We learned that Rabbi Hamnuna Saba (the elder) once went to Cappadocia. Going towards him was Rabbi Yisa Saba. According to Rav Ashlag, this paragraph is a later interpolation, which in other versions starts with Rabbi Aba.

34. "And he said: 'Swear to me'" (Beresheet 47:31). Rabbi Chizkiyah opened the discussion saying: "Hashem has sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength" (Yeshayah 62:8), WHICH MEANS Hashem swore He would deliver the children of Yisrael from their exile. This is what He swore to them BY THE VERSE: "AND HE SWORE TO HIM" (BERESHEET 47:31) HERE WHICH ALSO REFERS TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. He swore to them He would not abandon them in the land of their enemies.

34. "And he said: 'Let me go, for the day breaks.' And he said: 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me'" (Beresheet 32:27). What does "bless me" mean; TO WIT, WHAT WERE THE BLESSINGS HE CONFERRED UPON HIM? HE ANSWERS: He assigned them to exile and swore to them He would deliver them from it.

35. We learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, would DO for His children of Yisrael, that they would all dwell under His throne, and excel the high ANGELS. Therefore, one finds a long Vav IN THE TORAH, LIKE IN "WHATEVER GOES ON ITS BELLY (HEB. GACHON)" (VAYIKRA 11:42), which is an allusion that the Holy One, blessed be He, swore upon the perfection of the Vav (=six) generations. THE SECRET OF AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, YA'AKOV, MOSHE, AHARON, AND YOSEF, THE SECRET OF THE SIX SFIROT: CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD. Because of these six, IT IS WRITTEN: "And Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head" (Beresheet 47:31), YISRAEL BEING THE SECRET OF

ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH INCLUDES: CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD. The bowing of Yisrael ALLUDES TO the coming of Mashiach at the end of this time; TO WIT, AFTER SIX THOUSAND YEARS, ALLUDING TO THE SIX COMPLETE SFIROT, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD AND YESOD, CLOTHED BY SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA, WHICH SFIROT ARE EACH OF A THOUSAND YEARS. And the Shechinah will dwell among them.

3. "Behold, your father is sick"

Rabbi Chizkiyah begins by saying that this quotation refers to events at the end of exile, and means, literally, Yosef's father, Yisrael, is "worried and in haste." Rabbi Aba then adds that the name Yud-Hei-Vav ??? would be changed to Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei ???? to expedite Yisrael doing good for his children, so they would come out of exile. Rabbi Aba then explains Ya'akov's exposure to truth, and Avraham's to grace.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Hebrew letters Yud, Hei, Vav, Hei, ???? are known as the Tetragrammaton, one of the Holy Names of The Creator. The addition of the final Hei ? in the Holy Name corresponds to our physical realm. The other three letters ??? represent the Upper Worlds, specifically four dimensions of Keter, Chochmah, Binah, and Zeir Anpin. Thus, this passage is our connection to the Upper Worlds, via the Tetragrammaton, so that we may brighten our lives and the world with the resplendent Light of The Creator.

36. "And it came to pass after these things that one told Yosef, 'Behold, your father is sick.'" (Beresheet 48:1). In the Mishnah Rabbi Chizkiyah said, that the verse does not teach us what YOSEF did, but brings before us the events at the end of exile, at the end of the set time. He says that Mashiach, THE SECRET OF YOSEF, will come and say to him, Your Father in heaven makes haste to welcome you, who looks to the end of Mashiach. "YOUR FATHER IS SICK" MEANS, HE IS WORRIED AND IN HASTE. "AND HE TOOK WITH HIM MENASHE AND EFRAIM" (IBID.). MEANS: May it please Elohim in heaven to receive His children, who increased and multiplied (Heb. paru) in exile, FOR WHICH THEY ARE CALLED EFRAIM, and THEIR SINS forgotten BECAUSE OF THE EXILE, THE SECRET OF THEIR BEING CALLED MENASHE, WHICH IS DERIVED FROM THE WORD FORGETFULNESS (HEB. NESHIAH). For the Holy One, blessed be He, truly forgot their transgressions.

37. When Rabbi Aba came, he said he came not to speak ABOUT THE VERSE, BUT TO EXPLAIN ITS MYSTERY. HE SAID: The secret of this matter is very important AS THAT OF THE VERSE, "Hashem shall add (Heb. yosef) to me another son" (Beresheet 30:24). As we explained in relation to that verse, the Holy Name written in Yosef, TO WIT, THAT THE THREE-LETTERED NAME Yud-Hei-Vav will say to him, here your Father, the Master over the World to Come, SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN WITH THE MOCHIN OF SUPERNAL BINAH, CALLED THE WORLD TO COME, wishes to do good for His children, so they may come out of exile. But if you do not favor your Truth BECAUSE YOU FIND THAT THEY DO NOT MERIT IT, here is a four-lettered name Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei to set you right and then will favor it that the Shechinah to return to Her place.

38. For the fathers are the supernal Chariot FOR THE HOLY NAME on high, as it is written: "And Elohim went up from Avraham" (Beresheet 17:22), WHICH MEANS HE WAS RIDING ON HIM. IT IS ALSO WRITTEN, "You will show Truth to Ya'akov, Grace (Heb. chesed) to Avraham" (Michah 7:20). THUS YA'AKOV WAS A CHARIOT TO TIFERET CALLED TRUTH, AND AVRAHAM A CHARIOT TO CHESED. And we learned that BY THE UNISON OF THE ONE YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, Mashiach will come.

4. "At evening time, there will be light"

Rabbi Yosi describes how there will be a day without day or night, until the evening, when there will be light, at which time, two evils will befall Ya'akov's children. But these occur so his children can be taken to "the good land." Rabbi Aba then poses a conundrum: "What is darkness?" The others determine that "darkness is Gehenom."

The Relevance of this Passage

The phrase, "day without day or night," refers to the potential darkness and destruction [God forbid] that may appear before the final redemption of mankind takes place. Two paths to redemption and eternal peace are always available to us, a Light-filled path that embodies mercy and protection, or a darkened path that embodies pain, torment, and suffering. Our egos constantly urge us towards the path of darkness. Through a meditative, intense read of this passage, we can help ourselves, and the world at large, avoid the potential gloom and devastation that attends the path of darkness.

39. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse: "But it shall be one particular day which shall be known as Hashem's, neither day, nor night: but it shall come to pass that at evening time, there will be light" (Zecharyah 14:7). HE STARTED EXPLAINING THE VERSE, "AND HE TOOK...EFRAIM AND MENASHE" (BERESHEET 48:1), BUT EXPLAINED NO FURTHER. THE ZOHAR EXPLAINS THE WORDS OF RABBI YOSI, SAYING THAT HE wishes to say that two evils will befall the children OF YA'AKOV: 1) they will be in exile in the land of their enemies, THIS BEING THE ASPECT OF EFRAIM AND MENASHE. 2) He will not look at them many years on account of their sinning to Truth, and so will abandon them in the land of their enemies. Eventually, He would take their children, to whom these TWO evils befell, and conduct them to the good land, as the verse says, "AND HE TOOK... MENASHE AND EFRAIM"; TO WIT, HE WILL TAKE THEM, TO WHOM THE TWO EVILS BEFELL, AND CONDUCT THEM TO THEIR GOOD LAND.

40. There were two great and exalted ministers who were knocking under the Throne of Glory of Yisrael's chieftain, the fifth measure, to cause them to remain in exile for as long AS THEY NEED, FROM THE ASPECT OF EFRAIM, and worse, that He would forget them in the land of their enemies, WHICH IS THE ASPECT OF MENASHE.

41. These two ministers are two attributes, each containing two aspects; TO WIT, EACH IS DIVIDED INTO TWO ATTRIBUTES. HE EXPLAINS, One ATTRIBUTE came and spoke before the Master of the universe and was given permission to say what it liked. On the one hand, it saw it should be decreed that the children of Yisrael should come out of exile, due to their fathers' merit. On the other hand, it saw they deserve to be sentenced TO REMAIN IN EXILE for their sins, for THE ACCUSERS said great evil things about them. There are four attributes in all. FOR EACH OF THE MINISTERS, THE TWO ATTRIBUTES CONTAINS TWO ASPECTS; TO WIT, ONE FOR AND ONE AGAINST. But they did not have the fifth attribute, Yisrael's chieftain, and they spoke as they pleased. THE TWO MINISTERS SPOKE NOW FOR AND NOW AGAINST, FOR THEY HAD NOT THE FIFTH ATTRIBUTE, WHICH TURNS ALL INTO MERIT.

42. Then the fifth attribute arrived, WHICH WILL BE REVEALED AT THE END OF CORRECTION, to be upon the Throne of Glory of the Holy Name. It would say good things about Yisrael, and the two first measures would no longer be afraid to speak before Him GOOD THINGS ABOUT YISRAEL, AS THEY WERE BEFORE. For the fifth attribute, which was considered the rule of the night, now came out to shine upon them. Therefore RABBI YOSI opened the discussion saying: "But it shall be one particular day which shall be known as Hashem's, neither day, nor night: but it shall come to pass that at evening time, there will be light."

43. We have learned that the verse, "And Elohim called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night" (Beresheet 1:5) MEANS THAT THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED DARKNESS, AND ALSO CALLED NIGHT, RECEIVES FROM DAY, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. It is also said: "And darkness was on the face of the deep" (Ibid. 2) TO WIT, DARKNESS IS A KLIPAH, NOT PERTAINING TO HOLINESS. The verses contradict each other. Rabbi Elazar came to his father Rabbi Shimon and said to him: My father and master, what is the meaning of this CONTRADICTION? He replied to him, From the beginning, up to the sixth generation, THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, He created one Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF BINAH. He explains, This refers to THE SECRET OF Vav of the name YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, ZEIR ANPIN, upon which BINAH conferred the spirit of Chochmah. THEREFORE, until then, darkness was not known at all. Rabbi Elazar rose and kissed his father's hands.

44. Rabbi Aba rose and asked: What is darkness? The friends turned around, TO WIT, THEY SOUGHT HARD FOR AN ANSWER, but did not arrive at an answer to his question. They did something, NAMELY A CERTAIN MEDITATION, and a voice from before the Master of the

universe resounded this verse, "A land of gloom, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness" (Iyov 10:22). THIS DARKNESS MEANS Gehenom, for even before the world was created, it was stored for the wicked. FROM THIS, THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT DARKNESS IS GEHENOM. Woe to the wicked, who will abide in this darkness, when Elohim will do all this as it says in, "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples: but Hashem shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you" (Yeshayah 60:2). Happy is the portion of Yisrael, that the Holy One, blessed be He, did not create THIS DARKNESS for them. "Happy is that people, that is in such a case: Happy is that people, whose Elohim is Hashem" (Tehilim 144:15).

5. "And one told Ya'akov"

Rabbi Yosi explains that the quotation, "And one told Ya'akov," refers to Ya'akov being told his children would be redeemed. Through this redemption, Ya'akov would receive both truth and grace, which are two Sfirot, also contained in two higher Chariots, Avraham and Ya'akov.

The Relevance of this Passage

To achieve a higher level of spirituality and existence, we sometimes need to "borrow" Light from The Creator in order to use it to awaken and arouse even greater Light in our lives and in this world. This is similar to a businessman borrowing money from a bank for the purpose of building a successful business. In other words, you need money in order to make money. Hence, the primary purpose of this passage is to entrust the readers with Light, so that they may use it to for spiritual purposes and the formation of greater Light.

45. "And one told Ya'akov, and said: 'Behold, your son Yosef comes to you'" (Beresheet 48:2). Rabbi Yosi said: It was an angel WHO TOLD YA'AKOV that he was about to pronounce good words about the children of Yisrael at the time they would return to the Holy One, blessed be He, with all their troubles, when Mashiach's end was to come. And He would say to the attribute, YA'AKOV, THE SECRET OF TIFERET, your children are come to you, and the good ones, the children of YISRAEL, will be redeemed.

46. Happy is the portion of Yisrael, who are named the children of the Holy One, blessed be He, that are like angels, OF WHOM IT SAYS, "And all THE SONS OF Elohim shouted for joy" (Iyov 38:6). YISRAEL ARE ALSO CALLED the sons of Hashem, AS IT SAYS, "YOU ARE THE CHILDREN OF HASHEM YOUR ELOHIM" (DEVARIM 14:1).

47. Come and behold! When do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, called Ya'akov, 'El'? He said to him: 'You shall be among the lower beings, and I shall be Elohim among the upper beings. Whence do we know that? HE ANSWERS: It is written, "And Elohim went up from Avraham" (Beresheet 17:22). Thus the fathers are a Chariot to the Holy One, blessed be He. We learned that "you will show Truth to Ya'akov, Grace (lit. 'Chesed') to Avraham" (Michah 7:20) has in it two Sfirot, CHESED, AND TRUTH WHICH IS TIFERET in two bigger and higher Chariots, AVRAHAM AND YA'AKOV.

48. The third one is Yitzchak , WHO BECAME A CHARIOT TO THE SFIRAH OF GVURAH. Whence DO WE KNOW THAT FROM? FROM THE WORDS "And Ya'akov swore by the fear of his father Yitzchak" (Beresheet 31:53). For the fear of Yitzchak is a Sfirah of the Holy One, blessed be He, NAMELY GVURAH CALLED FEAR, and became the Throne of Glory, ITS supernal Chariot. Yitzchak's Sfirah, GVURAH, is more important and explicit than the other Sfirot of the fathers, CHESED AND TIFERET. For that reason it is written, "And Ya'akov swore by the fear of his father Yitzchak"; NAMELY BY THE SFIRAH OF GVURAH CALLED FEAR, WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT.

49. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion saying: "The Elohim of Avraham, and the Elohim of Nachor, the Elohim of their father, judge between us. And Ya'akov swore by the fear of his father Yitzchak." (Beresheet 31:53). From this verse, one may derive THAT YITZCHAK'S SFIRAH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE OTHERS, FOR HE DID NOT SWEAR BY ELOHIM OF AVRAHAM, BUT BY THE FEAR OF YITZCHAK.

6. "And sat upon the bed"

Rabbi Shimon explains that chief angel Michael will come to the side of Yisrael at his time of redemption. Yisrael will gain strength from this, and will sit on the bed, which is a code

alluding to this truth. Rabbi Shimon then explains that "marries the daughter of a strange El" refers to Yisrael, whom, in spite of his sins, would redeem those in exile, and preserve the nations. Rabbi Yosi then describes two angels, Mata and Matatron, as the Shechinah, sent from Binah to protect Yisrael. Rabbi Shimon next explains the meaning of Rut, which details the relationship between mercy and judgment. Rabbis Shimon and Aba then begin a discourse on "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full."

The Relevance of this Passage

The assistance of the supernal angels, including Michael, who represents the Right Column energy of mercy, and the protective Light of the Shechinah, is drawn into our lives. This Light also helps to accelerate the end of our personal and global exile.

50. "And Yisrael strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed." (Beresheet 48:2). The secret of the verse is: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great chief angel, who stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble" (Daniel 12:1). Rabbi Shimon says, This is the might of the great Michael, WHO WILL STAND UP FOR YISRAEL AT THE TIME OF REDEMPTION, WHICH WILL BE "A TIME OF TROUBLE SUCH AS NEVER WAS SINCE THERE WAS A NATION..." THUS SCRIPTURE CONCLUDES WITH "AND YISRAEL STRENGTHENED." "And sat upon the bed": As before when he bowed upon it, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "AND YISRAEL BOWED HIMSELF UPON THE BED'S HEAD," BUT NOW HE SAT UPON IT. HE ASKS: To whom did Ya'akov bow? If you say he bowed to the bed, WHICH IS MALCHUT. The bed was ready TO RECEIVE from him, AND THE GIVER DOES NOT BOW BEFORE THE RECEIVER. HE ANSWERS: He bowed to the circumcision, THE SECRET OF YESOD, of which he was fond.

51. "For Yehuda has profaned the holiness of Hashem which he loved, and has married the daughter of a strange El" (Malachi 2:11). HE WAS ASKED A DIFFICULT QUESTION ABOUT THE MEANING OF "MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF A STRANGE EL." HE SAYS, When the light was gone from ZEIR ANPIN, due to YISRAEL'S sins, THE SHECHINAH could not stand before ZEIR ANPIN and was exiled from the King. TO WIT, SHE WENT TOGETHER WITH YISRAEL INTO EXILE AMONG THE NATIONS, since She could not leave Her children among the nations to be killed. ZEIR ANPIN was in the Holy Land and, by having foreign nations with him, as it says "MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF A STRANGE EL," it conveys that the Shechinah was going into exile with them among the nations, when She was not in the land of Yisrael but in other lands. Thus, by the light of Yisrael, the nations around them were preserved. THEREFORE, IT SAYS "MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF A STRANGE EL." (IT LOOKS AS IF IT IS AN INTERPOLATION FROM THE WORDS 'IT CONVEYS.')

52. We learned, Rabbi Yosi said, that there were two ministers, NAMELY ANGELS, under the Holy Throne of Glory. The one, BY NAME OF MATA, dwells within the treasury of the Temple. And here we are in exile, and nothing remained to us but him, who is of the nature OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, and impressed by the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He. THIS IS THE ANGEL MATATRON, WHOSE NAME IS AS THE NAME OF HIS MASTER, AS IT IS WRITTEN OF HIM: "FOR MY NAME IS IN HIM" (SHEMOT 23:21).

53. It is written: "Behold, I send an angel before you, to keep you" (Shemot 23:20). It is not worthy to speak that way only of the World to Come, NAMELY BINAH, as we explained it to be the protection along the way. TO WIT, THE POWER TO PROTECT COMES FROM BINAH. THEREFORE, IT WAS BINAH WHICH SAID TO YISRAEL, "BEHOLD, I SEND AN ANGEL," NAMELY THE SHECHINAH "TO KEEP YOU," AND NO OTHER GRADE, BECAUSE PROTECTION COMES FROM IT. SHE SAID: I, the Shechinah, hover among you and protect you in exile. She will protect you until bringing you to your country, as you were before. THIS IS WHAT IS WRITTEN, "I have prepared" (Ibid.), WITH WHICH the verse CONCLUDES "to the place which I have prepared," for THE LAND was their dwelling place even before.

54. THE ANGEL MENTIONED IS the Shechinah, CLOTHED AND WORKING through Matatron. For the Shechinah was exiled INTO EXILE CALLED, from the King, ZEIR ANPIN, AND SHE WORKS THROUGH MATATRON until THE TIME OF REDEMPTION WHEN She will return to Her place TO ZEIR ANPIN. It is a mystery that: "For only Og, king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Refaim; behold, his bed is a bed of iron; is it not in Rabba of the children of Amon?" (Devarim 3:11), as we explained elsewhere.

55. In the way, which is a parable of the exile, THE SHECHINAH will protect you from all the troubles which will come upon you, until He will come and gather you into the land which He promised to your fathers, which is kept FOR YOU.

56. The second minister underneath the Holy Throne, which dwells in the treasure of the Temple is Nuriel. For the minister appointed over the children of Yisrael, NAMELY THE FIRST MINISTER UNDER THE HOLY THRONE, Matatron, when the Shechinah was with the King, would come and go before them. THE SECOND MINISTER, NURIEL, would receive the worship of Yisrael to the Holy One, blessed be He, as fire (Aramaic nura). And when the fire was no more, because the children of Yisrael were exiled, Her light was gone, and the Shechinah departed from the King.

57. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform to you the part of a kinsman, well (lit. 'good'); let him do the kinsman's part" (Rut 3:13) RUT IS THE SECRET OF MALCHUT, WHICH IS JUDGMENT, AND GOOD IS MERCY. Rabbi Yosi said: Mercy is more powerful than Judgment. "And Elohim saw the light, that it was good" (Bereshheet 1:4). Hence, goodness and light are equal, for it is the source of all the springs, whence the sea and all the rivers in the world come from. THE MEANING OF THE WORDS CONCERNING RUT ARE THAT IF HE WILL DO THE KINSMAN'S PART, GOOD, MEANING THAT MERCY CALLED GOOD WILL DO THE KINSMAN'S PART BY RUTH AND HAVE CONTROL OVER HER, WHO IS JUDGMENT.

58. We learned that Rabbi Shimon said: Once I went up and down to shine at the source of the springs. Rabbi Aba came up after me and said to me, With what are you occupied? I said to him: With the verse, "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full" (Kohelet 1:7). From the light OF BINAH were created all the ministers in the world, and from its light flow all the rivers; NAMELY, "the rivers" in the verse, "ALL THE RIVERS RUN INTO THE SEA; YET THE SEA IS NOT FULL." THE SEA, MALCHUT, is not full when in exile, because the darkness and obscurity IN THE EXILE were made by a mother's love, BINAH. And were it not FOR DARKNESS, the river would not have been created which shines unto the daughter, MALCHUT. The sea shall not be filled and made whole until the other side which was not in exile would have come; NAMELY THE RIGHT SIDE, UPON WHICH NO KLIPAH HAS EVER ANY CONTROL. THEN THE SEA, MALCHUT, WILL BE FILLED.

7. The names called hand

Rabbi Elazar first explains that the hands belong to The Creator, the source of Light for everything, meaning mercy. He then begs Rabbi Shimon to reveal to him the secret of the name "hand." Rabbi Shimon explains that without the "hand," which is mercy, war would prevail, since judgment would be allowed to come before mercy. But the Mashiach will come and wage war against Amalek through judgment, and in it, prevail. Rabbi Elazar then explains that the "the great hand" and "the supernal hand" are the same thing. They have the same numerical value and therefore, will be the left and right hands joined together. Even though one is called "great" and the other "strong," and therefore, must be different, they are equal by the name "hand," because of their letters Yud-Dalet, and will therefore create the heaven and the earth.

The Relevance of this Passage

Many profound lessons and benefits arise from this passage, including a secret concerning the nation of Amalek. Kabbalists have revealed that the nation of Amalek is a code term that refers to the doubts and uncertainties that dwell within the consciousness of man. Specifically, these doubts concern the following: our recognition of the reality of The Creator; our trust in the spiritual laws of our universe; our willingness to embark on and remain on the correct spiritual path. Whenever we begin to approach these universal truths and come nearer to the Light, doubts automatically set in. Consciously waging war against uncertainty helps to hasten the arrival of our personal Mashiach, as well as the global redemption. Moreover, triumphing over our doubt helps to ignite the Light of mercy, which sweetens the Judgments due to us as a result of previous iniquities in this life or past incarnations. Hence, the strength to defeat skepticism is summoned forth herein and the Light of mercy shines brighter in our lives, helping to soften decrees of judgement that might be due us.

59. The names called 'hand'-NAMELY THE HAND OF HASHEM, THE GREAT HAND, THE STRONG HAND-are the source OF LIGHT for everything. You will find only the hand of Yud-

Hei-Vav-Hei, as in the verse "the hand of Hashem is not shortened" (Yeshayah 59:1), since 'hand' is always combined with the name YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS MERCY.

60. Rabbi Elazar came to ask his father Rabbi Shimon. He wept and said to him: Reveal to me this secret, my father and master, OF THE NAME 'HAND'. He said to him: It will be revealed to you through the verse: "Because Hashem has sworn by His throne (lit. 'a hand on the throne of Yah'); that Hashem will have war" (Shemot 17:16), TO WIT, hand on the throne of Yah due to Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, WHICH IS MERCY, Mercy being stronger than Judgment. The verse wishes to say, may there be forever, instead of Gvurah, the great hand which was in Egypt, WHICH IS MERCY; for were it not FOR THE GREAT HAND, WAR would be through Judgment WITHOUT MERCY.

61. When Mashiach will come with the renewal of the great hand, he will wage war against Amalek, MERCY WILL OVERCOME JUDGMENT LIKE AT THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT, AS IT IS WRITTEN "By strength of hand Hashem brought us out of Egypt" (Shemot 13:14). When the name hand is will come with 'strength of hand' alone, NOT WITH HASHEM'S HAND OR THE GREAT HAND, it is then in Judgment; namely war against Amalek will be fought through Judgment, and then Mashiach will come. Rabbi Elazar supports his explanation with the verse, "Then shall Hashem go out, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle" (Zechariah 14:3).

62. Come and see: THE STRENGTH OF the great hand, THE RIGHT HAND, reaches the supernal hand, THE LEFT HAND CALLED THE STRONG HAND. By this hand, they came out of Egypt, AS IT SAYS, "BY STRENGTH OF HAND HASHEM BROUGHT US OUT OF EGYPT." THEY ARE CONNECTED since they have the same numerical value, one Yud equals the other Yud and one Dalet the other (YUD-DALET = HAND). The name 'the great hand' and the name 'the supernal hand' are the same, equal in letters and numerical value. UNISON receives two hands together, IN OTHER WORDS, THE RIGHT AND LEFT WERE JOINED TOGETHER.

63. HE ASKS, Why were they not separated, as they are not equal, THE ONE IS CALLED GREAT AND THE OTHER STRONG. HE ANSWERS: The connection of these two was explained BECAUSE their letters, Yud-Dalet, which are the same, THOUGH they are not exactly of the same content. TO WIT, SINCE THEY ARE EQUAL BY THE NAME HAND, THEY MAY BE JOINED TOGETHER THOUGH THE ONE IS CALLED GREAT AND THE OTHER STRONG. From these TWO HANDS, the heaven and earth were created, and all that is with them. INSIDE THE UPPERMOST CIRCLE: Yud to Yud, Dalet to Dalet. INSIDE THE SECOND CIRCLE WITHIN THE UPPERMOST ONE, TO THE RIGHT OF THE CIRCLE: Yud to Yud, Vav to Vav, Dalet to Dalet; AND TO ITS LEFT: Dalet to Dalet, Lamed to Lamed, Tav to Tav. INSIDE THE THIRD CIRCLE, THAT IS WITHIN THE SECOND, TO THE RIGHT OF THE CIRCLE: Dalet to Dalet, Lamed to Lamed, Tav to Tav; AND TO ITS LEFT: Lamed to Lamed, Mem to Mem, Dalet to Dalet; Tav to Tav, Vav to Vav. IN THE CENTER OF THESE CIRCLES: Vav above; AND BELOW IT Yud-Hei, Yud-Hei, BELOW THEM Shadai, AND BELOW IT the Chariot of the fathers of Yisrael. They are the first Sfirah, NAMELY THE UPPER CIRCLE, which is sublime Keter, WHERE THE SIMPLE LETTERS ARE, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF KETER. We learned that "The eyes of Hashem are in every place, watching the evil and the good" (Mishlei 15:3). THE SECOND CIRCLE IS THE SECRET OF THAT VERSE; NAMELY THE SFIRAH CHOCHMAH, SINCE EYES ARE THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH. HENCE, IT CONTAINS THE LETTERS OF THE LETTERS FULLY SPELLED OUT, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH. Third: IN THE THIRD CIRCLE, THERE IS THE SFIRAH BINAH, SINCE IN IT ARE THE FULLY SPELLED OUT LETTERS OF THE FULLY SPELLED OUT LETTERS. They help AND POUR UPON Vav OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, which performed many miracles in the land of Egypt.

8. "...appeared to me at Luz"

Rabbi Aba explains that Luz is Jerusalem, namely Binah, which will give a blessing to Ya'akov and thereby ensure that the land will be given to his children. Rabbi Elazar further describes that the blessing will also ensure a pure land, and happy will be the portion of the land he will keep. Rabbi Elazar comments on circumcision, namely Yud, as being required in order to be called children of The Creator (holy children). Without it, as Rabbis Aba and Yosi point out, they will die without repentance, in this world and in the next.

The Relevance of this Passage

The awesome energy and Light that issues from the land of Yisrael, concentrated in the city of Jerusalem, is bestowed upon the reader. In addition, the power of purification, associated with the mystical Light aroused through circumcision, is imbued within our souls, helping to cleanse iniquities resulting from negative sexual behavior and adulterated thoughts.

64. "And Ya'akov said to Yosef, 'El Shadai appeared to me at Luz in the land of Cna'an'" (Beresheet 48:3). Rabbi Aba said: Luz is the Celestial Jerusalem, NAMELY BINAH, which puts the Shechinah to dwell with us. Supernal Ya'akov, ZEIR ANPIN, said to the lower YA'AKOV, BINAH blessed me, that it wants to increase you and give the land to your children. Luz, the Celestial Jerusalem, BINAH, WHICH IS the Holy One, blessed be He, gave a blessing which will be fulfilled in the Holy Land, but outside THE LAND, in another land, there shall be no blessing.

65. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion saying: "He that blesses a friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him" (Mishlei 27:14). The Holy One, blessed be He, called Yisrael brothers and friends. THE MEANING OF THIS VERSE "THAT BLESSES A FRIEND" REFERS TO THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO BLESSES YISRAEL. HE ASKS: What did He bless them? HE REPLIES: That this nation will be pure under Him, and that He will watch over them.

66. Happy is the portion of this pure nation WHICH HE KEEPS, for they are called dear children more than the supernal beings, as it is written: "You are the children of Hashem" (Devarim 14:1), all for that reason. What is this reason? HE REPLIES: That the name SHADAI is completed by their impression, for they are circumcised.

67. Come and see: The Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, is in a man's face, NAMELY SHIN, but Yud is missing and thus it is not complete. When Avraham came and became dear to the Holy One, blessed be He, He said to him: 'In you shall this name be completed. He circumcised himself, and the name became complete through the Yud of circumcision. For Shin is found in a man's face; NAMELY, THE TWO EYES AND THE NOSE IN THE MIDDLE. IN HIS ARM, you find Dalet, and the Yud is missing, the Yud of circumcision completes it. Then they are called children of Hashem, holy children.

68. When the sign of the holy covenant is defiled and put into the dominion of the other, NAMELY BY TRANSGRESSION, the holiness of the seal is gone from him, and he is considered as if he ruined the world, for he has defiled the seal upon which the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, is completed. Thus he ruins the world BY STOPPING THE BOUNTY OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, FROM THE WORLD.

69. Rabbi Aba was walking from Cappadocia with Rabbi Yosi. While they were walking they saw a man there with a mark upon his face. Woe to the wicked, who will die without repentance, and the mark will not disappear, neither in this world nor in the World to Come.

9. "Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you"

Rabbi Aba first explains that shame will not overcome Ya'akov, since he will keep his promise to his children, [Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you,] because to fail would be to invoke shame upon himself. The quotation is a blessing from God, meant to further ensure that Ya'akov will keep his promise. Rabbi Aba then ends by indicating that at the time of war against Amalek, only The Creator would go to fight.

The Relevance of this Passage

In truth, a man lacks the full power to overthrow the Satan, doubts and internal demons that dwell within him. Nonetheless, when a man willingly overcomes his doubt--known by the code word Amalek, The Creator will fight for him throughout his life, thus assuring a man's victory over the dark side and providing him with a life of fulfillment. This is precisely what occurs herein, as we peruse the letters of this passage with the consciousness and intent to eradicate our doubts and demons and allow The Creator to fight on our behalf.

70. "...and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you'" (Beresheet 48:4). Rabbi Aba opened the discussion speaking in relation to the verse: "Ya'akov shall not now be

ashamed, neither shall his face now grow pale" (Yeshayah 29:22). A man who promises good for another man will be ashamed not to keep his promise. How the more so is A PROMISE come to man from above. If he brings not the goodness to his children that he said he would, he will be ashamed.

71. The Holy One, blessed be He, said TO YA'AKOV, "Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you" by this blessing given to Me FROM BINAH. And I will give this land to your children. Yet HIS CHILDREN are not in the land of Yisrael, nor is THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, with them. THIS IS SUPPOSEDLY SHAMEFUL THAT HE PROMISES YET DOES NOT KEEP IT. But when Mashiach's end will come AND HIS PROMISE will be fulfilled, the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "Ya'akov shall not now be ashamed." Now the face of supernal Ya'akov will not be put to shame, because of what he said "and will give THIS LAND TO YOUR SEED AFTER YOU" (Beresheet 48:4). For until now, he had naught in his hand to give them, and he was ashamed. Now his promise was kept before the Master of heaven and earth.

72. As we said, the war against Amalek will be by strength of hand alone when the end will come, for it is a day for battle, as is written: "Then shall Hashem go out, and fight against those nations, AS WHEN HE FOUGHT IN THE DAY OF BATTLE," He Himself shall go out, and none other.

10. "And now your two sons...who were born to you"

Rabbi Yosi opens the discussion with the saying that the two sons, Efraim and Menashe, are born to Yisrael into 'exile'. Vav will help Ya'akov at the time of redemption, and give his children a portion of the land. The aspect of Efraim refers to the children who were forgotten, and the aspect of Menashe to those he regards as his own. But Hashem will attend to both aspects and redeem them, taking them out of their land of exile. Rabbi Aba then says that when God executes judgment upon Egypt, Yisrael will be redeemed from exile. Rabbi Shimon next explains that God will make a Chupah (marriage canopy) for every righteous man in Jerusalem, as a means for the giving of the Torah and the building of the Temple. Yisrael will be born after the redemption of the fathers (Chariots). Rabbi Shimon finally explains that all children born in Jerusalem after the redemption, will go to Heaven, will have only Hebrew names, and will inherit the land according to their numbers.

The Relevance of this Passage

The blessings and wisdom contained herein are varied and abounding. Put briefly, we are all children of Ya'akov and our exile continues to this very day. However, when one earnestly turns to the path of Ya'akov, the Torah--the Light of the Upper World [the Hebrew letter Vav] will assist him in removing the Evil Inclination [Egypt], the underlying cause behind the continued exile. Furthermore, this passage awakens the entire world to the truth of the Torah and the power of Kabbalah and connects the reader to the redemptive Light emanating from the Land of Yisrael. Our personal and global redemption is therefore quickened.

73. "And now your two sons...who were born to you" (Beresheet 48:5): These are Yisrael below, who are in exile, the children of the Holy One, blessed be He, who are born among the nations. TO WIT, THE VERSE: "YOUR TWO SONS, EFRAIM AND MENASHE, WHO WERE BORN TO YOU IN THE LAND OF EGYPT" (IBID.) REFERS TO YISRAEL WHO ARE IN EXILE AMONG THE NATIONS. FOR EGYPT INCLUDES ALL EXILES. We learned, Rabbi Yosi said, that the children of Yisrael who will be in the Holy Land of Yisrael, dwelling in the land, at the coming of Mashiach, will be with their brothers in that place. For exile will be only for those who live in a foreign land, and they are called 'exiles'.

74. "I remember my covenant with Ya'akov" (Vayikra 26:42). The Vav OF YA'AKOV is superfluous, WHICH INDICATES that the Vav which was gone when the Temple was destroyed will help Ya'akov at the time OF REDEMPTION, and will be an everlasting possession for the holy son YA'AKOV, whose descendants shall live in the country in which they lived before, happy is their portion.

75. The children who were exiled out of the land of Yisrael and were forgotten, THE ASPECT OF MENASHE, and multiplied AND INCREASED ACCORDING TO THE ASPECT OF EFRAIM: Supernal Ya'akov, ZEIR ANPIN, said to the one below, Your children who are out of the land

of Yisrael, born in exile in other lands, before I came to Egypt and sentenced them for their sins, I do not consider to be your children those who were born in exile in a foreign land, though they be many, THE ASPECT OF EFRAIM, and forgotten, THE ASPECT OF MENASHE, they are my own CHILDREN. But when I saw them in this exile, I healed their pains and heard their prayers, Reuven, "Surely Hashem has looked upon my affliction" (Bereshheet 29:32) and for Shimon, "Because Hashem has heard that I was hated" (Ibid. 33). THIS IS THE MEANING OF THE VERSE "EFRAIM AND MENASHE" WHO MULTIPLIED AND WERE FORGOTTEN IN EXILE "AS REUVEN AND SHIMON THEY SHALL BE MINE," TO WIT, HE WILL SEE THEIR POVERTY, HEAR THEIR PRAYER AND REDEEM THEM, ACCORDING TO THE MEANING OF THE NAMES REUVEN AND SHIMON. Think of it as if they were before Me, and when we shall return from Egypt, WHICH INCLUDES ALL THE EXILES, after executing Judgment on them, we shall take them out of the land of their exile.

76. Rabbi Aba said: From this WE UNDERSTAND THAT AFTER HE WILL EXECUTE JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT, WHICH INCLUDES ALL THE NATIONS, YISRAEL WILL BE REDEEMED FROM EXILE, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an offering to Hashem" (Yeshayah 66:20). Scripture means that when the Holy One, blessed be He, will execute Judgment upon Egypt; NAMELY UPON ALL THE NATIONS WHICH THE EARLIER VERSE MENTIONED. At that time, all the nations will bring an offering when they hear about the Holy One, blessed be He, "and all the nations shall flow to it" (Yeshayah 2:2).

77. We learned that Rabbi Shimon said: The Holy One, blessed be He, will make for every righteous man a canopy in Jerusalem. It is written: "the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride" (Yirmeyah 16:9) when the Shechinah will return to the King and He will engage Her, as it is written: "Go forth, O daughters of Tzion, and behold...on the day of his wedding, and on the day of the gladness of his heart" (Shir Hashirim 2:11). "The day of his wedding" is the giving of the Torah, and "the day of the gladness of his heart" is the building of the Temple, may it be built soon in our days.

78. "And your offspring, which you beget after them, shall be yours" (Bereshheet 48:6). This is Yisrael below, WHO WILL BE BORN AFTER THE REDEMPTION to the fathers, who are Chariots, and their names will be in the secret of those born AFTER REDEMPTION. They will be named after their brothers in their inheritance.

79. We learned that Rabbi Shimon said: "And your issue (also: 'your homeland')" is Terrestrial Jerusalem, NAMELY YOUR HOMELAND. FOR THE WORDS "born at home" (Vayikra 18:9) in relation to the portion concerning incest, refer to the Terrestrial Jerusalem. THE MEANING OF THE VERSE IS that people who will be born in that Jerusalem will not only return to their Master in heaven, but will also convert AFTER REDEMPTION. They will have only names of Yisrael, not according to their father, such as 'the proselyte of Cappadocia,' but a name of Yisrael.

80. "Shall be your": THE VERSE means that they will have names of Yisrael, after their brothers in their inheritance. And when they return, they will inherit together with Yisrael in the country, and each tribe will take its own, AND ALSO for people of their own, CONVERTS. Each will inherit the land according to its numbers.

11. "Rachel died by me on the way"

Rabbi Aba begins by explaining the discrepancy in the verb tense in "they have come back," used in The Creator's promise for the future. Rabbi Aba then explains how Rabbi Elazar answers that the Shechinah will think her children have died by judgement. Only then will she return to her husband. "Rachel weeping" refers to the Shechinah being told by her husband that her children have perished. Only then will He tell her that her children have been redeemed. God then tells her that those who have died in the war will be resurrected. Rabbi Shimon tells us that the quotation refers to the Shechinah's children who die in the war, but are resurrected and will return to Efrat, the land of Yisrael. Rabbi Aba finally explains the meaning of Lechem, derived from Milchamah (war), and "fought" (lacham).

The Relevance of this Passage

Two paths to the final redemption lie before us: a path of destruction --war and death--and a path of mercy that offers us protection, the path of spiritual transformation. We have the

free will to choose our fate. In the end, all the souls of mankind will be resurrected and the arrival of the Mashiach will bring immortality and endless fulfillment. The Light that radiates from this passage of Zohar awakens the wisdom to walk the path of spiritual transformation. It helps accelerate the arrival of the Resurrection and the Mashiach through the path of mercy for all mankind.

81. "And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died by me." (Beresheet 48:7) Rabbi Aba opened the discussion, saying: "A voice was heard in Rama" (Yirmeyah 31:14) followed by: "Thus says Hashem; Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears: for your work shall be rewarded, says Hashem; and they shall (lit. 'they have') come back again to their own border" (Ibid. 15). HE ASKS: It does not say 'They shall come back' IN THE FUTURE TENSE, but that they have come back. YET THIS IS A PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE, AND IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN 'AND THEY SHALL COME BACK.'

82. HE ANSWERS: Come and see, Rabbi Elazar said that when there will be justice upon the mountain, and the Shechinah will be adorned on the mountain, She will think her children perished by Judgment. The secret is, "Sing, O barren one, you that did not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud" (Yeshayah 54:1). We have learned that many children of the throne will be Her own CHILDREN, as it is written: "For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife" (Ibid.). The Shechinah will then return to Her husband. "On that day Hashem shall be one, and His name One" (Zecharyah 14:9).

83. Before that, the Shechinah will say to Her husband, Where are my children? He will say to Her that they were judged, and She will think they perished by judgment, and weeps for Her children, who perished by justice. THIS IS THE SECRET OF "A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMA... RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN," AND HE WILL SAY TO HER, "KEEP YOUR VOICE FROM WEEPING... FOR YOUR WORK SHALL BE REWARDED." For you are to be greatly rewarded by Me for being with them, and the children have already come back from the hated land, FOR THEY HAVE ALREADY BEEN REDEEMED.

84. HE ASKS: Did not Yosef know his mother died? Indeed, he was with her when she died. WHY DID YA'AKOV HAVE TO TELL HIM THAT? HE REPLIES: Supernal Yisrael said that when he prophesied about the redemption of Yisrael, the Shechinah will stir, and the Congregation of Yisrael will stir and wage war against the nations. Some OF YISRAEL will die IN THIS WAR. They will slowly approach the land of Yisrael. When She weeps FOR HER DEAD SONS, the Holy One, blessed be He, will say to Her, Do not be afraid, there is a reward for the sons who died IN THE WAR for My name's sake. The others, who did not die, have already returned and those who died will live again through the resurrection of the dead.

85. "Rachel died by me." She died for the unity of the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He. TO WIT, HER SONS WHO WERE KILLED FOR THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE HOLY NAME. THE VERSE says of it: "When yet there was but a little way" (Beresheet 48:7), WHICH MEANS they died for the unity of the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, outside the land of Yisrael, AT THE WAR FOR THE COMING TO YISRAEL. For in the land of Yisrael, none shall die. THEREFORE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "WHEN YET THERE WAS BUT A LITTLE WAY TO COME TO EFRAT" TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL, FOR AFTER COMING TO THE LAND OF YISRAEL THEY WILL DIE NO MORE.

86. We have learned that Rabbi Aba said: Yisrael will be engaged in war on the way to Efrat, and many of them will die. Then they will rise at the resurrection of the dead, and will have more power than those who reached Jerusalem before them, WHO DID NOT DIE IN THE WAR.

87. Why is this holy place called 'Lechem' (Eng. 'bread'), AS IT IS WRITTEN "THAT IS BET LECHEM"? (BERESHEET 48:7) HE ANSWERS: Since it is one of the Names of the Holy One, blessed be He, they will die there IN WAR for sanctifying His name, hand ON THE THRONE OF YAH. THIS MEANS they will die there TO MAKE COMPLETE the name Yah, WHICH SHALL NOT BE COMPLETE IN YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI UNTIL THE MEMORY OF AMALEK SHALL BE FORGOTTEN. THEREFORE THE PURPOSE OF THIS WAR IS TO COMPLETE THE NAME OF YUD-HEI WITH VAV-HEI. THUS THE PLACE IS CALLED LECHEM DERIVED FROM MILCHAMAH (WAR), for it fought (lachim) in exile to render complete the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He.

12. "And Yisrael beheld Yosef's sons"

Rabbi Aba explains that lower Yisrael will be joined with the children of Yisrael into a great crowd, at which point they will all be circumcised and converted. Together, they will then return to their country with love for each other, and only then, "The Creator shall be one." Rabbi Shimon next explains that sores on the skin of the people of Yisrael represent the borders that will separate them from the others in their new land.

The Relevance of this Passage

The universal truth of the Torah and the spiritual power of the Zohar are awakened within the souls of all mankind, facilitating the objective of global unity. The purifying Light that shines and cleanses during circumcision helps refine our souls and purge the Evil Inclination, associated negative sexual behavior, from the souls of all mankind. As well, the arrival of the final redemption is accelerated and our commitment to the path of Torah is strengthened.

88. "And Yisrael beheld Yosef's sons, and said, 'Who are these?'" (Beresheet 48:8) Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse, "Then shall you say in your heart, 'Who has begotten me these'" (Yeshayah 49:21). HE ASKS: What does scripture mean by that? HE ANSWERS: Lower Yisrael saw that the children of Yisrael will come before Him, when they will come "from Elam and from Shin'ar and from Chamat and from the islands of the sea" (Ibid. 11:11), they will all gather into a great number. The Shechinah will say, Who are all these, are there not any who are unfit, of foreign children? They will say to Him, we are all Your children, there is no foreigner among us. For they will be separated the one from the other, THE MOTLEY CROWD WILL BE SEPARATED FROM YISRAEL, and they will be circumcised together and converted. The proselyte then will return together with Yisrael and they will be together.

89. We have learned that proselytes are as bad to Yisrael as a sore on the skin. It is written, "For Hashem will have Mercy on Ya'akov, and will yet choose Yisrael, and set them in their own land: and the stranger shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Ya'akov " (Ibid. 14:1). When the children will return to their country and there will be love among them, then "Hashem shall be one, and His name One" (Zecharyah 14:9). The proselyte will then cleave to the people of Yisrael and will be like a sore on their skin.

90. HE ASKS: Why are they LIKE A SORE ON THE SKIN? HE SAYS, come and hearken, Rabbi Shimon said that IT REFERS TO the borders of the country, for every one will want to live in the land of Yisrael, and the people OUTSIDE ITS BORDERS will be afraid. HENCE it is written: "And let them stretch forth the curtains of your habitations" (Yeshayah 54:2). The verse implies that the curtains you had before FROM THE TIME OF EXILE should be stretched and fortified more than those of the other nations so to speak, whom you saw strengthening them, when you were with the other nations; NAMELY IN EXILE AMONG THE NATIONS. AND THE PROSELYTES shall be many.

13. "Whom Hashem has given me"

Rabbi Shimon first describes how the Torah (zeh) is set before the children of Yisrael. Rabbi Rav Nachman then explains the difference between zeh and zot, pointing out that the Torah is referred to as "Tor," in the feminine, which is a name of a dove--meaning "the time of the singing bird is come," sung by the Levites, which is the secret of the female aspect of the Torah--the turtle being the secret of the male aspect. Rabbi Rav Nachman then explains that Hei (holiness) ? is more important than Aleph ?. Next, Rabbi Aba tells us how the measurement of the span of God is 670 years, from heaven to earth. Rabbi Aba concludes by explaining why the Torah is called Zeh.

The Relevance of this Passage

All reality consists of both male and female energies. When these two polar opposites are united, Light flows and shines upon supernal and corporeal worlds. Our physical world of Malchut embodies female energy, while the Upper Realm of Zeir Anpin corresponds to male. This passage enjoins the two worlds, allowing the resplendent Light of The Creator to vanquish all forms of darkness dwelling in our midst.

91. "And Yosef said to his father, 'They are my sons, whom Elohim has given me in this here (Heb. zeh maccs.).'" (Beresheet 48:9) Rabbi Shimon explained in relation to this the verse: "And that (Heb. zot fem.) is the Torah which Moshe set before the children of Yisrael" (Devarim 4:44). When lower Yisrael -WHO ARE CALLED YOSEF- said: When Supernal Yisrael is high above them, "They are my children," for the Holy One, blessed be He, gave me the Torah CALLED ZEH (ENG. 'THIS'). THEREFORE SCRIPTURE SAYS "IN THIS (HEB. ZEH)." Behold YISRAEL AND their true laws, according to the laws of the Torah which were given them. Come and see: When Yisrael will shelter under the wings of the Shechinah, the Torah is called 'zeh,' as in "this (zeh) is my El, and I will praise Him" (Shemot 15:2). THIS IS ALSO THE MEANING OF THE VERSE "WHOM ELOHIM HAS GIVEN ME IN THIS," WHICH IS THE TORAH. But as long as David was not speaking from under the wings of the Shechinah, but prophesied that which will be, THE TORAH is called zot (Eng. 'this', fem.), AS IN "AND THAT (HEB. ZOT) IS THE TORAH."

92. Rav Nachman said: From this, WE UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'ZEH' AND 'ZOT', AS IT IS WRITTEN: "Though a host should camp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident (lit. 'in zot')" (Tehilim 27:4), zot (Eng. 'this') being the Torah when Mashiach will come, WHEN THE TORAH SHALL BE REVEALED. It is therefore written: "And the voice of the turtledove (Heb. tor) is heard in our land" (Shir Hashirim 2:12) IN THE MASCULINE, INSTEAD OF TORAH, WHICH IS THE FEMININE. TOR IS A NAME OF A DOVE. Why was Torah likened to a dove? Because its voice is sweet like that of a dove. This voice will resound when Mashiach will come at Judgment Day; NAMELY BEFORE REDEMPTION, WHEN MASHIACH WILL EXECUTE JUDGMENT AND WAGE WAR AGAINST THE NATIONS WHICH ENSLAVE YISRAEL. YET IT IS NOT YET THE TIME TO REVEAL THE TORAH. IT IS THEREFORE CALLED 'TOR' IN THE MASCULINE, AND ZEH ('THIS', MASC.).

93. We learned: "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing bird is come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." (Ibid.). The flowers are the patriarchs of the Chariot, AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, AND YA'AKOV, who will rise in the world and will be seen IN THE LAND.

94. "The time of the singing bird is come," that is, the singing that will be sung by the Levites when they return to their worship of yore. "The voice of the turtledove" IS THE SECRET OF THE VERSE "whom Elohim has given me in this (Heb. bazeh)." THIS REFERS TO THE SECRET OF THE TORAH IN ITS MALE ASPECT, CALLED 'ZEH', WHICH IS ALLUDED TO IN THE VERSE "WHOM ELOHIM HAS GIVEN ME IN THIS (HEB. BAZEH)." These are the words of the Torah which are pleasant as the voice of the turtledove, Zeh.

95. HE ASKS: What does this mean? HE ANSWERS: The secret of this matter is that when the children of Yisrael are not sheltered under the wings of the Shechinah, the Aleph of 'zot' descends beneath all THE GRADES, and the Hei of "zeh (this) my El, and I will praise Him" departs. Since the Temple was ruined, the Hei could not dwell among the idolatrous nations and the Holy Hei was separated from the Name. When the children of Yisrael will return to their country, the Holy Hei, which was cut from the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, shall return to 'zeh' and come out of the Day of Judgment, while the Aleph will be mended AND COME BACK TO 'ZOT'. HE ASKS: WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT, Hei or Aleph? HE ANSWERS: Hei is more important with respect to holiness, and Aleph is more important with respect to the letters.

96. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse: "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span?" (Yeshayah 40:12). 'Zeh (Heb. Zayin-Hei)' and the turtledove (Tav-Vav-Resh) are supposedly alike; NAMELY, THEY JOIN TOGETHER. Zayin OF ZEH joins Resh OF TOR, the Resh OF TOR joins the Tav OF TOR, and from this comes the combination of Zeret (Eng. 'span'). VAV OF TOR IS ATTACHED TO HEI OF ZEH, TO FORM VAV-HEI OF THE NAME OF YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI-ZEIR AND HIS NUKVA. The measurement of the span of the Holy One, blessed be He, is 670 years, from heaven (ZEIR ANPIN) to earth (THE NUKVA). HE ASKS: How can this be? HE SAYS: Zeh-tor HAS TWO PERMUTATIONS: 1) Zeret-Vav-Hei 2) Hei-Vav-Terez, in which Hei OF ZEH comes before Vav OF TOR. Hei OF ZEH precedes Vav OF TOR, THE PRECEDENCE OF HEI ALLUDES TO BINAH, WHICH POURS ABUNDANCE UPON ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS THE VAV. The Vav before the Tav OF TOR and Tav before Resh OF TOR and Resh OF TOR before Zayin OF ZEH: THIS IS THE PERMUTATION OF HEI-VAV-TEREZ, THE SECRET OF 670 YEARS FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH.

"Foursquare it shall be, being doubled; a span shall be its length, and a span shall be the breadth of it" (Shemot 28:26).

97. "And he said: Bring them, I pray you, to me, and I will bless them." (Beresheet 48:9). He says, Since they study the Torah, AS SAID "WHOM ELOHIM HAS GIVEN ME IN THIS (ZEH)," which is the Torah, AND THE ATTRIBUTE Zeh IS BETWEEN THEM, I will bless them.

98. This is the secret of the words, "And he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said: 'Ya'akov'" (Beresheet 32:28): THE NAME YA'AKOV IS OF SMALLNESS WITHOUT MOCHIN. IT IS THEN WRITTEN, "And he said: 'Why is it that you ask after my name?'" (Ibid. 30). HE SAID TO HIM: What is it, WHY DO YOU ASK FOR MY NAME, A NAME BEING UNDERSTANDING? Yet in the former verse, YOU SAID THAT YOUR NAME IS YA'AKOV, WHICH MEANS A LITTLE IS ENOUGH FOR YOU, AND YOU DO NOT WISH TO ATTAIN AND KNOW THE NAME. Like we explained elsewhere. There is another secret IN THIS VERSE, "And Ya'akov asked him... And he said: 'Why is it (Zeh) that you ask after my name?' And he blessed him there." That is, he said to him that he will bless him due to Zeh.

99. We learned a great mystery from this verse, but I have come before you only to teach you the verse I just spoke of, saying that the Torah is called Zeh. It is also written: "That (Zeh) Sinai before Hashem the Elohim of Yisrael" (Shoftim 5:5), SINAI BEING THE TORAH GIVEN ON SINAI. ALSO, when the Torah was given by Moshe, IT WAS SAID OF HIM, "This (Zeh) man Moshe" (Shemot 32:1), and also "this is my El, and I will praise him," WHICH MEANS the Torah CALLED ZEH descended before the Elohim of Yisrael. THEN THEY SAID: "THIS IS MY EL..."

14. "Now the eyes of Yisrael were dim from age"

Rabbi Chizkiyah first explains that this language is from lower Yisrael, since none of it is found in the Torah. Since the exiles did not follow the rules of the Torah, they became old and weak. Rabbi Chiya then says that when the exiles return to their land, God will invest them with His spirit. Rabbi Aba goes on to explain the meaning of "dim" as referring to the length in which the exiles lived without "light." Rabbi Aba then answers the question of why the Torah speaks in the language and names of men.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we are connected to the divine language of the Torah, whose letters are the bridge between the Upper and Lower Worlds. The words of the Torah are like cables that carry spiritual current from the supernal realm into the material dimension. The energy that flows between these two worlds helps us expedite the end of both our personal exile and the global one. This Light illuminates for us the importance of spiritual transformation through the path of Torah and strengthens our commitment to it.

100. "Now the eyes of Yisrael were dim from age." (Beresheet 48:19). Rabbi Chizkiyah taught that this is lower Yisrael, for such language is not found THROUGH THE WHOLE TORAH. For when YISRAEL will be in exile all the days of destruction, they will become old with age, and will not be able to behold the face of the Shechinah until another spirit will come upon them.

Sitrei Torah (Secrets of the Torah) ?

101. HE EXPLAINS FURTHER that they were defiled among the nations IN EXILE, and did not follow the laws of the Torah as they should have. They sat a long while among the gentiles, generation after generation, and learned their ways, AS IT IS WRITTEN "BUT WERE MINGLED AMONG THE NATIONS, AND LEARNED THEIR WORKS" (TEHILIM 106:35). When they will return to their land, they will not at first be able to behold the face of the Shechinah until the Holy One, blessed be He, will invest them with His spirit.

102. Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion saying: "And I will put My spirit within you" (Yechezkel 36:27). Then he said: "And cause you to follow My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments, and do them" (Ibid.). For after I will put My spirit within you, and holiness, you shall follow My rules and go by them.

103. "So that he could not see" (Beresheet 48:10): Rabbi Aba opened the discussion saying: "In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favor is as a cloud bringing the spring rain" (Mishlei 16:15). For when they will receive the face of the Shechinah of the Holy One, blessed be He, and be occupied with the Chariots, by which the world endures; NAMELY THE LIVNG CREATURES WHICH CARRY THE CHARIOT (YECHZKEL CHAPTER 1), THEN IT WILL BE SAID OF THEM "IN THE LIGHT OF THE KING'S COUNTENANCE IS LIFE..."

104. Come and see: You shall not find in the language of the whole scripture IN THE PORTION OF VAYECHI but words which talk of men, and no verses which speak of the Holy One, blessed be He. TO WIT, THOUGH THEY SPEAK OF REDEMPTION, WHEN YA'AKOV IS MENTIONED, IT REFERS TO SUPERNAL YA'AKOV OR SUPERNAL YISRAEL; NAMELY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. WHY DOES SCRIPTURE SPEAK IN THE LANGUAGE AND NAMES OF MEN? HE ANSWERS: For when they will return to their land, and the Holy One, blessed be He, will put upon them the spirit of Wisdom, they will always speak of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it says, "My tongue also shall tell of your righteousness" (Tehilim 71:24).

End of Sitrei Torah

15. "And Ya'akov lived," part two

Rabbi Chiya opens the discussion by saying that God called the children of Yisrael "righteous" and that they will be happy in the world to come because they cleaved to His body (the Central Column). Rabbi Yitzchak then explains that the land they shall inherit will be supernal, meaning the Malchut. Then, we learn, they will surely inherit the Shechinah, the land of the living. The secret of the Malchut is that the land is one of planting, referring in scripture to God planting when He created the universe. The children of Yisrael will thus inherit the land forever. Rabbis Ya'akov and Yehuda next explain why there is no space in the Torah between the portion of Vayigash and the beginning of the portion of Vayechi. Rabbi Shimon tells us that there are no spaces between the two verses separating "And Ya'akov lived" to indicate that Yisrael and his children lived in luxury like kings. Rabbi Shimon goes on to explain the importance of seventeen years, because Ya'akov was sorrowful all his life, but the beauty of Yosef upon first seeing him, reminded Ya'akov of his wife Rachel, and all his sorrow fell away. But when Yosef, being seventeen, was separated from Ya'akov, we learn, his sorrow returned. Therefore, Ya'akov lived in Egypt "for seventeen years." Rabbi Elazar next tells us why the word "play" is mentioned three times in the verse; it refers to the three Columns. Rabbi Aba explains the three Columns as south, north, and east. From them come the three worlds: The Right Column is called "south," the Left Column "north," the Central Column "east." Rabbi Shimon concludes by pointing out that "Your fathers" refers to three: Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power of the three Column System lies at the heart of this passage. The three Columns refer to the following behavioral traits: Right Column signifies a man's desire to share, the God-like nature of his soul. Left Column refers to the covetous desire of receiving for the self alone, the insatiable impulses of the ego. The crucial Central Column correlates to a man's free will to resist his selfish desires and instead, choose the truthful longings lingering in his soul, which include unconditional sharing. When a man integrates these three Columns into his life in a spiritually balanced way, he creates a circuit of energy igniting profound Light in his life. The patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov, were the Vessels and template that established these three Columns in our physical world by virtue of their deeds throughout their lifetimes. Upon their merit and through the mention of their names in this passage, we can draw upon their respective strength and wisdom to manage these three traits in a fashion that will bring forth spiritual luxuries into our own lives.

105. "And Ya'akov lived." Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion saying: "Your people also shall be all righteous...they shall inherit the land forever" (Yeshayah 60:21). Happy are Yisrael of all the other idolatrous nations, for the Holy One, blessed be He, called them righteous, so they may receive the inheritance of the World to Come, and to delight in that world, as it is written: "Then shall you delight yourself in Hashem" (Ibid. 58:14). For what reason? Because YISRAEL cleaved to the body of the King; NAMELY THE CENTRAL COLUMN, as it is written "But you that did cleave of Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4).

106. Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion saying: "Your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever." This verse is a sublime mystery among the reapers of the field, TO WIT, THOSE WHO MERITED TO RECEIVE THE FRUIT OF THEIR LABOR IN THE SUPERNAL FIELD, THE NUKVA. For we have learned that among the secrets of the Agada, Rabbi Shimon taught about the possession of the supernal inheritance of the land, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. No one inherits it save the one called righteous, for the Nukva cleaves to him in order to sweeten THE BITTER JUDGMENTS IN HER. The righteous then surely inherits the Shechinah.

107. Here too, in His love for Yisrael, the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "Your people also shall be all righteous," for which reason "they shall inherit the land for ever." For they are worthy of inheriting the Shechinah, AS THE RIGHTEOUS INHERITS THE SHECHINAH. Wherefore are the children of Yisrael called righteous, and wherefore do they inherit the Shechinah? Because they are circumcised, and as we learned, whoever is circumcised and enters this possession, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH, whoever keeps the covenant, enters and cleaves to the body of the King, HE BECOMES A CHARIOT TO ZEIR ANPIN, and enters the righteous, BY BECOMING A CHARIOT TO YESOD. Hence, the children of Yisrael are called righteous and "they shall inherit the land for ever." What is this land? It is the land of the living, NAMELY THE SHECHINAH.

108. Scripture repeats, "The branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Yeshayah 60:21). "The branch of my planting" is one of the branches the Holy One, blessed be He, planted when He created the universe, as it is written: "And Hashem Elohim planted a garden eastward in Eden" (Beresheet 2:8). This land is one of the planting, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. Therefore scripture says, "The branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified."

109. According to another explanation, "Your people also shall be all righteous": are Ya'akov and his children, who went down to Egypt among a stiff-necked nation, and they all remained righteous. Therefore scripture says OF THEM that "they shall inherit the land for ever" because they went up to inherit the Holy Land from EGYPT.

110. "And Ya'akov lived in the land of Egypt." HE ASKS: Why is this portion closed, THERE BEING NO SPACE AT ALL IN THE TORAH BETWEEN THE END OF VAYIGASH AND THE BEGINNING OF THE PORTION OF VAYECHI? Rabbi Ya'akov said: When Ya'akov died, Yisrael's eyes were closed. Rabbi Yehuda said: Then, AFTER THE DEATH OF YA'AKOV, they descended into exile, and THE EGYPTIANS enslaved YISRAEL.

111. Rabbi Shimon said: It is written above, "And Yisrael dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen; and they took possession of it, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly" (Beresheet 47:27), WHICH MEANS THEY LIVED IN LUXURY LIKE KINGS. THE VERSE IS FOLLOWED BY, "And Ya'akov lived," WITHOUT ANY SPACE BETWEEN THE VERSES. THIS INDICATES that we should not separate the two VERSES. As YISRAEL lived in luxury and had pleasures and were short of nothing, so did Ya'akov live in luxury and pleasure. Therefore, THE VERSES are not separated.

112. Here IN EGYPT, it is considered that "Ya'akov lived" FOR IT WAS CONSIDERED LIFE FOR HIM. It was not said of him: 'Ya'akov lived' all his life, for his life was that of sorrow. Of him it is written, "I had no repose" IN LAVAN'S HOUSE, "nor had I rest" FROM ESAV, "nor was I quiet" BECAUSE OF DINAH AND SHCHEM; "yet trouble came" OF SELLING YOSEF (Iyov 3:26). But after he went down to Egypt, it is said of him "And lived." He saw his son a king, he saw all his sons pure and righteous, living in pleasure and luxury, and he dwelling in their midst as good wine resting on its lees. Then it is said: "And Ya'akov lived." THEREFORE, there is no separation, NO SPACE, between "And grew and multiplies exceedingly" and "And Ya'akov lived," and so it should be, THE ONE BEING THE CONTINUANCE OF THE OTHER.

113. "Seventeen years": HE ASKS: Why seventeen years? HE ANSWERS: Rabbi Shimon said that Ya'akov was sorrowful all his life, and his days passed in sorrow in the beginning. When he saw Yosef standing before him, Ya'akov looked at Yosef and his soul was made whole as if he saw Yosef's mother. For the beauty of Yosef resembled that of Rachel, and it seemed to him as if he had never known sorrow.

114. When Yosef departed from him, it came to pass that "I had no repose, nor had I rest, nor was I quiet; yet trouble came." For this trouble was harder to Ya'akov than everything

that came over him. When Yosef was separated from him, it is said: "Yosef being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock" (Beresheet 37:2). All his days, Ya'akov had no such sorrow. He used to weep every day for the seventeen years of Yosef.

115. They replied to him from heaven, "And Yosef shall put his hand on your eyes" (Beresheet 46:4). Here are other seventeen years for you: in pleasure and delight, luxury and lack for nothing, This is the meaning of: "And Ya'akov lived in the land of Egypt for seventeen years." (Beresheet 47:28). Come and see: The Shechinah of the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, was with him all those years, for which reason ALL THOSE YEARS IN EGYPT are called 'Life'.

116. Come and see, it is written: "The spirit of Ya'akov their father revived." From this we understand that his spirit was dead earlier, and also he had no intention of drawing and receiving another spirit, as the Supernal Spirit does not dwell on an empty place. Rabbi Yosi said: The Shechinah dwells only in a whole spot, not in a place of deficiency or sadness, but a proper place, a place of joy. Therefore, the Shechinah did not rest upon him for all the years that Yosef had been separated from his father and Ya'akov was in sadness.

117. We learned that Rabbi Elazar said that Rabbi Aba said: It is written, "Serve Hashem with gladness; come before His presence with singing" (Tehilim 100:2). The verse teaches us that the service of the Holy One, blessed be He, should only be performed through joyfulness, as said Rabbi Elazar, that the Shechinah does not dwell upon sadness. It is written, "But now bring me a minstrel (player). And it came to pass, when the minstrel (player) played" (II Melachim 3:15): HE ASKS: For what reason is the word 'play' mentioned three times IN THIS VERSE? HE ANSWERS: In order to awaken the spirit from the source of wholeness, ZEIR ANPIN WHICH INCLUDES THE THREE COLUMNS, the whole spirit. THREE TIMES 'PLAY' CORRESPONDS TO ITS THREE COLUMNS.

118. Rabbi Aba said: We have learned that everything is to be found in the four winds: THE THREE COLUMNS OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED SOUTH, NORTH, EAST; AND THE SHECHINAH WHICH RECEIVES THE THREE COLUMNS IS THE SECRET OF THE WEST WIND. FROM THEM COME OUT THE THREE WORLDS: BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, ASIYAH AND EVERYTHING THAT IS IN THEM. All the roots of the upper and lower worlds hold on to them. We have learned that the one enters AND SHINES, NAMELY THE RIGHT COLUMN CALLED SOUTH, and the other comes out BUT DOES NOT SHINE; NAMELY THE LEFT COLUMN CALLED NORTH, WHICH DOES NOT SHINE WITHOUT THE RIGHT COLUMN. Another one is closed, TO WIT, THE CENTRAL COLUMN CALLED EAST, WHICH SHINES ONLY BY COVERED CHASSADIM, BEFORE HIS MATING WITH THE NUKVA, and the other one revealed; NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH SHINES BY UNCOVERED CHASSADIM AT THE TIME OF UNION WITH ZEIR ANPIN. SHE IS CALLED THE WEST WIND. All THE WINDS join one another; NAMELY THEY ARE INCLUDED BY ONE ANOTHER, THEN they become the fathers of everything FOR ALL REALITY, BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH, ARE DRAWN AND BORN OF THEM.

119. Rabbi Shimon said: "Hashem took delight only in your fathers" (Devarim 10:15). "Your fathers" are exactly three, NAMELY AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK, YA'AKOV. It is written "only" meaning THERE IS NO MORE THAN THESE THREE. From them are branched out and cleave to them all the others, THE GRADES OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH, who go up TO MAYIN NUKVIN, TO MALE AND FEMALE, to adorn the name; NAMELY TO DRAW NEW MOCHIN UPON THE NUKVA, WHICH IS CALLED NAME.

16. Two camels

Rabbi Yosi starts by saying that the springs of wisdom were stopped when Rabbi Shimon died. He then explains how Rabbi Yehuda failed to fulfill the words of the verse when he came upon bundles of woolen clothes, which had fallen off two camels and were being attacked by birds. A man walks by and points out his failure to drive the birds away. Rabbi Yosi then explains Rabbi Yehuda's subsequent dream, and that when he woke up, he knew Rabbi Shimon's death caused wisdom to depart from the earth. Rabbi Aba then reveals that manna is the secrets of the Torah, but they are "to be kept," which means hidden.

The Relevance of this Passage

When a great soul departs this physical existence, the full measure of spiritual Light revealed though his lifelong deeds, is awakened each year on the day of his passing. Rabbi Shimon's

deeds included the revelation of the Zohar, the mystical secrets of the Torah and soul of the universe. Thus, the brightest of all Lights shines forth in this passage at the mention of Rabbi Shimon's leaving this world. This Light helps to strengthen our connection to the Zohar, Rabbi Shimon, and the hidden Light of the Torah.

120. We learned that Rabbi Yosi said: Since Rabbi Shimon left the cave, nothing was concealed from the friends. They would behold supernal mysteries, which were revealed to them, as if they were given on Mount Sinai at that hour. After RABBI SHIMON died, it is written: "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped" (Beresheet 8:2). TO WIT, THE SPRINGS OF WISDOM WERE STOPPED. The friends contemplated these matters but did not understand their secrets.

121. For one day, Rabbi Yehuda sat at the gate of Tiberias. He saw two camels laden with BUNDLES OF expensive woolen clothes. The load fell, and birds came TO WHERE IT WOULD FALL. But the birds were torn before the clothes reached it.

122. After that, other birds came on THE TORN BIRDS. They sat upon the rock and were not torn. They shouted AT THE BIRDS, TO REMOVE THEM FROM THE TORN BIRDS, but they would not go. They heard a voice saying that the crown upon the crowns dwells in darkness, and its master is outside.

123. While RABBI YEHUDA was sitting, a man passed by and looked AT THE BIRDS. He said: This man did not fulfill the words of the verse: "And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Avram drove them away" (Beresheet 15:11). Rabbi Yehuda said: But I tried TO MAKE THE BIRDS GO AWAY FROM THEM BY SHOUTING AT THEM, but they would not go. The man turned his head TO RABBI YEHUDA and said: He did not yet pluck the hair of his master, nor did he shear the lady. RABBI YEHUDA DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT HE MEANT. He ran after him three miles AND BEGGED HIM TO EXPLAIN what he said, but he did not. Rabbi Yehuda was grieved.

124. One day RABBI YEHUDA slept under a tree. In his dream he saw four wings prepared and Rabbi Shimon mounting upon them with a book of the Torah. He left no book of sublime mysteries and Aggada, but took all with him to heaven. He saw them hidden from his eyes, never to be revealed again.

125. When he woke up he said: Assuredly, when Rabbi Shimon died, Wisdom departed from the earth. Woe to the generation, from which the precious stone they held on to, which was the support of the upper and the lower, was gone.

126. He came before Rabbi Aba and told him. Rabbi Aba raised his hands to his head and wept. He said: A mill to grind good manna every day; NAMELY REVEALING THE SECRETS OF THE TORAH, CALLED MANNA. It is gathered, as it is written: "He that gathered least gathered a quantity of ten homer" (Bemidbar 11:32). Now the mill and the manna are gone, and nothing remained of it in the world, save as it is written: "Take a jar, and put an omer full of manna in it, and lay it up before Hashem, to be kept for your generations" (Shemot 16:33). It does not say 'in an open place' but "to be kept," which means to be put in a hidden place. Who could now reveal secrets? Who even knows them?

127. RABBI ABA whispered to Rabbi Yehuda, saying: Surely the man you saw was Eliyahu. He did not agree to reveal secrets to you, so that you may realize the worth of Rabbi Shimon, who lived in your days, and the generation will weep for him. RABBI ABA said to him: We should indeed mourn him.

128. Rabbi Yehuda wept for him every day, for he was with him, RABBI SHIMON, at the holy assembly of Rabbi Shimon with the other friends. He said TO RABBI ABA, Woe is me that I was not gone at the holy assembly that day with the three who were gone, RABBI YOSI THE SON OF RABBI YA'AKOV, RABBI CHIZKIYAH, AND RABBI YISA, instead of beholding this generation that is changed.

17. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine"

Rabbi Yehuda begins by explaining to Rabbi Aba that the verse, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine," means, in other words, that "the heavens are the heavens of The Creator." He

then explains the importance of the holy garments, which are Aba and Ima. The high priest above is Aba, and the one below, Ima. They are the secret of the Malchut of Zeir Anpin.

The Relevance of this Passage

When the energies of male and female unite, spiritual energy is free to flow throughout all the worlds. By revealing the secrets of the holy garments which are Aba [Male] and Ima [Female], the Zohar, is in effect, linking the Upper [Male] and Lower [Female] Worlds. Thus, the dazzling heavenly Light of The Creator gleams throughout our world, removing all forms of darkness from our lives. This splendid occurrence takes place the moment our eyes fall upon the mystical texts that reveal these supernal secrets.

129. RABBI YEHUDA said to RABBI ABA, Tell me Rabbi, it is written: "And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen" (Shemot 28:5), yet silver is not mentioned. But AT THE OFFERING FOR THE TABERNACLE it says "gold and silver" (Shemot 25:3); brass too is not mentioned, though both silver and brass were counted AS AN OFFERING FOR THE TABERNACLE. Here, IN RELATION TO THE VESTMENTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST they are not mentioned. But if the sacred lamp, NAMELY RABBI SHIMON, did not reveal this mystery when it was discussed, I MYSELF should not reveal either.

130. RABBI ABA opened with: "The silver is Mine, and the gold is mine," says Hashem" (Chagai 2:8) as it says in the verse, "The heavens are the heavens of Hashem" (Tehilim 115:16).

131. I have looked at the vessels of the sanctuary in several places; NAMELY THE RAIMENTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST, as it is written: "These are holy garments" (Vayikra 16:4) "and they shall make holy garments" (Shemot 28:4). HE ASKS: What holiness is there TO THE GARMENTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST? HE SAYS, We have learned that in all of these places THAT ARE MENTIONED there is holiness. NAMELY, "these are holy garments," "and they shall make holy garments," WHICH MEAN they resemble the ones above; TO WIT, ABA AND IMA WHICH ARE CALLED HOLY, FOR THE HIGH PRIEST CORRESPONDS TO SUPERNAL ABA, AND HIS GARMENTS ARE THEREFORE CALLED HOLY GARMENTS, AS WAS SAID.

132. For we have learned that there is a High Priest above, ABA, and a high priest below, WHO CORRESPONDS TO HIM. Therefore, the holy raiments OF ABA above CORRESPOND TO the holy raiment OF THE HIGH PRIEST below. HENCE, AS ABA IS THE SECRET OF HOLINESS SO IS THE HIGH PRIEST HOLY; AS THE RAIMENTS OF HONOR OF ABA ARE HOLY GARMENTS SO ARE THOSE OF THE HIGH IN RELATION TO THE GARMENTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST. Thus, the verse does not mention silver or brass because they are assigned to another place, NOT CORRESPONDING TO THE SUPERNAL ABA AND IMA, as it is written: "All the pillars round about the court shall be bound with silver... and their sockets of brass" (Shemot 27:17). They are the instruments of service of the tabernacle, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN.

133. But no one is allowed to use the garment of honor OF THE HIGH PRIEST save the high priest, who is anointed with the oil of holy ointment upon his head, as it is written: "And you shall make holy garments for Aharon your brother for honor and for beauty" (Shemot 28:2). For in these garments, he resembles ABA above.

18. "And the time drew near for Yisrael to die," part two

Rabbi Yehuda opens the discussion by describing that every day a herald resounded in 250 worlds, in which two birds, one going to the north and the other to the south, would return to report the trembling of the world. When a man's end draws near, his legs, like the birds upon their return, become trapped, called "the day of Hashem." A man's spirit must be righteous in order to have it sucked from him by God. Rabbi Yosi further explains that when a man is about to die, if he is righteous, it is proclaimed for thirty days by those in the Garden of Eden.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here, the purifying Light of The Creator cleanses our soul and awakens us to the value and importance of spiritual growth, so that we will merit a high place in the world to come. The world to come refers to both the Garden of Eden and to our present lifetime in this material

realm. A man's end can refer to both his demise in this physical world, and to the end of his negative and wicked ways in this current life.

134. We learned "And the time drew near for Yisrael to die." Rabbi Yehuda said: Woe to the world, who do not see, nor hear or know that on each and every day, a herald resounds in 250 worlds.

135. We learned about a certain world above, THE NUKVA. When the herald goes forth AND MAKES IT WHOLE, the world shudders and trembles. Two birds come out from that world, that live under the tree in which is the appearance of life and death.

136. One bird goes to the south side, and the other bird to the north side; the one goes with daybreak and the other when the day darkens. Each cries out what it heard from the herald.

137. Later, they wish to return to their place but their legs stumble on a hollow in the great abyss and they are trapped there until midnight, when the herald proclaims, "And like the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared" (Kohelet 9:12).

138. Rabbi Yehuda said: When man's legs are trapped and his time draws near, that day is called "the day of Hashem" when he returns the spirit to Him. We have learned that at that time, the holy crown visits the spirit OF THAT MAN. What is it? According to the verse, "The days of our years are seventy" (Tehilim 90:10) it is the seventh crown of all, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SEVENTH, FINEL, SFIRAH.

139. If THE NUKVA comes TO MAN from the side of Gvurah, NAMELY BINAH ABOVE THE SEVEN SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD AND MALCHUT, it is written: "Or if by special strength (Heb. gvurot), eighty years" (Tehilim 90:10) since the crown of Gvurah is the eighth. From that time onward, life cannot be prolonged, as it says, "Yet their pride is but trouble and wretchedness" (Ibid.), for when there is no foundation, the building will not endure.

140. Rabbi Yehuda said: Happy are the righteous when the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to take back their spirits to Himself and suck their spirits from within them. For we have learned that when the Holy One, blessed be He, desires to recall the spirit if it be a righteous spirit, it is written: "And the spirit returns to the Elohim who gave it" (Tehilim 12:7).

141. If it is not found to be righteous, woe to that spirit, which must bathe in the burning fire and be purified in order to be sucked into the body of the King, NAMELY THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. If it is not corrected, woe to that spirit, which rolls like a stone in the hollow of the sling, as it is written: "And the souls of your enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the hollow of a sling" (I Shmuel 25:29). We learned that if the spirit is worthy, much good is stored for it in that world, as it is written: "Neither has the eye seen, that a Elohim, beside You, should do such a thing for he that waits for Him" (Yeshayah 64:3).

142. Rabbi Yosi said: When the time approaches for a man TO DIE, it is proclaimed in the world for thirty days THAT HIS TIME HAS COME TO DIE. Even the birds in the sky proclaim it, and if he is righteous, it is proclaimed for thirty days among the righteous in the Garden of Eden.

143. We have learned that all these thirty days, the soul ascends from him each night to go up and look at its place in that world, yet the man does not know ABOUT THIS, nor cares, nor has control over his soul during these thirty days like before, as it is written: "There is no man who has power over the spirit to retain the spirit" (Kohelet 8:8). Rabbi Yehuda said: At the beginning of the thirty days, the man's shadow is darkened, and the shape OF THE SHADOW is not seen upon the ground.

19. Rabbi Yitzchak sat sadly

Rabbi Yitzchak asks Rabbi Yehuda for three things that were troubling him. Rabbi Yehuda then asks him why he thinks he is going to die. Rabbi Yitzchak explains that he no longer sees his shadow. They go to see Rabbi Shimon, who protects them from the Angel of Death. Rabbi Shimon asks Rabbi Yitzchak if he has seen his father today, for if so, that means he will die. Rabbi Shimon summons God to prepare to take Rabbi Yehuda away. Rabbi Yitzchak then sleeps and sees his father in his dream, who tells him that they are preparing his

chamber in Heaven. Next, Rabbi Shimon asks God that Rabbi Yitzchak will not die, and the wish is granted. Not only that, Rabbi Yitzchak is given seventy places with doors to seventy worlds. Rabbi Yitzchak is then told that he will discover the secrets with Rabbi Shimon upon his death.

The Relevance of this Passage

The profound greatness of Rabbi Shimon is made evident here through his influence and connection to The Creator that allows him to turn aside the Angel of Death on behalf of a fellow rabbi, reversing a decree of death. Moreover, great spiritual worlds and treasures await the rabbi in the world to come, by virtue of his association to Rabbi Shimon. In effect, this ancient passage is telling us that anyone who truthfully embraces the path of Rabbi Shimon and connects deeply to the Zohar and its wisdom, will have the power to stop the Angel of Death in its tracks and secure a place high in the heavens in the world to come. The Light emitted here helps to facilitate our connection to the path of the Zohar and deepens our relationship with the giant of all Kabbalists, the master Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

144. Rabbi Yitzchak was sitting sadly one day by the door of Rabbi Yehuda. Rabbi Yehuda came out and found him sitting sadly at his door. He said to him: What is the matter today?

145. He said to him: I come to you to ask you three things. The first is that when you say words of the Torah, and you shall say the things that I said, say them in my name so as to mention my name. Also, that you shall teach my son, Yosef, the Torah and that you shall go to my grave all the seven days OF MOURNING and pray for me.

146. He said to him: How do you know YOU ARE GOING TO DIE? Rabbi Yitzchak said to him: My soul departs from me every night, but it does not enlighten me with dreams as before. Moreover, when I pray and reach the part of 'do hearken unto prayer and supplication', I look at my shadow upon the wall but do not see it. I think I SHALL DIE since the shadow is gone from me and cannot be seen. For a herald comes forth and proclaims, as it is written: "Surely every man walks in a shadow" (Tehilim 39:7). As long as his shadow has not gone from him, "every man walks" and his spirit within him. Once a man's shadow is no longer seen, he passes away from this world.

147. RABBI YEHUDA said to him: It is also derived from the verse, "Because our days upon earth are a shadow" (Iyov 8:9). RABBI YEHUDA said to him: I shall carry out your requests. But I also ask that you shall reserve a place for me by you in the other world, as I was by your side in this world. Rabbi Yitzchak wept and said: Please do not go away from me all these days.

148. They went to Rabbi Shimon and found him occupied with the Torah. Rabbi Shimon lifted up his eyes and saw the Angel of Death running and dancing before Rabbi Yitzchak. Rabbi Shimon stood up, held Rabbi Yitzchak by the hand and said: I decree that whoever is wont to come to me shall enter, and he who is not wont shall not come. Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yehuda came in. And he thus kept the Angel of Death remaining outside, UNABLE TO COME IN.

149. Rabbi Shimon looked and saw that his time had not yet come TO DIE, until the eighth hour of the day. Rabbi Shimon placed him before him and studied the Torah with him. Rabbi Shimon said to his son Rabbi Elazar, Sit at the door, and whoever you see do not speak with him; if he shall want to enter, swear he may not enter.

150. Rabbi Shimon said to Rabbi Yitzchak, Have you seen your father's image today, or have you not? For we have learned that when a man departs from the world, his father and relatives are there with him, and he sees and recognizes them. And all those with whom he will dwell in the other world in the same grade, all gather to be with him, and accompany his soul to its dwelling place. RABBI YITZCHAK said: Until now I have not seen THE IMAGE OF MY FATHER.

151. Rabbi Shimon stood up and said: Master of the universe, we have a certain Rabbi Yitzchak with us, one of the seven eyes here; TO WIT, ONE OF THE SEVEN STUDENTS WHO REMAINED ALIVE WHEN THEY WENT OUT OF THE HOLY ASSEMBLY. Behold, I hold him, give Him to me! A voice resounded saying: the throne of His Master, NAMELY THE NUKVA, has approached UNION through the wings of Rabbi Shimon. Behold, Rabbi Yitzchak is yours, and

you shall come with him when you shall sit in your throne AT THE TIME RABBI SHIMON WILL PART FROM THE WORLD. Rabbi Shimon said: Certainly, I SHALL DO SO AND BRING HIM WITH ME WHEN I WILL DEPART FROM THE WORLD.

152. While he was speaking, Rabbi Elazar saw the Angel of Death departing. He said: No sentence stands at the place of Rabbi Shimon. Rabbi Shimon said to his son Rabbi Elazar, Come here and hold Rabbi Yitzchak, for I see he is afraid. Rabbi Elazar entered and held him, and Rabbi Shimon turned to study the Torah.

153. Rabbi Yitzchak slept and saw his father. HIS FATHER said to him: Son, happy is your portion in this world and in the World to Come, for you sit among the leaves of The Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. A great and strong tree in both worlds is Rabbi Shimon, who holds you in his boughs. Happy is your portion, my son.

154. He said to him: Father, what am I there, IN THE WORLD OF TRUTH? He said to him: For three days they have been hastily preparing your chamber with open windows to shine upon you from the four directions of the world. I have seen your place, rejoiced and said: Happy is your portion, son. Only your son has not yet studied the Torah AND I WAS SORRY FOR THIS.

155. Even now, twelve righteous men from among the friends were preparing to come to you. As they were going, a sound went forth in all the worlds: Friends who stand here, bedeck yourself for Rabbi Shimon who has asked a request OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, THAT RABBI YITZCHAK SHALL NOT DIE, and it was granted him.

156. Not only this, but seventy places are adorned for him here. Each place has doors opening to seventy worlds, each world opening to seventy channels, each opened for seventy supernal crowns, where there are ways leading to Atika, the most concealed of all, to see the highest pleasantness which delights and shines upon all, as it says "to behold the pleasantness of Hashem, and to inquire in His temple" (Tehilim 27:4). "To inquire in His temple" as it is written: "For he is the trusted one in all my house" (Bemidbar 12:7).

157. He said to him: Father, how long am I given to live in this world? He said to him: I was not given permission to tell you this, and man is not made to know. But at the feast for Rabbi Shimon, NAMELY ON HIS DAY OF DEPARTURE, WHEN THERE WILL BE GREAT JOY IN ALL THE WORLDS FOR ALL THE SECRETS HE REVEALED, AS MENTIONED IN THE SMALL ASSEMBLY, you shall be there to set his table TO REVEAL MYSTERIES WITH HIM. As it says, "Go forth, O daughters of Tzion, and behold King Solomon with the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, and on the day of the gladness of his heart" (Shir Hashirim 3:11).

158. Rabbi Yitzchak then awoke and laughed and his face shone. Rabbi Shimon looked at his face and said to him: You have heard something new. RABBI YITZCHAK said to him: Surely I HAVE HEARD; He told him WHAT HE SAW IN HIS DREAM. RABBI YITZCHAK prostrated himself ON THE GROUND before Rabbi Shimon.

159. We have learned from that day onward that Rabbi Yitzchak would hold his son in his hand. He studied the Torah with him, and never left him. When he came before Rabbi Shimon, he made his son sit outside. He used to come in and sit before Rabbi Shimon and call before him, "O Hashem, I am oppressed, be you my security" (Yeshayah 38:14).

20. When it is time for a man to depart from the world

This section starts by saying that when a man dies, Four Judgments arise from four winds of the world. The four elements in man--earth, air, fire, water--attach and fight with each other. They are then separated upon his death. The herald next explains that man is evil if he has no merit, and his soul will burn in Nahar Dinur (river of fire). At this time, he confesses his deeds. Rabbi Yehuda then explains to Rabbi Yosi the reason for "a black cock," black being the color of judgment. When judgment comes upon man, the black cock starts crowing, then a second supernal spirit is added to him, so that he may see what he never saw in his days. If he is righteous, he goes to heaven; if not, his spirit stays in this world, and eventually ends up in Gehenom. Rabbi Yehuda then explains the triple-colored pillar in the lower Garden of Eden, meaning the three colors of the rainbow. The soul ascends through the pillar into righteousness, and so on towards God, if he is worthy.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power to cleanse the evil from our nature and purify our souls from the iniquities we knowingly or unknowingly committed in life, is bestowed upon us, provided we connect to this passage with an atoning heart. This Light sweetens judgments and helps us recognize the foolishness and dangers of self-centered behavior. We are inspired to travel the path of righteousness.

160. We have learned that on that hard and terrible day, when it is time for a man to depart from the world, the four winds of the world, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT, sentence the world with severe Judgment. Four Judgments arise from the four winds of the world. The four ELEMENTS IN MAN, FIRE, AIR, WATER, AND EARTH that are attached to each other, fight and quarrel between them and wish to depart each to its own side, THE ELEMENT OF FIRE WITHIN MAN TO THE GENERAL ELEMENT OF FIRE, THE ELEMENT OF WATER WITHIN MAN INTO THE ELEMENT OF WATER IN THE WORLD, AND SO ON. FOR THE ELEMENTS WITHIN MAN ARE SEPARATED IN HIS DEATH.

161. The herald, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH FROM THE UNION ON THE LEFT, comes forth. He proclaims in the supernal world TEVUNAH and is heard in 270 worlds. If he be righteous, all the worlds welcome him with joy; FOR IF HE HAS MERIT, HE IS GOOD. But if he be not righteous, woe to this man and his portion, FOR IF HE HAS NO MERIT HE IS EVIL.

162. HE EXPLAINS WHY HE IS EVIL IF HE HAS NO MERIT. HE SAYS, We have learned that when the crier makes his proclamation, a flame comes out from the north side, and goes to be burned in Nahar Dinur (the river of fire), MENTIONED AS "A FIERY STREAM ISSUED AND CAME FORTH FROM BEFORE HIM" (DANIEL 7:10). It expands to the four directions of the world and burns the souls of the wicked.

163. The flame, THE JUDGMENT OF MALCHUT, WHICH IS REVEALED BY THE SECRET OF 'IF HE HAS NO MERIT, HE IS EVIL' ascends TO BINAH, and descends back into the world, BACK TO MALCHUT. The flame alights beneath the wings of a black cock, which flaps its wings and crows at the opening between the gates.

164. At the first time, it crows, saying "For, behold, that day is coming: it burns like a furnace..." (Malachi 3:19). On the second time, it crows and says, "For, lo, He that forms the mountains, and creates the wind, and declares to man what is his thought" (Amos 4:13). At that time, man sits AND HEARS THE WITNESSES give testimony on his deeds before him, and he confesses them. On the third time, when they want to take his soul from him, the cock crows, saying: "Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? for to You it is fitting" (Yirmeyah 10:7).

165. Rabbi Yosi said: Why a black cock? Rabbi Yehuda said to him: Everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created upon earth alludes to Wisdom, only men do not know. This is the meaning of the words "O Hashem, how manifold are your works! in Wisdom have you made them all" (Tehilim 104:24), for they have been made in Wisdom and allude to Wisdom.

166. We have learned IN THE MATTER of the black cock that Judgment abides only in a place of its own kind, and black pertains to the side of Judgment, SINCE THE BLACK COLOR ALLUDES TO MALCHUT, THE ATTRIBUTE OF JUDGMENT. Therefore at midnight exactly, when the north wind, THE LEFT COLUMN, stirs, a flame comes out and strikes under the wings of the cock, and it crows. The cock is black, BEING OF THE ATTRIBUTE OF JUDGMENT, and thus is more appropriate than A COCK OF a different COLOR.

167. Here too, when Judgment is aroused upon man, THE BLACK COCK starts crowing. No one knows it save the man who is about to die. For we have learned that when a man is about to die, and Judgment hovers about him so he would depart from the world, another Supernal Spirit is added to him which he had not before during his lifetime. When it hovers about him and cleaves to him, he is able to see what he never saw in his days, due to the additional spirit in him. When the spirit is added to him, he sees and then departs from this world. This is the meaning of the verse, "You take away their breath (lit. 'you shall add their spirit'), they die, and return to their dust" (Tehilim 104:29). Then it is written: "For no man

shall see me, and live" (Shemot 33:20), WHICH MEANS THAT when they are alive they cannot see, but they do when they die.

168. We have learned that when a man dies, he is given permission to see, and he sees about him his relatives and friends from the world of Truth. They all have their forms engraved upon them like they were in this world. If the man is righteous, they are all happy to see him and greet him.

169. If he is not righteous, they do not recognize him but only the wicked, who are smitten daily in Gehenom. They are all sad, they open their speech with 'woe' and end with 'woe'. The man lifts up his eyes and sees them as something burnt rising from the fire. He too opens AND SAYS OF THEM 'woe'.

170. We have learned that when a man's soul departs, all his relatives and friends in the world of Truth accompany his soul and show it the place of delight and place of punishment. If he is righteous, he sees his place, and goes up to sit and take delight in the upper Eden of that world. If he is not righteous, the soul remains in this world, until the body is buried in the ground. Once it is buried, numerous executioners grab it until it reaches Dumah, and is put in the stories of Gehenom.

171. Rabbi Yehuda said: All the seven days OF MOURNING the soul goes from the house to the grave and from the grave BACK to the house and mourns for the body, as it is written: "His flesh shall suffer pain for him, and his soul shall mourn for it" (Iyov 14:22). It goes to sit in the house, and when it sees everybody sad, it mourns TOO.

172. We have learned that after seven days the body becomes whatever it turns into, and the soul goes into its place. It enters the cave of the Machpelah. It sees whatever it sees, and enters wherever it enters until arriving at the Garden of Eden, it meets the Cherubs and the flash of the turning sword in the Garden of Eden. If it is worthy of entering, it enters.

173. We have learned that four pillars, THE FOUR ANGELS COMING FROM THE FOUR SPIRITUAL ELEMENTS CHOCHMAH AND BINAH, TIFERET AND MALCHUT, are appointed OVER THE SOUL. They have a bodily form in their hands, and it gleefully dons it, and sits in a story in the lower Garden of Eden for the period of time allotted for it TO SIT THERE.

174. A triple-colored pillar stands there IN THE LOWER GARDEN OF EDEN, THE SECRET OF THE THREE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW. This pillar is called the "dwelling place of Mount Tzion" (Yeshayah 4:5), as it is written "And Hashem will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Tzion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day..." THE SOUL ascends through that pillar into the opening of righteousness, where Tzion and Jerusalem are, YESOD AND MALCHUT OF THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

175. If it is worthy of ascending further than that, happy is its lot and portion which cleaves to the body of the King; NAMELY TO ZEIR ANPIN, FOR IT ALREADY MERITED TO ASCEND TO TZION AND JERUSALEM, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA. THE NEXT GRADE IS THE BODY OF THE KING, ZEIR ANPIN. If it is not worthy of going further up, it is written OF IT: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Tzion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy" (Ibid. 3). But if he is worthy of going further up, happy is he to attain the glory of the King, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, and to be delighted in the supernal Eden above the place called heaven, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "Then shall you delight yourself in (Lit. 'alone') Hashem" (Ibid. 58:14). "Above Hashem" is precise ZEIR ANPIN CALLED YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI. Happy is the portion of him who is worthy of this chesed, as it is written: "For your steadfast love (Heb. chesed) is great above the heavens" (Tehilim 108:5).

176. HE ASKS: Is Chesed above the heaven? It is written: "For your Chesed is great unto the heavens" (Ibid. 57:11), WHICH MEANS THAT CHESED IS UNDER THE HEAVEN. HE ANSWERS: There is Chesed and Chesed, an upper Chesed and a lower. The upper Chesed, CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN ITSELF, is above the heaven, AS HEAVEN IS TIFERET AND CHESED PRECEDES TIFERET. THEREFORE, SCRIPTURE SAYS, "FOR YOUR CHESED IS GREAT ABOVE THE HEAVENS." The lower Chesed, CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN CLOTHED BY THE NUKVA THROUGH NETZACH HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN is like "the sure Chasdadim of David" (Yeshayah 55:3), CALLED DAVID AFTER THE NUKVA. of which it says, "FOR YOUR CHESED is great unto the heavens" SINCE THEY ARE BELOW THE HEAVENS, TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN.

21. "A joyful mother of children"

Rabbi Yitzchak begins by saying the mother is Binah. Rabbi Shimon adds that there are two children: one male, who went to Ya'akov, and one female, who went to Avraham. He continues by saying that the quotation is a warning to men not to sin, for it may cause Binah to depart from the children, Zeir Anpin and Nukva. When the inhabitants perform good deeds, Binah returns to her young. Rabbi Shimon concludes by saying that happy is the portion for those who "behold the pleasantness of Hashem" and desire righteousness.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light of The Creator is endless, ever present, and it never changes. Darkness only exists when our Lower World disconnects from the Upper World. Disconnection occurs each time we succumb to the will of our ego and treat others with anything less than human dignity. Connection to the Upper World takes place when a man masters the drives of his ego and yields to the longings of his soul. Here we are stimulated to perform positive deeds and we strengthen our connection to the Upper World, the realm of Binah.

177. We learned that Rabbi Yitzchak said: "A joyful mother of children. Haleluyah" (Tehilim 113:9). We know who the mother is, SHE IS BINAH, but who are the children? Rabbi Shimon said: We have learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, BINAH, has two children, one male and one female. The male he gave to Ya'akov, as it is written: "Yisrael is my son, my firstborn" (Shemot 4:22) and "Yisrael, in whom I will be glorified" (Yeshayah 49:3), and the girl he gave to Avraham, as it is written: "And Hashem had blessed Avraham in all things (Heb. bakol)" (Bereshheet 24:1). Avraham had a daughter named Bakol.

178. The mother, BINAH, sits on them, MALE AND FEMALE and suckles them. Hence it is written: "You shall not take the mother together with the young" (Devarim 22:6). We learned ITS MEANING that a man should beware of sinning below, IN THIS WORLD, for it might cause the mother, BINAH, to depart from the children, MALE AND FEMALE. It is also written, "She is your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness" (Vayikra 18:7); TO WIT, NOT TO CAUSE HER TO LEAVE THE YOUNG. Woe to him who indulges in incest, WHO CAUSES THE MOTHER TO DEPART FROM THE YOUNG.

179. When the inhabitants of the world repent and do many good deeds before the Holy One, blessed be He, and the mother, BINAH, returns to cover the young, MALE AND FEMALE, BINAH is then called repentance (lit. 'returning'). HE ASKS: Why is it called returning? HE REPLIES: For she returns to her sustenance; TO WIT, BINAH RETURNS TO COVER THE CHILDREN, MALE AND FEMALE, AND GIVES THEM SUCK AS BEFORE. It is then written, "a joyful mother of children." The "joyful mother" is surely BINAH, and hence a man should continue multiplying until he begets a boy and a girl, TO CORRESPOND TO MALE AND FEMALE, THE CHILDREN OF BINAH.

180. Rabbi Yitzchak said: It is written: "To behold the pleasantness of Hashem, and to inquire in His temple" (Tehilim 27:4). We understand from this that the desire of the righteous is to behold THE PLEASANTNESS OF HASHEM, THE PLEASANT MOCHIN OF ZEIR ANPIN. How can you say "above Hashem"? Rabbi Shimon said: All is one, because we understand from the words "the pleasantness of Hashem" that it comes from Atika Kadisha to heaven, TO WIT, ZEIR ANPIN RECEIVES MOCHIN FROM ABOVE IT. The desire of the righteous is assuredly ONLY TO ATTAIN THESE MOCHIN OF ZEIR ANPIN AND NOT ABOVE IT, FOR THERE IS NO CONCEPTION OF THE FIRST THREE SFIROT. IT IS WRITTEN OF THEM: "GREAT ABOVE THE HEAVEN" (TEHILIM 108:5), BECAUSE THEY COME FROM ABOVE ZEIR ANPIN. FOR THE SAME REASON, it is also written: "Then shall you delight yourself in (Lit. 'above') Hashem" (Yeshayah 58:14). Happy is the portion of him, who merit this. They must be few.

22. "My mother's children were angry with me"

Rabbi Shimon describes this quotation as the one that explains the exile of Yisrael's children, when God decided he wanted to destroy His lower house. By exiling the children, he remained "aloof" from Malchut (earth). So "my mother's children" refers to Malchut and Zeir Anpin, Binah the mother. Then Rabbi Yosi describes how he was walking with Rabbi Chiya when they spotted a man in the river who said "Crown, crown," referring to the crowns

Malchut and Zeir Anpin. Then "a flame came and consumed the bird" on the man's head, referring to Malchon, a button.

The Relevance of this Passage

In reality, The Creator does not choose to destroy or reward his Creation. The Light of The Creator is a constant expanding force of goodness, positivity, and fulfillment. It is man's free-willed choice as to whether he connects to this divine force of Energy [reward] or disconnects from the Light [destruction]. The entire structure of the Upper and Lower Worlds can be simplified and understood by the following analogy. The electrical current flowing through a home is always available for use. If a room is in darkness and we mistakenly [or purposely] fail to plug a lamp into the wall socket, the room remains darkened. The electrical current, however, never changed. It is not logical to conclude that the electricity decided to withhold its energy, keeping the room darkened. It is our own actions or lack of actions that determine whether we live in darkness or light. Kabbalah is the blueprint of the universe, providing man with the tools and methods for connecting to spiritual Light. The verses appearing in this passage are one such tool. We connect ourselves to the mother, Binah, the source and fountainhead of the Light that shines in this world.

181. We learned that Rabbi Shimon said: It is written, "My mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards" (Shir Hashirim 1:6). "My mother's children" are as in the verse: "Cast down from heaven to (or: the) earth" (Eichah 2:1), THE EARTH BEING THE NUKVA. For when the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to destroy His lower house, NAMELY THE TEMPLE, and exile the children of Yisrael among the nations, He removed the earth, THE NUKVA, from before Him, and remained aloof from it: "And his sister stood afar off" (Shemot 2:4). And when the earth was afar from the heaven above, ZEIR ANPIN, the lower earth, NAMELY THE TEMPLE, was destroyed and the children of Yisrael were dispersed among the nations. The Congregation of Yisrael said: Who has done this to me, who caused this? "My mother's children," ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA, who "were angry with me" and kept away from me. Assuredly they are "my mother's children," ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA BEING THE CHILDREN OF BINAH, THE MOTHER.

182. Rabbi Yosi went on the road with Rabbi Chiya bar Rav. While they were walking, Rabbi Yosi said to Rabbi Chiya, Do you see what I see? He said to him: I see a man in the river, and a bird on his head with teeth in her mouth. It is eating and tearing with its claws. The man raises his voice and shouts, but I do not know what he says.

183. RABBI YOSI said: Let us approach the man and hear what he says. Rabbi Chiya said: I am afraid to come near. He said to him: Is this a man in that place? The Holy One, blessed be He, gave us a hint of Wisdom. They came near him and heard him say, Crown, crown, I.E., ZEIR ANPIN AND NUKVA CALLED CROWNS, two children OF BINAH dwell outside THEIR PLACE. ZEIR ANPIN does not have rest, nor is there respite FOR THE NUKVA, until the bird will be cast away TORN TO pieces in Caesarea.

184. Rabbi Yosi wept and said: This is what we learned in relation to the verse: "My mother's children were angry with me," WHICH ALLUDES TO MALE AND FEMALE. Why? Because "my own vineyard I have not kept" (Shir Hashirim 1:6).

185. He said: Assuredly the exile will continue, and therefore the birds in the sky, THE MINISTERS OF THE NATIONS, will be in power until the government of the idolatrous nations will pass away from the world. When will that be? When the day of the Holy One, blessed be He, will come and His Judgment will be set upon the world, as it is written: "But it shall be one particular day which shall be known as Hashem's, neither day, nor night" (Zecharyah 14:7).

186. While they were walking, they heard a voice saying: 'The flame of the button has come with its judgment'; TO WIT, OF MALCHUT CALLED BUTTON. A flame came and consumed the bird. Rabbi Yosi said: Surely, it happened as in the verse, "And given to the burning flame" (Daniel 7:11).

23. "And your covenant with death shall be annulled"

Rabbi Yosi begins the discussion by saying that God exiled Yisrael only after His children lost Faith, which is the secret of the Shechinah. Then the Shechinah is separated, or "annulled"

from Zeir Anpin. Death, we learn, will be destroyed from the world only when the children of Yisrael "cleave to the right" of God.

The Relevance of this Passage

At the moment of creation, the souls of mankind sought the opportunity to create their own Light through their effort towards spiritual transformation. For this reason, our physical world, and all the supernal worlds above, was created. We create our own Light when we overcome our doubts concerning the reality of The Creator and when we triumph over our Evil Inclinations. When we experience doubt or succumb to the selfish impulses of our nature, we disconnect from the Light and our exile continues. These negative attributes are associated with the Left Column energy. However, when a man "cleaves to the right" of God, it means he is becoming a more sharing and tolerant person, the attributes associated with Right Column energy. Thus, one purpose behind this passage is to ignite the power of Right Column energy within us, so that we overcome our dark side and attract the Light of the Shechinah into our lives. In addition, the mere act of reading the words contained herein strengthens our faith, arouses the Light of the Shechinah and helps to remove the force of the death from this universe.

187. Rabbi Yosi said: The Holy One, blessed be He, exiled Yisrael only when there was no faith among them, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE SHECHINAH CALLED FAITH, FOR SINCE THEY HAVE IMPAIRED THEIR COVENANT, THE SHECHINAH WAS GONE FROM THEM. For when faith is withheld from them, it is so in everything, I.E. ALSO ABOVE, THE SHECHINAH IS SEPARATED FROM ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "And your covenant with death shall be annulled" (Yeshayah 28:18), WHICH MEANS THAT KEEPING THE COVENANT ATONES FROM DEATH, AND IT ATONED FOR THEM TOO, SO THEY WOULD NOT GO INTO EXILE. BUT THEY DID IMPAIR THE COVENANT AND THUS THE SHECHINAH DEPARTED FROM THEM.

188. Rabbi Chiya said: This is the meaning of, "He will destroy death for ever" (Yeshayah 25:8). RABBI YOSI said to him: When the Holy One, blessed be He, will awaken His right, death will be destroyed forever from the world. But the right will not stir until the children of Yisrael will arise and cleave to the right of the Holy One, blessed be He. What is "THE RIGHT" OF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE? It is the Torah, as is written: "From His right hand went a fiery law for them" (Devarim 33:2). At that time, "the right hand of Hashem does valiantly" (Tehilim 118:16) followed by, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of Hashem" (Ibid. 17), AS THE RIGHT ANNULS DEATH.

189. We have learned that a righteous man, with whom the Holy One, blessed be He, is delighted, is proclaimed by a herald for thirty days among the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and all the righteous rejoice. They all come to decorate his place until he will come to be seated among them.

24. "Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill"

This section opens by stating that all wicked men are sad and that they say, "Woe." The wicked, as Rabbi Yitzchak points out, are those who spill their "semen in vain." Those who do this are called ra (evil), and it is the worst transgression. They never escape from Gehenom. Rabbi Yehuda further adds that it is the only sin for which one cannot atone.

The Relevance of this Passage

The entire physical world is a shadow, a reflection of the Upper World. Everything on this physical plane has a corresponding counterpart in the supernal realm. Semen is the substance most reflective of the Light of The Creator. Hence, as raw naked energy must be concealed in high voltage cables in order to harness its power, semen must remain concealed in this physical world. When it is wasted in vain, through selfish gratification, and not used for the divine purpose of creating life and/or sharing pleasure with one's spouse, negative forces that dwell among us are free to use this energy for destructive purposes. This passage helps us cleanse sexual iniquities from the world and gives us the strength to direct our urges in a positive and sharing way.

190. If he be evil, a herald announces him in Gehenom for thirty days. All the wicked men are sad and open AND SAY, 'Woe'. For a new Judgment is awakened for a certain person,

and numerous accusers await him to welcome him AND SAY TO HIM, 'Woe.' Woe unto the wicked, woe unto his neighbor.

191. They all open and say, "Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for according to the deserving of his hands shall be done to him" (Yeshayah 3:11). What is "the deserving of his hands"? Rabbi Yitzchak said: It includes him who defiles with his hands by spilling his semen in vain.

192. For we have learned that he who spills his semen in vain is called ra (evil), and cannot behold the face of the Shechinah, as it is written: "For you are not an El that has pleasure in wickedness: nor shall evil dwell with you" (Tehilim 5:5) and also "And Er, Yehuda's firstborn, was evil (Heb. ra)" (Beresheet 38:7). Here too, "Woe to the wicked... ill (Heb. ra)" ALLUDES TO HIM WHO SPILLS HIS SEMEN IN VAIN. Woe to the wicked who is evil and made himself evil (Heb. ra), "for according to the deserving of his hands shall be done to him." This means that whoever whores himself by letting his semen spill in vain is punished in the world of truth more than any OTHER TRANSGRESSION.

193. Come and see it is written: "Woe to the wicked." Since it says, "Woe to the wicked (Heb. rasha)," why add 'ra (evil)' SEEING THAT THE WICKED IS EVIL? This is as I said: that he has made himself evil, ESPECIALLY HE WHO SPILLED HIS SEMEN IN VAIN. ALSO: "...nor shall evil dwell with you." Everyone ascends FROM GEHENOM save this one, who does not. HE ASKS: Would you say that other evil-doers who killed people ARE BETTER THAN HE, AND WILL ASCEND WHILE HE SHALL NOT? HE ANSWERS, Come and behold: everyone rises but he does not, because they killed other people, yet he killed his own children, and spilled much blood. Come and behold: it is not written of any other wicked man in the world that he "displeased Hashem" (Beresheet 38:10), only in this case where it says, "And the thing which he did displeased Hashem." Why? Because, the verse says, "He spilled it on the ground" (Ibid. 9).

194. We learned that Rabbi Yehuda said: There is no sin in the world for that one cannot repent other than the one OF SPILLING ONE'S SEMEN IN VAIN. There are no wicked men who shall not behold the face of the Shechinah IN THEIR DEATH, save him of whom it says "nor shall evil dwell with you" at all. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Happy are the righteous in this world and in the World to Come, of whom scripture says, "Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever" (Yeshayah 60:21). Rabbi Yehuda said: It is also said in "I will walk before Hashem in the land of the living" (Tehilim 116:9), WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH, CALLED LAND, THE LAND HERE ALLUDES TO THE SHECHINAH.

195. "And Ya'akov lived" among them: Another explanation for this is that a man should not mingle his image with that of the idolatrous nations, for the one is holy and the other defiled.

25. The shadow

This section begins by describing the difference between what happens when a person dies to the body of a man of Yisrael, and to the body of an idolatrous heathen. Unlike an Israelite, a heathen's impurities cannot be defiled. Each Israelite contains two shadows (tzelamim,) the ordinary and the holy shadow. As he approaches death, both shadows depart, since they are joined together. He must write letters and put them in a bag, and then on Yom Kippur, he must repent. If he attains repentance, the letters are torn; if not, they are read in consideration for judgment. Then, there follows a description of the significance of various parts of a man's shadow, and what it means if one or many of them are missing. Everything in the Lower World has its root in higher worlds. When one stirs, so does the other.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light to cleanse ourselves from sin and wrongdoing is bestowed upon readers of this passage. The importance of repentance is awakened within us and we remove judgments decreed against us in the Upper Worlds. Our shadow is the link between the body and soul, and when a person is about to leave this world, the shadow becomes dimmer. This section helps strengthen our shadow, removing the force of death from life.

196. Come and see the difference between Yisrael and the idolatrous nations. When a man of Yisrael dies, he defiles the body and the house. But the body of a heathen man does not defile and his body is not defiled in his death. Why is it so?

197. HE ANSWERS: When a man from Yisrael dies, all the holiness of his Master is removed from him, the holy shadow and the Holy Spirit is gone from him and leave his body defiled.

198. But this is not so for an idolatrous heathen. For during his lifetime he is impure on all sides, his shadow is impure and his spirit is impure. Since impurities lie within him, it is forbidden to come near him. Once he dies, all the impurities depart from him and the body is left without defiling impurity.

199. Though their bodies are defiled both during their life and in their deaths, yet when they are alive all the impurities within them have the power to defile others. In their deaths, when impurities leave them, they cannot defile. A BODY OF an Yisraeli AFTER DEATH can defile others, since all that is holy has left him and the Other Side dwells upon him.

200. Come and see this holy shadow. When a man grows and his shape is made COMPLETED by a face, another shadow is made and joins THE FIRST ONE, each embracing the other. When a man has two shadows, he is protected and his body lives with a spirit abiding within it.

201. When his time draws near for him to die, the shadows (Heb. tzelamim) depart from him, the one causes the other to depart SINCE THEY ARE JOINED TOGETHER. The man remains without protection, in accordance with the verse: "Before the days cools, and the shadows (Heb. tzelalim) flee away" (Shir Hashirim 2:17), NOT SAYING 'SHADOW' BUT 'SHADOWS,' NAMELY two--AS WE SAID.

202. Come and see: When Judgment awakens in the world and the Holy One, blessed be He, sits on His throne of justice to sentence the world ON ROSH HASHANAH, a man should awaken to repent his sins. For on that day, letters are written and put in a bag all written down. If a man succeeded and returned IN REPENTANCE before his Master, the letters concerning him are torn.

203. After that, the Holy One, blessed be He, prepared Yom Kippur for man. If he repents his sins, well. If not, the King commands to seal the letters. Woe to him, for repentance is about to depart from him.

204. If he attains repentance, yet it is not whole, the letter is withheld until the last day called Atzeret (gathering), which is the eighth day of Sukkot. If he wholly repented before his Master, the letters are torn; if he has not, the letters are sent from the King's house and given to the punishing angel for the judgment to be executed. After the letters are handed out, they return no more to the King's house, AND THE JUDGMENT WRITTEN IN THEM MUST BE EXECUTED.

205. Then, the images are gone and do not abide with him. Once they are gone from him, the King's punishment comes upon him, and he tastes the cup of death. On the night of the last festival, THE EIGHTH DAY OF SUKKOT, the executioners are ready and receive the letters. After they do, the images are gone and cannot be with them. If THE SHADOWS are with him, no judgment comes upon him, nor evil illnesses THAT COME when the shadows are flawed, as we already explained elsewhere.

206. In ancient books, this is explained further: When the head of his shadow is missing but the body is not, it indicates that his child or wife will survive but he will pass away. This is true as long as he does not repent. If he does, he will only taste death and recover from his illness.

207. If the body OF HIS SHADOW will not be seen, but only the head, HIS FAMILY WILL DIE and he will stay alive. This is true as long as he is responsible for his small child.

208. If the hands OF THE SHADOW are flawed, it is an indication that the works of his hands will deteriorate, and if his legs ARE FLAWED, it is an indication that illnesses pursue him. If the shadow flees and returns, then flees and returns again, it is said of him, "In the morning you shall say, 'Would it were evening'" (Devarim 28:67). This is true only when the moon shines and the night is diffused with her light, WHEN HE CHECKS HIS SHADOW.

209. But the righteous and the pious search in their hearts every day as if on this very day they are to pass away from the world, and they repent wholly before their Master. They have need of nothing else, I.E. CHECKING THEIR SHADOW OR THE LIKE OF IT. Happy is their portion in this world and in the World to Come.

210. Come and see "every one that is called by My name" (Yeshayah 43:7). How exalted are the worshipers of the holy King, for their actions below connect them to the higher things above; TO WIT, TO THEIR ROOTS. FOR EACH THING BELOW IN THE WORLD HAS A ROOT ABOVE IN HIGHER WORLDS. When they are taken down and act by them, the action above, THEIR ROOT IN HIGHER WORLDS, AWAKENS in accordance with it. This is like the hyssop and the cedar wood THE TORAH COMMANDS HIM WHO IS PURIFIED TO USE, as we already explained.

26. The four kinds

This further describes the importance of the root connection between aspects of the lower and higher worlds. There are four things to cleave to: the Lulav, Etrog (citron), myrtle, and willow. Then, we learn of the significance of "the fifteenth day," the first of the three travelling Columns. Next, we are told that Yom Kippur is the secret of Ima, the day in which Binah sets the prisoners free, who name that day "the first day", and ask Binah for water. It is either the beginning of "Clouds of Glory" or of "Living Water."

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we connect ourselves to the internal spiritual forces associated with the Lulav, Etrog, myrtle branch, and willow. These physical items work like an antenna. They have powerful spiritual counterparts in the Upper World which help us draw the Light of protection to our lives. We also destroy any judgments that might be pending in the Upper Courts, provided our hearts are filled with repentance.

211. Some of them cleave to the Holy Name above, like the Lulav, Etrog (citron), myrtle and willow. In relation to them, we learned that we should unite them; NAMELY TO BIND THEM TOGETHER and perform an action with them; NAMELY TO SHAKE THEM, in order to arouse joy in the root to which it cleaves above. We have learned that by speech, THE BENEDICTION OF THE PRECEPTS, and by deed, THE PRECEPT, we should exhibit it BELOW in order to awaken that WHICH IS ABOVE; NAMELY ITS SUPERNAL ROOT.

212. This is the meaning of the words: "Every one that is called by My Name: for My Glory" namely, so it would glorify Me; "I have created him" so he would declare My unity; "I have formed him" so he would perform good deeds for My sake; "I have made him" so that through him the supernal force will awaken.

213. Another explanation: "Every one that is called by My Name" as it is written "the fruit of the tree Hadar (citrus)" (Vayikra 23:40); "For My glory I have created him" namely, the "branches of palm trees;" "I have formed him," "the boughs of thick leaved tree;" "I have made him," the "willow of the brook."

214. They are to be used, as it says, "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day" (Ibid.), which is the fifteenth.

215. But what is the first day SCRIPTURE MENTIONS, WHAT DOES IT ALLUDE TO? HE REPLIES: It is the first to travel by the sources of living water, BEING THE FIRST COLUMN OF THE THREE TRAVELING COLUMNS, THROUGH WHICH TRAVEL CHASSADIM BECOME REVEALED BY CHOCHMAH CALLED LIVING WATER. FOR THE RIGHT COLUMN, CHESED, TRAVELS FIRST, and we should draw into the world. FOR IN SUKKOT, IT IS TIME FOR DRAWING CHASSIDIM, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF "HIS RIGHT HAND EMBRACES ME" (SHIR HASHIRIM 8:3).

216. This is like the story of a king who put people into his prison. The lady, his mother, came and set them free. The king, mindful of her honor, put them under her authority. She found them hungry and thirsty and said TO HER SON THE KING, now that I set them free, give them food and drink.

217. Thus Yom Kippur, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF IMA, BINAH sets them free. We are hungry for nourishment and thirsty for a drink, FOR NO PHYSICAL FOOD AND DRINK IS DRAWN FROM BINAH, FOR WHICH REASON WE FAST AND AFFLICT OUR SOULS ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. She therefore adorns THE KING, ZEIR ANPIN, THE SON OF BINAH, with his crown, MOCHIN OF CHASSADIM on this day, THE FIRST OF THE FESTIVAL. We know that there is living water there, and we ask for water from the one who set us free, SO SHE WOULD GIVE CHASSADIM TO ZEIR ANPIN FOR US, AFTER WE ATTAINED MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH FROM HER ON YOM KIPPUR, THE SECRET OF FREEDOM. We therefore name this day 'the first day'.

218. All this is written in the book of Agada, and is correct. But BESIDES WHAT WAS SAID, this day THAT ALLUDES TO Avraham, THE SECRET OF THE SFIRAH OF CHESED, is the starting point of everything-whether it is the beginning of the clouds of glory THAT ARE THE SECRET OF THE SURROUNDING LIGHTS, IT IS THE BEGINNING AS THE FIRST SURROUNDING LIGHT IS CHESED, or the beginning of water, THE SECRET OF INTERNAL LIGHT, AS FOR THE FIRST SURROUNDING LIGHT IS CHESED, INTERNAL LIGHT IS CHESED. THIS IS THE SECRET MEANING OF Avraham starting to dig wells of water.

219. "The fruit of the tree Hadar" is the well of Yitzchak; NAMELY THE NUKVA CALLED WELL WHEN RECEIVING CHOCHMAH FROM THE LEFT COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED YITZCHAK. For Yitzchak glorified (Heb. hider) the Holy One, blessed be He, and called Him "the tree Hadar," THE NUKVA BEING the fruit of this particular tree. "Branches of palm trees" are as it is written: "The righteous man flourishes like the palm tree" (Tehilim 92:13), NAMELY THE RIGHTEOUS YESOD. There is no dividing between YESOD AND THE NUKVA, for which reason it does not say "and branches" but just "branches (Heb. kapot)," WHICH IS AN INDICATION OF BINDING (HEB. KAPHUT) AND UNITY. For they cannot exist without each other, BUT ARE ALWAYS BOUND TOGETHER. Through this the well, THE NUKVA, is filled from the well of supernal living water, BINAH, for YESOD is filled first FROM TIFERET AND TIFERET FROM BINAH, and from it, the well is filled until it BECOMES a gushing spring for everyone.

220. "The bough of thick leaved tree": This is the bough of the great tree TIFERET, which was strengthened, struck root and became a high tree, connected on every side; NAMELY TIFERET WHICH INCLUDES THE SIX SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD WHICH HOLD TO IT ON EVERY SIDE. This bough is a thick tree (Heb. avot, with Ayin), holding on to the patriarchs (Heb. avot, with Aleph). FOR IT IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN THAT COMPRISES RIGHT AND LEFT, CHESED AND GVURAH, CALLED AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. THE ALEPH OF AVOT (FATHERS) AND THE AYIN OF AVOT THICK TREES ARE INTERCHANGEABLE. For from TIFERET, the foundation (Yesod) of the world receives and is filled and pours unto the well, THE NUKVA, which is the land that is all water.

221. There are two "willows of the brook," ALLUDING TO the two brooks of water, THE TWO SFIROT, NETZACH AND HOD, where the water gathers to pour upon the righteous, YESOD WHICH RECEIVES FROM NETZACH AND HOD. Another explanation: The "willows of the brook" are the Gvurot which hold fast to Yitzchak, THE LEFT COLUMN. They come from the supernal brook, IMA, and not from the side of Aba, THE RIGHT COLUMN, and this is why the willows are all handsome but not sweet like fruit and do not produce fruit.

222. The "willows of the brook" are the two pillars, NETZACH AND Hod, which support the body, yet the "willows of the brook," as was explained, all pour water to the well TO GIVE TO THE NUKVA.

223. Another explanation for: "And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of the tree Hadar" is that it is Avraham; NAMELY CHESED. "Branches of palm tree" is Yitzchak, NAMELY GVURAH; "the bough of thick leaved tree" is Ya'akov, NAMELY TIFERET; and the "willows of the brook" are the two grades we mentioned, NETZACH AND HOD.

224. And this is because the thick tree is Ya'akov, who holds all the parts, THE SIX ENDS CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD, WHICH ARE INCLUDED WITHIN HIM, FOR WHICH REASON HE IS CALLED A THICK TREE. Assuredly, we have shown that "the fruit of the tree Hadar" is the well of Yitzchak, the lower Gvurah; NAMELY THE NUKVA. In "branches (Heb. kapot) of palm trees," 'kapot' is spelled without VAV, WHICH MEANS IT IS TIED; NAMELY a tie upon the well, as it is written "bound (Aramaic kephitu) in their mantles" (Daniel 3:21), NAMELY YESOD AND NUKVA, which do not ascend without one another, AS IF THEY ARE BOUND. "The bough of thick leaved tree" is the supernal bough turned into a thick

tree cleaving to every side; NAMELY CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD, FOR TIFERET IS THE BODY, CHESED-GVURAH THE ARMS, NETZACH-HOD THE LEGS, AND YESOD THE HOLY COVENANT, as we explained. The "willows of the brook" is Yitzchak, for on all sides they hold to the side of the brook, IMA, instead of the side of Aba. As we learned, though there are no judgments in this brook, BINAH, yet all Judgments are awakened thence.

225. Rabbi Hamnuna Saba (the elder) explained that "willows of the brook" are the two pillars we mentioned, NETZACH AND HOD, from which water comes out. THE EXPLANATION is well, yet come and behold: we see that these two grades, NETZACH AND HOD, stand on the grade of the righteous, YESOD. Fruits and gathered blessings are issued from them; but from the willows of the brook, WHICH ALSO ALLUDE TO NETZACH AND HOD, no fruits are produced, nor taste or smell, as we already explained. And all is well.

226. Therefore WE HOLD the Etrog with the left against the heart, while Lulav is held by the right together with the other kinds all tied. For the righteous, YESOD, is united with all THE SFIROT, and bound to them all. This is the bond of faith, SHINING UPON THE NUKVA CALLED FAITH.

227. In the book of Agada it is well versed that all THE FOUR KINDS are the guests, THE SECRET OF THE SEVEN SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT, who were invited by the holy people on this day, BY PRAYING ON THE DAYS OF SUKKOT BEFORE THE MEAL AND INVITING THE SUPERNAL GUESTS. They should be there, since they were invited, and man uses them in his prayer to the King. BY THE FOUR KINDS, WHICH ALLUDE TO THESE SFIROT, ONE ATTAINS THEM. Happy are the children of Yisrael who know the ways of the holy King, and know the ways of the Torah, with which to walk the path of Truth and merit this world and the World to Come.

228. On that day, the children of Yisrael come out from before the King with certain signs; NAMELY THE FOUR KINDS, for they received a favorable judgment. What are these signs? The signs of the faith, THE SHECHINAH, the seal of the most high King, ZEIR ANPIN. It is like two men come before the king to be judged. The people in the world did not know who won. A minister came from the king's house and they asked him. He said to them, Whoever leaves THE KING'S HOUSE with the king's signs in his hands, he is the winner.

229. All the people in the world come to be judged before the most high King and He judges them on Rosh Hashanah and on the Yom Kippur until the fifteenth day of the month. Thus, it was found out that the children of Yisrael had all succeeded in repenting, and work hard in building the Sukkah and acquiring a Lulav and Etrog. It is not known who won the judgment. The supernal angels ask who has won, and the Holy One, blessed be He, says they who hold my signs in their hands, THE FOUR KINDS, have received a favorable judgment.

230. On that day, the children of Yisrael leave with a mark from the King with a song of glory and enter the Sukkah, Etrog in their left hand, a Lulav in their right. Every one sees that the children of Yisrael are written in the King's list, and open and say, "Happy is that people, that is in such a case: happy is that people, whose Elohim is Hashem" (Tehilim 144:15).

231. Now all rejoice, and the guests rejoice. Even the nations of the world participate in that joy and are blessed by it. Hence sacrifices are offered for them in every day, so there will be peace upon them, and they will be blessed by it. From now on, there is one day in which the highest King rejoices with the people of Yisrael, as it is written: "On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly" (Bemidbar 29:35). This day comes solely from the King, who delights in the children of Yisrael as a king who has invited guests.

27. The tulip and the lily

Rabbi Shimon begins the discussion by providing two explanations for this title verse. He reveals that the "tulip of Sharon" signifies both the congregation of Yisrael and the Malchut. Rabbi Shimon continues by explaining that the Malchut is called "Sharon" and that it thirsts for the water of Binah. The tulip, we are told, is also called "the lily of the valley," since it changes hues when she unites with the King. This change, we learn, indicates an alignment with mercy or judgment. Rabbi Shimon next proceeds by providing a description of Adam's mortal sin, the crime by which he brought punishment upon all people. We are told that in fact it was Eve who led Adam to sin and thereby, brought death to all. As punishment for this

sin, both Adam and Eve, as well as the rest of humanity, became subject to constant change and eventual death.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light of Binah flows into our world as we peruse this passage with a pure heart. This Light brings mercy into our lives, softening judgments. This energy of purification also helps to correct the original sin of Adam, and assists in the removal of death from the landscape of human existence.

232. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "I am the tulip of the Sharon; the lily of the valleys" (Shir Hashirim 2:1). How fond is the Holy One, blessed be He, of the Congregation of Yisrael. He always praises it, and she always praises the Holy One, blessed be He, AS SAID IN SHIR HASHIRIM. How many poets and singers it summons before the Holy One, blessed be He. Happy is the portion of Yisrael, who cleave to the lot of the holy portion, as it says, "For Hashem's portion is His people..." (Devarim 32:9).

233. "I am the tulip of the Sharon." This is the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, which stands in the Garden of Eden in the magnificence of her beauty. She is called Sharon, because she sings (Heb. sharah) and praises before the most high King.

234. Another explanation is that "I am the tulip of the Sharon" in need of watering from the deep river, the source of all springs; NAMELY BINAH, as it says, "And the parched ground (Heb. sharav) shall become a pool" (Yeshayah 35:7). HENCE THE NUKVA IS CALLED SHARON, DERIVED FROM SHARAV, FOR IT IS THIRSTY FOR THE WATER OF BINAH. She is called "the lily of the valley (also: 'the deeps')" since she is to be found very deep. The deeps are those in the verse, "Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Hashem" (Tehilim 130:1). "The tulip of the Sharon" comes from the place where the waters of the springs come and never stop flowing. "The lily of the valley" is from the place called the depth of all, closed on all sides.

235. Come and see: In the beginning, she is green as a tulip, which has leaves of green. Then, she is red as a lily with white shades, a lily (Heb. shoshana) of six leaves. THE WORD IS DERIVED FROM CHANGE (HEB. SHINUYY), for she changes hues, changes from one color to another.

236. SHE IS CALLED a lily, THOUGH at first she was a tulip. WHEN she desired to be united with the King, she was called a tulip. Now that she is joined to the King in kisses, she is called a lily. Since it is written: "His lips are lilies" (Shir Hashirim 5:13), she is called "the lily of the valley," for she changes colors, now for better now for worse, now for Mercy now for Judgment.

237. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes" (Beresheet 3:6). Come and see: Men do not behold, nor do they know or care, that when the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He donned him with what is most dear, THE SUPERNAL MOCHIN, and asked Adam to cleave to Him, so he will be the only one, of one heart, to cling to the place of one never-changing clinging; NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN. IT SAYS, "FOR I AM HASHEM, I DO NOT CHANGE" (MALACHI 3:6), which never alters, the knot to which the all embracing unison is tied. This is the meaning of "The Tree of Life in the midst of the garden" (Beresheet 2:10); NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN.

238. Later, they turned from the path of faith, and left the only supernal tree among the trees, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, and alighted upon the place which changes colors, and changes from good to evil and from evil to good, TO WIT, THE NUKVA WHEN NOT WITH ZEIR ANPIN, BUT SUCKING FROM THE LEFT ALONE. They descended downward from above, and were greatly changed. They left the only tree, the highest among the trees, as it is written: "That the Elohim has made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Kohelet 7:29).

239. Surely then their heart was changed on that very side, FOR THEY UNDERWENT MANY CHANGES, now for good now for evil, now for Mercy now for Judgment. They clung to THE LEFT, surely seeking many inventions there, I.E. NAMELY CHANGES, and cleaved to them.

240. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: Adam, you have abandoned life and clung to death. Life is, as it is written: "The Tree of Life in the midst of the garden," NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN called life, for whoever cleaves to it shall never taste death. Yet you clung to another tree, THE NUKVA WHEN NOT UNITED WITH ZEIR ANPIN. Now surely death awaits you, as it is written: "Her feet go down to death" (Mishlei 5:5), FOR WHOEVER HAS NO MERIT IS EVIL. It is also written: "And I find more bitter than death the woman" (Kohelet .7:26), THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA WHEN NOT UNITED WITH ZEIR ANPIN. Surely he clung to the place of death and abandoned the place of living and was therefore doomed to death together with the rest of the world.

241. HE ASKS: If he sinned, what was the sin of the whole world, WHY WAS IT DECREED THAT THE REST OF THE WORLD WOULD DIE? If, you might say, it is because the whole world ate of this tree, and therefore were all sentenced to death, this is not so. HE ANSWERS: When Adam WAS CREATED AND stood upon his feet, all the creatures saw and feared him, and followed him like servants after the king. But he said to them, "O come, let us worship and bow down" (Tehilim 95:6), you and I. When they saw Adam bowing before that place, THE LEFT SIDE, and cleaving to it, they all followed him. Thus, he brought death upon the whole world.

242. Then was Adam changed in several ways, now Judgment, now Mercy, now to death and now to life. He never stood still in one of them, because of the nature of that place which was therefore called the revolving sword, which revolves from this to that side, from good to evil, from Mercy to Judgment, from peace to war. Usually it turns from good to evil, as it is written: "The Tree of Knowledge of good and evil" (Beresheet 2:9).

243. The most high King, in His love for His creatures, rebuked him saying: "But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it..." (Ibid. 17), but he did not accept it and was drawn after his wife and was expelled FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN for ever, for the woman ascended to the place OF THE REVERSAL BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH and no more. THUS the woman brought death to all.

244. Come and see: It is written of the World to Come: "For as the days of a tree shall the days of my people be" (Yeshayah 65:22). "The days of a tree" refer to the well known TREE OF LIFE, of which it says "He will destroy death for ever" (Yeshayah 25:8), FOR THERE ARE NO CHANGES OR DEATH IN THE TREE OF LIFE.

28. "And the days drew near for Yisrael to die," part three

Rabbi Chiya explains to Rabbi Yosi that when the Holy One wishes to take back a man's spirit, the days that man has lived are enumerated before Him. If this man is righteous, all the days will draw near Him without reproach. The wicked, however, cannot draw near Him since they are consumed by darkness. The name "Yisrael" is more complete than, and superior to, the name Ya'akov, we are told. This is why we find Yisrael rather than Ya'akov written in the title quotation.

The Relevance of this Passage

A rare opportunity is afforded to the readers of this mystical passage. Through the spiritual power ingrained into the name Yisrael, we receive the Light of the great patriarch, which helps merit closeness to The Creator in this world and the next, by removing the darkness created by our misdeeds and selfish actions. Moreover, we are inspired to seek higher levels of spirituality, so that we, too, can elevate from the realm of "Ya'akov" to "Yisrael" over the course of our lives.

245. "And the days drew near for Yisrael to die." We learned that Rabbi Chiya said: It is written, "And Ya'akov lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years." In his life, it is written Ya'akov and in his death, it says Yisrael. YET THE NAME YISRAEL IS MORE ELEVATED THAN THE NAME YA'AKOV. Rabbi Yosi said: Surely IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SAID HERE YISRAEL, for it does not say, 'The day drew near,' but "the days." This is difficult to understand, for a man does not die in several days; within one hour, one moment, he dies and passes away from the world.

246. HE ANSWERS: We have so learned that when the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to take back to Him the spirit of man, all the days the man lived come before Him and are

counted. When the days draw near him to be reckoned, the man dies, and the Holy One, blessed be He, takes back to Himself the spirit of man, that breath which the man breathes in and out.

247. Happy is the portion of the man, whose days draw near the King without reproach, and none is pushed out for containing a transgression committed in it. The reason the words 'drawing near' are used in relation to the righteous is that the days draw near the King without reproach.

248. Woe to the wicked of whom it does not say 'drawing near'. For how could their days draw near the King, when all the crimes of the world are found in them? Hence they do not draw near the King, nor come before Him or recorded above, but are consumed of themselves, as is said of them, "The way of the wicked is like darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Mishlei 4:19).

249. And here it says, "And the days drew near for Yisrael to die," for assuredly they drew near without shame, in complete joy. This is why it says (lit.) "the days of Yisrael," AND NOT "THE DAYS OF YA'AKOV," as the name Yisrael is more complete than that of Ya'akov. If you say that it is written "and Ya'akov was a plain (lit. 'whole') man" (Bereshheet 25:27), indicating that the name Ya'akov too is whole. HE ANSWERS: THE NAME YA'AKOV IS ALSO WHOLE, but not whole on a superior grade like Yisrael is.

250. We have learned that Rabbi Yosi said: When a man's days are enumerated before the King, those of a certain righteous are enumerated far from the King, and the days of another righteous are counted close to the King. They do not stand at a distance but come in without shame and draw near the King. Happy is their portion. This is the meaning of the verse, "And the days drew near for Yisrael to die."

29. "And he called his son Yosef"

Through a discussion of the title verse, the rabbis reveal the special connection that exists between Yosef and his father Ya'akov. Not only were the two very similar in appearance, but Ya'akov also recognized Yosef's holiness and knew that he would one day be a great man. We also learn that Ya'akov was afraid to go to Egypt because he feared that in the future his children would be made slaves, that the Shechinah would leave him, and that he would be buried among the wicked. However, the Lord assured him that he would be buried in the grave of his forefathers, and Ya'akov saw that the Shechinah would dwell with Yisrael in exile.

Rabbi Shimon then addresses the topic of Ya'akov's relationship with Leah and Rachel. The deception that was played out by Leah, posing as Rachel, leads to the transference of the birthright from Reuven to Yosef. This also relates to the significance of the name Reuven (lit. 'see, a son').

Rabbi Shimon then explains the holy significance of the verse, "Put, I please you, your hand under my thigh." Written in connection with Avraham, Ya'akov, and Yosef, this verse alludes to the place that emits the holy seed.

Finally, Rabbi Yehuda explains why Ya'akov was buried with Leah rather than Rachel. The reasons, we're told, are that Leah stood by the roadside day after day, weeping and praying that Ya'akov would marry her. Furthermore, she bore six holy tribes into the world and therefore, deserved this privilege more than Rachel.

The Relevance of this Passage

The story of Ya'akov entering into the land of Egypt is synonymous with the men of all generation confronting their own personal demons when they fall into negativity. As the Shechinah dwelled in the presence of Ya'akov during his sojourn in Egypt, the Light of The Creator can illumine our lives when we fall into negativity and find ourselves enslaved to dark forces. This passage is our connection to this Light. Moreover, we can share this Light with all the world and help bring about the end of the exile.

The discourse concerning Ya'akov's relationship with Leah and Rachel shows us that everything that takes place within the drama of human existence has underlying meaning

and that all events that transpire are necessary in the course of mankind's spiritual development. Thus, this verse instills wisdom within us to accept the things we might not understand at the present moment. It ensures that order will emerge from chaos. The Light that shines from the story concerning Leah's burial with Ya'akov inspires us to weep and yearn for the Light of The Creator, for the tears of man cause great stirrings above.

251. "And he called his son Yosef." Rabbi Yitzchak said: Are the other tribes not his sons? WHY DID HE CALL YOSEF ALONE? HE REPLIES: Rabbi Aba said that Yosef was his son more than the others. We have learned that when Potifar's wife begged Yosef, it is written: "Yosef went into the house to do his work; and there was none (lit. 'no man') of the men of the house there within" (Beresheet 39:11). This verse should have said 'there was no man', but why add "of the men of the house"? HE ANSWERS: This indicates the image of Ya'akov which was there. It says "the men of the house" to show us there was another man, NOT OF THE MEN OF THE HOUSE; NAMELY YA'AKOV. Once Yosef lifted up his eyes and saw the image of his father, his mind was settled and he withdrew.

252. Come and see the verse: "But he refused, and said to his master's wife..." (Beresheet 39:8). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him upon your life, another will say "I refuse" when he will come to bless your sons, who will be blessed by him. This is why it says, "And his father refused, and said, 'I know it, my son, I know it'" (Beresheet 48:19).

253. HE ASKS: Since he said, "I know it, my son," why did he say again, "I know it"? HE ANSWERS: He said, "I know it, my son" meaning 'you showed through your body that you are my son, when you saw my image and returned to the holy covenant AND DID NOT DESECRATE IT'. This is why it is written: "I know it, my son." THE SECOND TIME IT IS WRITTEN "I know it" is what you said about this one being the firstborn, TO WHICH HE ANSWERED BY "He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great" (Beresheet 48:19). This is why it says here: "And he called his son Yosef" (Beresheet 47:29), his very son Yosef SINCE HE PROVED IT BY HIS BODY, AS EXPLAINED.

254. Another explanation for: "And he called his son Yosef." They looked the same, and whoever saw Yosef said he was Ya'akov's son. Rabbi Yosi said: This is exactly so, that he called him his son SINCE THEY LOOKED THE SAME. Moreover, Yosef gave food for him and his sons in his old age, for which reason he was his own son more than everyone else. "And he called his son Yosef": HE ASKS: Why did he call Yosef and not another one? HE ANSWERS: Because he could take him from there TO THE CAVE OF THE MACHPELAH SINCE HE WAS A KING, BUT NO ONE ELSE HAD THE AUTHORITY.

255. Rabbi Yosi said: Since Ya'akov knew his descendants would become slaves in Egypt, why was he not buried there, so that his merit would protect his children? Why did he wish to go up from there? When it says, "As a father pities his children" (Tehilim 103:13), where is pity then?

256. HE REPLIES: We have so learned that when Ya'akov went down to Egypt, he was afraid. He said: Might it come to that, heaven forbid, that my children will perish among the nations, or that the Holy One, blessed be He, will remove the Shechinah from me as before. It is written, "And Elohim appeared to Ya'akov" (Beresheet 35:9). "Fear not to go down to Egypt; for I will there make of you a great nation" (Beresheet 46:3). As for what you said, that I might remove My Shechinah from you, "I will go down with you into Egypt" (Ibid. 4).

257. He also said: I am afraid lest I shall be buried there and will not merit to be buried with my fathers. He answered him, "And I will also surely bring you up again" (Ibid.), to be buried in the grave of your fathers.

258. This is why he wanted to be taken up from Egypt. Another reason is not to be made godlike, for he saw that the Holy One, blessed be He, would take vengeance upon the deities of Egypt. He also saw that the Shechinah would dwell among his children in exile, AND THAT HE NEED NOT BE BURIED IN EGYPT TO PROTECT THEM. Another reason is that he wanted his body to dwell among the bodies of his fathers, to be with them and not with the wicked in Egypt.

259. We learned that the body of Ya'akov had its beauty from Adam, and the image of Ya'akov was of the supernal holy form, the form of the Holy Throne. Thus he did not want to be buried among the wicked. The secret of this matter is that there is no separating the

patriarchs, AND THEY ARE ALWAYS TOGETHER. It is therefore written, "I will lie with my fathers" (Beresheet 47:30).

260. "And he called his son Yosef." SCRIPTURE SAYS his son BECAUSE they had the same countenance, and also because he begot him more willingly than any other TRIBE. Come and see: It is written: "Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband?" (Beresheet 30:15), for Ya'akov's whole desire was for Rachel. Hence it says, "and he called his son Yosef."

261. We learned: Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "The secret things belong to Hashem our Elohim..." (Devarim 29:28). Come and see how a man should beware sins, and be watchful lest he would transgress his Master's wishes. For we have learned that every thing a man does in this world is written in a book and reckoned before the holy King. All is known before Him, as it is written: "'Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?' says Hashem" (Yirmeyah 23:24). How can a man not guard himself from sinning before his Master? We learned that even a man's thoughts and plans are all placed before the Holy One, blessed be He, and are not lost before Him.

262. Come and see: on the night Leah came to Ya'akov, she gave him the tokens he gave Rachel, LEST HER FATHER SHOULD REPLACE HER WITH ANOTHER. WHEN RACHEL SAW THAT HIS FATHER GIVES LEAH IN HER PLACE, AND THAT SHE DOES NOT KNOW OF THE TOKEN AND MIGHT BE PUT TO SHAME, SHE GAVE HER THE TOKENS. He thought he was with Rachel, when he had intercourse with her. It was his first drop, as it is written: "My might and the beginning of my strength" (Beresheet 49:3), and he thought it was Rachel. The Holy One, blessed be He, who reveals depths and mysteries, who knows what lies in the dark, brought up the desire to its place, and the birthright was gone from Reuven AND GIVEN to Yosef. Why? Because the first drop that came from Ya'akov belonged to Rachel. Since the actual birthright of Reuven belonged to her, Yosef inherited it and Rachel came into her own inheritance.

263. This is the secret reason why Reuven did not receive a name like the other sons but simply Reuven, namely Reu ven (see, a son), a son, not known by name. Leah therefore did not call him 'my son', naming him 'Reu veni' (Eng. 'see, my son'), for she knew what had happened, THAT YA'AKOV'S THOUGHTS WERE WITH RACHEL AND NOT WITH HER.

264. We learned it is known to the Holy One, blessed be He, that Ya'akov did not mean to sin by COMING INTO LEAH AND THINKING OF RACHEL, and that he never knowingly thought of another woman at that time, like the wicked men in the world. It is therefore written, "Now the sons of Ya'akov were twelve" (Beresheet 35:23), for the sons of the other wicked men in the world, who act in this way, are called by another name; NAMELY CHANGED CHILDREN, which is known to the friends. He therefore "called his son Yosef," his own son from the beginning, REUVEN'S BIRTH, and his son in the end.

265. We learned that Rabbi Yosi said: What did Ya'akov use to make Yosef swear? It is written "Put, I pray you, your hand under my thigh." HE ANSWERS: HE MADE HIM SWEAR by the sign of the covenant, which was stamped upon his flesh, for the patriarchs assigned it more importance than everything else, and the covenant is the secret of Yosef. TO WIT, YOSEF IS THE SECRET OF THE ATTRIBUTE OF THE RIGHTEOUS YESOD, OF WHICH HE IS A CHARIOT.

266. Rabbi Shimon said: It is written of Avraham and Ya'akov, "Put, I pray you, your hand under my thigh," in the place alluded to by the Holy Name, which emits holy seed, THE SEED of faith, into the world. It is not written in connection to Yitzchak: "PUT, I PRAY YOU, YOUR HAND UNDER MY THIGH," since Esav issued from him.

267. Another reason it is written: "Put, I pray you, your hand under my thigh...bury me not, I pray you, in Egypt." Ya'akov said to Yosef, Swear to me by this holy impression, which emitted holy and faithful seed into the world and was always kept from being defiled, that it will never be buried among the unholy who did never keep it, of whom it says, "Whose flesh is the flesh of asses, and whose issue is the issue of horses" (Yechezkel 23:20).

268. It may be said that Yosef guarded his covenant more than everyone else, but why was he buried among them IN EGYPT? HE REPLIES: We have learned that it is written, "The word of Hashem came to Yechezkel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of Casdim by the river

K'var" (Yechezkel 1:3). Yet we learned that the Shechinah does not dwell outside the land of Yisrael. Why was she revealed there? HE ANSWERS: It is written "by the river K'var," FOR WATER CANNOT BE DEFILED, UNLIKE THE LAND OF NATIONS. It is also written: "And the hand of Hashem was there upon him" (Ibid.), WHICH IS THE SHECHINAH. Here too, Yosef's coffin was thrown into the water. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: If Yosef will be gone from here, the exile will not be carried out, FOR YISRAEL WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TOLERATE IT. His burial place will then be in an undefiled place, and the children of Yisrael will endure the exile.

269. We learned that Rabbi Yosi said: Ya'akov saw that the Holy Throne was fitted in every way by the patriarchs, AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK ON RIGHT AND LEFT, AND HE IN THE CENTER. YA'AKOV said to himself, If he is to be buried here IN EGYPT, how will the body be attached to the patriarchs? Even the cave where he was to be buried is called Machpelah (from the term for 'double'), for in every thing it is double, TO THE RIGHT AND TO THE LEFT, both double and single. TO WIT, THEY ARE IN NEED OF A THIRD ONE TO BALANCE BETWEEN THEM. The cave too is both double and single, AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK BEING ON THE RIGHT AND LEFT, AND YA'AKOV BETWEEN THEM.

270. Come and see: The patriarchs merited to be buried in the cave of the Machpelah together with their spouses, Ya'akov was buried with Leah. Why was Rachel not buried with him, especially when it says, "And Rachel was barren (Heb. akarah)" (Beresheet 29:31), which is an indication that she was the foundation (Heb. akarah) of the house? HE ANSWERS: Leah had more right FOR YA'AKOV since she bore six tribes into the world from the holy stock. Thus, she was given to him as his spouse in the cave.

271. Rabbi Yehuda said: Leah used to stand every day by the highway and weep for Ya'akov, THAT HE WOULD MARRY HER, for she heard he was righteous. She thus prepared herself through prayer. It says, "And Leah's eyes were weak" (Beresheet 29:16), since she rose early and sat by the highway to pray.

272. Rachel never went to the highway TO ASK TO BE MARRIED TO YA'AKOV, LIKE LEAH DID. For this Leah was privileged to be buried with him, and Rachel is by the highway, buried there. This is the meaning of the words "And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died by me." What is "by me"? It means "because of me in the land of Cna'an on the way." Because of me, she died on the way, for she never went out for my sake TO PRAY like her sister.

273. Since Leah went and wept by the highway for Ya'akov, she merited to be buried with him. Rachel, who did not want to go out to pray for him, was therefore buried by the highway. The secret of this matter is that the one is disclosed and the other undisclosed.

274. Come and see: The righteous Leah shed many tears in order to be the portion of Ya'akov instead of that of the evil Esav. Hence, we learned that any man who sheds tears before the Holy One, blessed be He, even if punishment was already given, will have the verdict annulled, and the punishment will not have any effect upon him. Whence do we know that? From Leah, for it was decreed that Leah would be in the portion of Esav, but through her prayer she was married to Ya'akov, and not to Esav.

275. Rabbi Chiya said: "And I will lie with my fathers..." Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion with the verse, "What profit has a man of all his labor wherein he labors under the sun?" (Kohelet 1:3). We have studied several times the words of Solomon, and they do not seem to be understood, for all his words should be read with wisdom.

30. And the Wisdom of Solomon excelled

Here we learn that during the days of King Solomon, the Malchut grew, was blessed, and attained fullness. Consequently, the wisdom of Solomon excelled that of the children of the east, who inherited their wisdom from Avraham, derived from the lower Crowns. Hadar was the only king of the east country who endured because he was composed of both male and female and he maintained the Malchut. There follows a description of the awesome form of Malchut [Female Principle] and her son Matatron, the son of Yered. We learn that the comets fastened to the hairs of the moon are the scourge by which the world is sentenced, and the nails of the Female Principle write and record the transgressions of men under strict

judgment. Finally, Rabbi Chiya comments on the verse, "What profit has a man of all his labor"

The Relevance of this Passage

The wisdom of King Solomon shines into our physical world [Malchut], helping mankind achieve its final correction. Solomon's wisdom is founded upon the Three Column System, whereas the spiritual teachings of the East are based upon Two Column System, such as Yin and Yang. The third and Central Column creates resistance between the two positive and negative columns of energy, like a filament in a light bulb--that generates spiritual Light for the entire planet. This Light shines forth in this passage and helps sweeten judgments decreed against mankind.

276. We studied the verse, "And Solomon's Wisdom excelled" (I Melachim 5:10). During the days of King Solomon, the moon, NAMELY THE NUKVA, was in her fullness. Hence it is written, "And Solomon's Wisdom excelled the Wisdom of all the children of the east country." Regarding this, we learned who the children of the east were. It has already been explained. Nevertheless, the wisdom of the children of the east is the Wisdom they inherited from Avraham.

277. We learned: It is written, "And Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak" (Beresheet 35:5). HE ASKS: What was "all that he had" WHICH HE GAVE TO YITZCHAK? HE ANSWERS: It is supernal Wisdom, for he knew the name of the Holy One, blessed be He. This may be understood from the verse: "All that he had," for the supernal Wisdom is his, in the same way we learned of the daughter he had named Bakol (lit. 'in everything'), THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA.

278. "But to the sons of the concubines, which Avraham had, Avraham gave gifts" (Beresheet 35:6). He gave them certain knowledge from the lower crowns and settled them in the east country. From this, the children of the east country inherited Wisdom, I.E. FROM THE LOWER CROWNS, as it is written: "The wisdom of all the children of the east country."

279. We learned that one day Rabbi Shimon came from Cappadocia to Lod. Rabbi Aba and Rabbi Yehuda came with him. Rabbi Aba was tired running after Rabbi Shimon who was mounted. He said: "They shall walk after Hashem, who shall roar like a lion" (Hoshea 11:10).

280. Rabbi Shimon dismounted and said to him: Indeed it is written, "Then I abode in the mountain forty days and forty nights" (Devarim 9:9). Surely wisdom does not settle upon man when he walks but when he just sits down. We have already explained why it says, "I abode (or: sat)" and now we should rest. They sat down.

281. Rabbi Aba said: It is written: "And Solomon's Wisdom excelled the Wisdom of all the children of the east country and all the Wisdom of Egypt." What is the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Egypt and the Wisdom of the east country? He said to him, Come and behold: we have explained in several places in regard to the name of the moon, NAMELY THE NUKVA. When it is blessed by all THE SFIROT, it is written "excelled." THIS WAS SAID in the days of Solomon, THE NUKVA grew and was blessed and reached her fullness.

282. We have learned that a thousand mountains grow GRASS before her, and she swallows them in one bite; a thousand great rivers she has, which she swallows in one gulp.

283. Her nails reach 1,070 directions, her hands hold four and twenty directions. None escapes her to the RIGHT side and none escapes her to the LEFT side, BUT THROUGH THE MIDDLE. Many thousands shields cling to her hairs.

284. A youth, whose height is from the top of the world to its bottom, NAMELY MATATRON, WHOSE HEIGHT IS FROM THE HEAD OF BRIYAH TO THE BOTTOM OF ASIYAH, comes from between her legs, NETZACH AND HOD OF THE NUKVA, clothed in sixty clubs of fire, BY WHICH HE DRIVES AWAY THE EXTERNALS SO THEY WOULD NOT CLING TO THE LEGS OF THE NUKVA. In this way, he is in charge over the lower beings of the four sides. This is the youth, who holds 613 upper keys on the side of Ima. All the supernal keys dangle from the sharp sword girded about his waist.

285. This youth is called Chanoch the son of Yered in the Braita, as it is written: "Train up (Chanoch) a youth in the way he should go" (Mishlei 22:6). It may be said it is written in the Mishnah, not in the Braita. Yet we explained it when studying the Mishnah, and this has been explained. They all looked into the same thing. Under HIS SHADE, the beasts of the field shall find shelter; NAMELY THE ANGELS OF YETZIRAH we learned of, like Supernal Holy Yisrael-NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, called 'the son of his mother', BINAH. It is written, "For I was my father's son, tender and the only one in the sight of my mother" (Mishlei 4:3), and "Yisrael is my son, my firstborn" (Shemot 4:22), WHICH REFERS TO ZEIR ANPIN. Underneath ATZILUT, MATATRON is too called the son of his mother, THE NUKVA, as it is written "Yisrael was a youth, then I loved him" (Hoshea 11:1), WHICH REFERS TO MATATRON. He was named the son of Yered for several reasons, I.E., NOW TO SHAME HIM AND NOW TO RECOMMEND, as we have already explained. Yet come and behold: HERE WE SPEAK OF the very son of Yered (lit. 'descent'), for we have learned that the Shechinah descended to the earth by ten steps (Heb. yeridot), all of them explained by the friends. Underneath, several Living Creatures are standing; NAMELY THE ANGELS OF YETZIRAH, which are called the very beasts of the field.

286. Under these Living Creatures are fastened the hairs of the moon, THE NUKVA, called the comets (Heb. Shevet), a very scourge (Heb. Shevet); TO WIT, THEY ARE CONSIDERED THE SCOURGE WITH WHICH THE WORLD IS SENTENCED. THEY ARE DIVIDED INTO the accusers, the weighty, those of STRICT Judgment, and the impudent. They are all called hairy. Her hands and feet hold on to it like a mighty lion holding its prey, of which it says "and tears in pieces, and none can deliver" (Michah 5:7).

287. Her nails are the ones who call to mind the sins of men, who write and record their transgression under strict judgment. Of this says the verse: "The sin of Yehuda is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond" (Yirmeyah 17:1). What is the diamond? HE ANSWERS: That which imprints and carves the stone, and hews in it on all sides.

288. The filth of the nails REFERS TO those who do not cleave to the body of the King, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, BUT CLEAVE TO THE LEFT and suck from the side of defilement when the moon is diminished, TO WIT, WHEN THE ABUNDANCE THEN DRAWN FROM THE NAILS PASSES TO THE SIDE OF DEFILEMENT, AND CONSIDERED THE FILTH OF THE NAILS.

289. Since King Solomon inherited the moon at her fullness, THE NUKVA IN GREATNESS, he ought to inherit her when she is defective. He therefore strove to know about the spirits and demons, in order to receive the moon, THE NUKVA, in all her aspects.

290. In the days of King Solomon, the moon shone from all the grades, as it is written: "And Solomon's Wisdom excelled (also: 'increased')," meaning that it was greater than the Wisdom of all the children of the east country SINCE IT WAS INCLUDED WITHIN THE NUKVA, AND ALSO THE WISDOM OF EGYPT WAS COMPRISED IN IT AND THE WISDOM OF THE CHILDREN OF THE EAST. This is a supernal secret, in accordance with the verse, "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom" (Beresheet 36:31). They were all called the children of the east country. None of them endured except he who was comprised of male and female, who was called Hadar. For it says, "And Hadar reigned in his place...AND HIS WIFE'S NAME..." (Ibid. 39). BUT NO WOMAN WAS MENTIONED IN RELATION TO THE OTHER KINGS.

291. We have learned that though the Nukva was maintained BY KING HADAR, she nevertheless did not illuminate wholly until the time of King Solomon, who was worthy of her, as we explained, for his mother was Bat-sheva (lit. 'daughter of seven,') TO WIT, THE NUKVA WAS CALLED IN HER GREATNESS DAUGHTER OF SEVEN, SINCE SHE INCLUDES CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT OF ZEIR ANPIN, BEING HIS MOTHER. HE WAS THEREFORE WORTHY OF INHERITING HER IN HER DAYS OF GREATNESS.

292. "And all the Wisdom of Egypt." This is the lower Wisdom called 'the maid behind the millstones.' The Wisdom of Solomon included everything, the Wisdom of the children of the east country together with the Wisdom of Egypt. Rabbi Aba said: Blessed be the Merciful One, that I have asked about it, and so merited all these words. Rabbi Shimon said: I have explained this subject, and we already interpreted it.

293. We learned: "What profit has a man of all his labor wherein he labors." One may say that this is true also for laboring in the Torah. Yet it is said "wherein he labors under the sun," and the labor in the Torah is different by being above the sun, OF THE SUPERNAL ONE. Rabbi Chiya said: This is true also for the Torah, THE WORDS "WHAT PROFIT..." if it is done for the sake of people or to gain respect. Of this, it is said "under the sun," for this study of the Torah does not ascend. We learned that Rabbi Elazar said: Even if a man lives to a thousand years, on the day he departs from the world, it would seem to him as if he lived but one day.

31. "And I will lie with my fathers"

Rabbi Yehuda begins by explaining the significance of each day with or without sin for the individual. We learn that if man sins and repents, that day returns to its place. However, if he does not repent, that day ascends to bear testimony to this sin, then descends, joins with the spirit outside, and brings evil to that man. At the end of his days, man's soul is clothed with the days in which he did not sin. If there are none, he is sentenced to Gehenom, wherein he is punished two days for each day of sin.

We learn that Adam repented for his great sin, although he did not completely repair the damage his sin caused. Therefore, the Lord accepted his repentance and clothed him with garments that were not made from his days. In contrast, Avraham wore a complete raiment of glory when he departed this world, since he merited it. Ya'akov also merited to be clothed in his own days. Indeed, his garments were scented with the perfume of the Female Principle, as signified by the verse, "And he smelled the smell of his garments" Rabbi Elazar then explains to Rabbi Yehuda that three garments are made for man from his days. These are worn by the Ruach, the Neshamah, and the Nefesh. Rabbi Elazar explains the relationship between, and the significance of, these bodies.

Rabbi Shimon directs the final portion of the discussion. He says that the companions of Bavel listen and learn from him, but do not share these matters with others. The reason for this, we are told, is that they are outside the Holy Land and do not draw from Holiness. Rabbi Shimon then warns us of the time when people abandon the study of the Torah and the scrolls are moved. Without the wisdom of the scholars and without the righteous to arouse the souls to pray for the living, the people of the world will be punished by the accusers-- unless all people do penance for their sins. Rabbi Yehuda explains that when the world is in distress and is in need of mercy, the scroll of the Torah must be stirred. Then, the Nefesh informs the Ruach, the Ruach the Neshamah, and lastly, the Neshamah informs the Holy One. The Lord then draws the crystal dew to flow upon the sleeping patriarchs who join in and pray for the world. Only then does the Lord have mercy on the world.

The Relevance of this Passage

Each day in our lives presents us with opportunities to fulfill our personal spiritual mission in life and complete our transformation. Unfortunately, most people fail to realize the meaning of life and the purpose of their existence. Each lost opportunity creates a negative blockage that diminishes and dims the Light of The Creator in our lives. It is within this expanding darkness that turmoil, hardship, pain, and suffering are born. Thus, it behooves a man to awaken to the spiritual truths of his existence, so that he may develop himself spiritually. This passage ignites that awareness in our consciousness. It helps to remove the negative blockages and darkness created by our lack of action in previous times, while arousing penitence in our hearts for our unkind behavior. Moreover, the Light of the Torah is set aflame, drawing to us both mercy and protection.

294. "And I will lie with my fathers." Happy is the portion of the patriarchs, for the Holy One, blessed be He, made them into a Holy Chariot, and desired to be crowned with them. Hence it is written, "Only in your fathers Hashem took delight..." (Devarim 10:15). Rabbi Elazar said: Ya'akov knew that he was to be crowned by his fathers for they would be crowned with him, and he with them. We learned regarding the engraved letters that Shin has three knots, two knots on both sides, RIGHT AND LEFT, and one knot that binds them together, THE MIDDLE ONE. This we learned from the verse: "And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end" (Shemot 26:28), that the knot in the middle is attached to the RIGHT side and the LEFT side. Hence it says, "And I will lie with my fathers."

295. "And I will lie with my fathers." Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse, "Hear, O deaf; and look, O blind, that you may see" (Yeshayah 42:18). "Hear, O deaf" refers to the men who neither listen to the words of the Torah, nor open their ears to hearken the precepts of their Master. The blind are those who do not look to know wherefore they live. For every day, a crier comes and proclaims, yet no one pays attention.

296. We have learned that man's days already exist from the day he was born into the world, FOR THEY ARE REAL ILLUMINATIONS, FROM WHICH MAN'S DAYS ARE DRAWN. They go about the world and descend to warn man, each day in its turn. When the day comes to warn the man, yet the man commits a sin on that day, it ascends shamefacedly and bears testimony on him, and stands outside alone.

297. We have learned that after it was put to stand alone OUTSIDE, it sits and waits for the man to repent HIS SIN. If the man repented, the day returns to its place; but if he did not merit AND ATONE, the day descends, joins the spirit outside and comes back to his house, putting on the same appearance as the man to bring evil upon him. THE DAY sits with him in his house, and if he has the merit TO REPENT, it brings him good, but if not, it brings him evil.

298. In either case, when that man's days are accounted they are in want, and those are not numbered because of the sins. Woe to the man who diminished the number of his days before the holy King, and has no days above with which to be crowned in that world, to approach the holy King.

299. Come and see: When his days come before the holy King, if the man who passed away from the world be righteous, he ascends and comes in with these days that are the raiments of glory which his soul is clothed in. For he merited these days, by not committing any sin therein.

300. Woe to the man who reduced the number of his days above. For when he is to don his days, the days he spoilt by his sins are missing from that garment, and he wears a defective costume. All the more so if they are many, THE DAYS WHICH WERE SPOILT, and that man has nothing to be clad in that world. Woe to him, woe to his soul, for he is sentenced to Gehenom on account of these days, days upon days; HE IS PUNISHED TWO days for every SINGLE day. When he departs from the world he finds no day in which to be clad, and has no garment or covering. Happy are the righteous, whose days are all stored with the holy King, and made into raiments of glory to don in the World to Come.

301. We have studied according to the secret of the Mishnah, the words, "And they knew that they were naked" (Beresheet 3:7). They knew exactly that the raiment of glory made of the days was impaired, and no day was left in which to be clad. Hence it says, "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh; for in your book all things are written, the days also in which they are to be fashioned" (Tehilim 139:16), WHICH ALLUDES TO ADAM. "The days...to be fashioned" FOR HIM TO WEAR, "and for it too there was one of them" (Ibid.), for he had none left in which to be clad. Then, Adam strove to repent and the Holy One, blessed be He, accepted his repentance and formed for him another vessel and garment, not made from his days BECAUSE HE DID NOT COMPLETELY REPAIR BY HIS ATONEMENT THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE. Hence it says, "For the man also and for his wife did Hashem Elohim make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Beresheet 3:21).

302. Come and see the merit of Avraham. It is written, "And Avraham... (lit.) came with days" (Beresheet 24:1). Since he had the merit, when he departed from this world, he came with his own days and wore them. Nothing was lacking in that raiment of glory, as it says "came with days." Of Iyov it says, "Naked I came out of my mother's womb and naked I shall return there" (Iyov 1:21), for nothing was left for him to wear.

303. We learned that happy are the righteous, whose days are clean FROM SINS and remain for the World to Come. Upon leaving THIS WORLD, they all join together and turn into a raiment of glory to be clothed in. In this raiment, they can be delighted with the pleasure of the World to Come. Through the garment, they will rise into the world AT THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. All those with a raiment will rise, as it says, "And they stand as a garment" (Iyov 38:14). Woe to the wicked in the world, whose days were diminished through sins, and nothing is left from them to be covered with when they leave this world.

304. We learned that the righteous who were privileged to don the raiment of glory made of their days, are crowned in that world by the same crowns the fathers were adorned with, from the river that flows and comes into the Garden of Eden. This is the meaning of the words: "And Hashem shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought" (Yeshayah 58:11). But of the wicked men in the world, who had not the merit to be dressed with the garment from their days, it says, "For he shall be like the juniper tree in the desert, and shall not see when good comes; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness" (Yirmeyah 17:6).

305. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Happy is the portion of Ya'akov, who had the greatest faith, as it is written: "And I will lie with my fathers," for he deserved them, not another, to be clad in his own days and theirs.

306. Rabbi Yehuda said: It is written, "And he smelt the smell of his garments, and blessed him" (Beresheet 27:27). HE ASKS: It says "his garments" while it should have been 'Esav's garments,' for the garments were not his but Esav's, as it is written: "And Rivkah took the best clothes of her eldest son, Esav" (Ibid. 15). Yet here it says "the smell of his garments," which means Ya'akov's.

307. HE ANSWERS: We have explained that "he smelt" means that he looked further and smelt the smell of his garments in the world of Truth, and then blessed him. Therefore it is written, "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field" (Beresheet 27:27), the field of holy apple trees, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. He was saying: Since you deserve to wear these raiments of glory, "therefore the Elohim give you of the dew of heaven" (Ibid. 28). HE ASKS: Does this mean THAT THE DEW OF HEAVEN DEPENDS UPON THE RAIMENTS OF GLORY? HE REPLIES: Since the field of apple trees, WHICH RESEMBLES THE RAIMENTS OF GLORY IN SMELL, receives dew everyday from the place called heaven, ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written "the dew of heaven." HE THEREFORE SAID: SINCE YOU ARE WORTHY OF DONNING THE RAIMENTS OF GLORY, "ELOHIM GIVE YOU OF THE DEW OF HEAVEN.

308. Rabbi Yosi said: He blessed him in everything, "of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth." TO WIT, ALSO FROM THE ABUNDANCE OF THE NUKVA CALLED EARTH. What was the reason for that? Because "he smelt the smell of his garments," his own garments as we explained, AND THESE GARMENTS RECEIVE ALSO FROM THE NUKVA. We learned that 1,500 odors rise every day from the Garden of Eden, THE NUKVA, and perfume the raiments of glory, which are crowned with the man's days in that world, SINCE THE GARMENTS RECEIVE ALSO FROM THE NUKVA.

309. Rabbi Yehuda said: How many garments are MADE FOR MAN FROM HIS DAYS? Rabbi Elazar said: There is a controversy over this point, but there are three. The first is the garments the Ruach dons in the terrestrial Garden of Eden. The Neshamah is clothed in another, the most precious, WHICH LIVES inside the bundle of life; NAMELY NUKVA amidst the purple cloak of the King. The last one is the external garment, which exists and exists not, seen yet not seen, FOR BEING EXTERNAL IT HAS NO CONTINUOUS EXISTENCE, BUT NOW IT IS SEEN AND NOW IT IS NOT. The Nefesh wears this garment when it goes and hovers about the world.

310. In every new moon and Shabbat, THE NEFESH goes to be attached to the Ruach in the terrestrial Garden of Eden, which stands in the midst of the precious curtain. From it, THE NEFESH studies and receives its knowledge, and then it hovers and announces it to the world.

311. We learned that the Nefesh is attached by two knots on every new moon and Shabbat: 1) to the Ruach amidst the odors of perfumes in the terrestrial Garden of Eden 2) from there, THE NEFESH roams and goes to attach itself with the Ruach in the Neshamah, which is bound in the bundle of life. There it slacks its thirst and eats of the precious lights on this and that side, RIGHT AND LEFT. This is written in the verse: "And Hashem guide you continually" (Yeshayah 58:11). "Continually" is precise, INDICATING THAT IT RECEIVES FROM ALL SIDES CONTINUOUSLY.

312. "And satisfy your soul (Nefesh) in drought (Heb. tzachtzacht)." HE ASKS: What is "tzachtzacht"? HE ANSWERS: One tzach (Eng. 'bright) it receives while attached to the Ruach in the terrestrial Garden of Eden; it receives the tzach inside tzach, when attached to

the Neshamah above in the bundle of life. This is the meaning of tzachtzachot: tzach is singular, and tzachot dual. They are high above, in the preciousness of the Neshamah. Who will inherit the tzachtzachot? SCRIPTURE SAYS "your soul (Nefesh)." Your Nefesh indeed INHERITS THEM FROM THE NESHAMAH. Happy is the portion of the righteous.

313. Rabbi Shimon said: When I am with the friends of Babylon, they gather round me and learn things openly, but they put them (these matters) in a sealed iron box, closed on all sides--IN OTHER WORDS, THEY CONCEAL THEM SO NO ONE WOULD KNOW.

314. How many times did I teach them the ways of the King's garden, THE NUKVA, and the ways of the King, ZEIR ANPIN? How many times did I teach them about the grades of the righteous in that world? They are all fearful of talking of these matters, but mumble instead. They are therefore called mumblers, I.E. SLOW OF SPEECH, for they mumble as stammerers.

315. But I see it in a favorable light, for they are afraid because the holy air and the Holy Spirit are gone for them, SINCE THEY ARE OUTSIDE THE LAND OF YISRAEL. And they breathe in the air and spirit of another region THAN THAT OF HOLINESS. Moreover, the rainbow is seen above them, WHICH IS A SIGN THEY ARE UNDER JUDGMENT AND ARE IN NEED OF MERCY, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "I HAVE SET MY BOW...AND I WILL LOOK UPON IT, THAT I MAY REMEMBER THE EVERLASTING COVENANT" (BERESHEET 9:13-16). They are then not deemed worthy of receiving Eliyahu, let alone someone else.

316. But it is beneficent to them that I live in the world and support it, for during my lifetime the world will not be sorrowful, nor suffer Judgment from above. After me, there will never be such a generation as this. The world will be such that there will be no one to protect them, and there will be impudence both above and below. Above ALSO THERE WILL BE IMPUDENT COUNTENANCES, WHICH ARE THE ACCUSATIONS OF THE KLIPOT, because of the transgressions below and their impudence.

317. The people in the world will cry out, but there will be no one to protect them. They will look to all the directions of the world TO FIND RELIEF, but shall not return with a remedy TO THEIR TROUBLES. I have found but one remedy in the world and no more, wherever there will be people who are occupied in the Torah, and a scroll of the Torah with them, without any error. When it will be taken out, the upper and lower beings will be roused, especially if the Holy Name wherein is properly written, as we have already learned.

318. Woe to the generation, where the scroll of the Torah is banished BY BEING TAKEN OUT TO THE STREETS IN ORDER TO PRAY. But no one was awakened above or below, FOR THEIR PRAYER WAS NOT ACCEPTED, FOR IT WAS NOT JOINED BY FASTING OR ATONEMENT BELOW. HE ASKS: Who shall be roused to pray when the world is in great sorrow and in need of rain as the scroll of the Torah is further banished because of the hardship in the world.

319. HE ANSWERS: When the world is in sorrow and people ask for mercy by the graves, all the dead are aroused to ask on behalf of the world, for the Nefesh hastens to tell the Ruach that the scroll of the Torah is in exile, and has been exiled due to hardship in the world, and the living have come TO THE GRAVES to ask for mercy.

320. Then the Ruach informs the Neshamah, and the Neshamah the Holy One, blessed be He. Then is the Holy One, blessed be He, aroused in pity on the world. All this is caused by the exile of the scroll of the Torah from its place, WHEN the living came to ask for mercy upon the graves of the dead. Woe to the generation, which must exile the scroll of the Torah from place to place, or even from one synagogue to another IN ORDER TO PRAY, for there will be no one among them to take care of them AND PRAY FOR THEM, SINCE THERE ARE NO RIGHTEOUS AMONG THEM.

321. Yet no man knows THE REASON FOR this. For when the Shechinah was exiled the last time, in order not to go up above, it is written THAT SHE SAID: "Oh, that I were in the wilderness, in a lodging place of wayfaring men" (Yirmeyah 9:1), AND NOT GONE ABOVE. FOR SHE WISHED TO EXILE WITH YISRAEL. Later, WHEN SHE ALREADY WAS IN EXILE WITH YISRAEL, in a time of great distress for the world, she was IN THE DESERT, THE ABODE OF THE KLIPOT. Also in the exile of the scroll of the Torah she is there in the desert, and everyone is stirred AND SUFFERS for her, the upper and lower beings.

322. Rabbi Shimon said: Had those stupid Babylonians known the secret verses of Wisdom, such as why the world exists, or why its supporting pillars quake when it is in distress, they would know the worth of Rav Hamnuna Saba, who dwelt among them, without their knowing his worth. I find that his words are connected to those of King Solomon in the high secret of Wisdom, but they did not guess his worth.

323. Now they strive after words of wisdom but there is no one to uncover THEIR SECRET, and no one to teach it. With all that, there are sages among them in the field of establishing the beginning of months and the intercalation of years, though it is not their duty TO INTERCALATE THE YEARS AND SANCTIFY THE MONTHS, WHICH ARE FIXED ONLY IN THE LAND OF YISRAEL.

324. We have learned that the Nefesh is attached to the body inside the grave for twelve months, and they are judged together, except the Nefesh of the righteous, as we explained. It dwells inside the grave and feels pain OF PUNISHMENT, and the pain of the living, yet it does not strive TO PRAY for them.

325. After twelve months, the Nefesh dons a garment and goes to roam about the world, and learns certain things from the Ruach. It strives to ask for mercy for the world's pain, and to feel the sorrow of the living.

326. HE ASKS: Who arouses all that, THE NEFASHOT OF THE DEAD TO PRAY FOR THE LIVING? HE REPLIES: When there is a righteous man in the world, he duly informs them. The righteous is well known among them. For we have learned that when there remains a righteous man in the world, known among the living and the dead, he is proclaimed every day. When the world is in great distress and he cannot protect the people, he informs them of the pain in the world AND THEY ASK FOR MERCY UPON THE LIVING.

327. When there is no proclaimed righteous among them and no one to stir THE NEDASHOT about the sorrow of the world but a scroll of the Torah, then the upper and lower are stirred for its sake TO PRAY FOR THE WORLD. Yet at that time, everyone should do penance, for if they do not, the accusers are aroused upon them TO PUNISH THEM FOR MOVING ABOUT THE SCROLL OF THE TORAH. THIS APPLIES NOT ONLY FOR THE NEFESH, as Ruach in the Garden of Eden is also stirred for the sake of the scroll of the Torah TO ASK FOR MERCY, as we have learned.

328. We learned: "And I will lie with my fathers"; namely in body, Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah, all included within one Chariot of a high grade. TO WIT, THE VERSE ALLUDES TO THE BODY AND ALL THE ASPECTS OF THE SOUL, WHICH WILL BE TOGETHER WITH HIS FATHERS. Rabbi Yehuda said: How senseless are the children in the world who do not know, nor care, hear or see what happens in the world, that the Holy One, blessed be He, is filled with Mercy for the world at any time and season. But no one pays attention.

329. Three times a day, a certain spirit comes into the cave of the Machpelah and breathes over the tombs of the fathers so that their bones are healed and they endure. The spirit draws dew from over the King's head, CHOCHMAH, BINAH, AND DA'AT OF ZEIR ANPIN, where the supernal patriarchs are. When the dew flows in, the lower patriarchs are awakened IN THE CAVE OF THE MACHPELAH.

330. We have learned that the dew flows down certain grades, one grade after another, and reaches the lower Garden of Eden, where the perfumes are bathed in it. Then is a certain spirit awakens, which comprises two others; NAMELY A SPIRIT OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, YA'AKOV, WHICH INCLUDES THE TWO COLUMNS, AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. It ascends and hovers above the perfumes and comes in through the opening of the cave. Then the patriarchs are awakened with their wives and ask for Mercy for their children.

331. When the world is in distress AND NOT ANSWERED, and due to its sins THE PATRIARCHS sleep and the dew does not arouse them, for it cannot be found or drawn. THEN, when the scroll of the Torah is stirred in the world, the Nefesh informs the Ruach, the Ruach the Neshamah, which tells the Holy One, blessed be He. The King then sits on the throne of mercy and draws from the supernal Atika Kadisha, ARICH ANPIN, the crystal dew, which flows upon the King's head, CHOCHMAH, BINAH, AND DA'AT OF ZEIR ANPIN, and the patriarchs, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, are blessed. The dew then flows upon the sleeping FATHERS IN THE CAVE OF THE MACHPELAH, who then join IN

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD. The Holy One, blessed be He, then has Mercy upon the world. We have learned the Holy One, blessed be He, does not have mercy on the world until He notifies the Patriarchs, and for their merit the world is blessed. Rabbi Yosi said: Surely this is so. I also found it in the book of King Solomon, the high one who is called every MAN'S wise counsel, AS IT SAYS, "FOR HE WAS WISER THAN ALL MEN" (I MELACHIM 5:11).

332. Rav Hamnuna also said the same and that it was revealed to him in a dream, that Rachel achieved more THAN ALL THE PATRIARCHS by standing at the highway whenever the world is in need OF MERCY. The secret of this matter is that the ark, its covering and the Cherubs are in the portion of Binyamin, RACHEL'S SON, who was born on the highway, and the Shechinah is above ALL HIS PORTION, AS IT SAYS, "HE SHALL COVER HIM ALL THE DAY LONG" (DEVARIM 33:12).

32. "And Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head"

Rabbi Shimon begins the discussion by explaining that the bed in the title verse signifies the foundation of the world, and the bed's head signifies the Shechinah. We learn that by his action, Yisrael bowed to the Supernal Throne. Rabbi Yehuda then explains that although Ya'akov's soul departed while he was still in Egypt, it was united with the Shechinah and his body was buried alongside the patriarchs, as he had wished.

The text then addresses the verse, "And Yosef shall put his hand on your eyes." Rabbi Yesa reveals that this verse indicates both Ya'akov's importance and that his son would be alive at the time of Ya'akov's death. Rabbi Chizkiyah then speaks about the custom of a man's son putting dust on his father's eyes as a sign of respect when he dies. This leads to a discourse on the symbolic significance of each color of the eye. After offering further explanations for the custom of closing a man's eyes after his death, the conversation turns to the subject of the Nefesh of the departed soul. Finally, the rabbis return to the spiritual significance of Ya'akov's actions described in the title verse.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light of the Shechinah is summoned into our world, helping The reader climb out of darkness and negativity [Egypt], and in doing so, merit closeness to the great patriarchs in the world to come. These verses also help elevate the souls of our fathers if they have passed on.

333. "And Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head." HE ASKS: What is the bed's head? HE ANSWERS: It is the Shechinah, WHICH IS ALWAYS PRESENT AT THE HEAD OF A SICK MAN. Rabbi Shimon said: Heaven forbid THAT HE WAS BOWING DOWN BEFORE THE SHECHINAH, SINCE HE WAS A CHARIOT OF TIFERET, WHICH IS ABOVE THE SHECHINAH. He bowed to his own attribute, TIFERET. HE EXPLAINS HIS WORDS: Come and behold: the bed is the Shechinah, of which it says, "Behold it his litter, that of Solomon" (Shir Hashirim 3:7). The bed's head is the foundation (Yesod) of the world, the head of the sacred bed, THE SHECHINAH; the head refers to Yisrael, TIFERET, standing at the bed's head, WHICH IS YESOD, FOR TIFERET IS ABOVE YESOD, and therefore Yisrael bowed to himself, NAMELY TO TIFERET.

334. You might say THAT HE BOWED DOWN TO THE SHECHINAH, WHICH IS ABOVE THE HEAD OF A SICK MAN. At that time, he was not yet ill, only later. It is written: "And it came to pass after these things, that one told Yosef, 'Behold, your father is sick.'" But when he bowed down, he was not sick. Of necessity, he bowed down because he knew that he then ascended to the holy supernal grade of the whole throne TIFERET. He therefore bowed down to that Chariot, the supernal throne. FOR CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET ARE THE SUPERNAL THRONE OF BINAH, AND TIFERET IS INCLUDED OF THEM ALL. It is the perfection of the great and strong tree which is named after him, NAMELY TIFERET CALLED YISRAEL AFTER HIS NAME. Therefore, "Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head," for surely he was elevated into his own grade and adorned with crowns, MOCHIN, of the holy King TIFERET.

335. "And he said: 'Swear to me.' And he swore to him. And Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head." Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion saying: "All this have I proved by Wisdom: I said, 'I will be wise'; but it was far from me" (Kohelet 7:23). We have learned that King Solomon inherited the moon, THE NUKVA, together with all her aspects. In his days the

moon was in fullness, being blessed by all THE GRADES. When he wanted to understand the statutes of the Torah he said: "I said, 'I will be wise'; but it was far from me."

336. Rabbi Yehuda said: Ya'akov said, "And I will lie with my fathers, not, I pray you, in Egypt: but I will lie with my fathers and you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their place of burial." In connection to this, we learned that a man whose soul departed in another domain, NAMELY OUTSIDE THE LAND OF YISRAEL, and whose body was buried in the Holy Land, scripture says of him: "But when you entered, you defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination" (Yirmeyah 2:7). Yet Ya'akov said: "And bury me in their place of burial," though his soul departed in another domain, IN EGYPT.

337. Rabbi Yehuda said: Ya'akov is different THAN OTHER MEN, since the Shechinah held him and cleaved to him. This is the meaning of the words, "I will go down with you into Egypt" (Beresheet 46:4) to dwell with you in exile "and I will also surely bring you up again" (Ibid.), for your soul shall be united with me, and your body shall be buried in the graves of your fathers. This comes to teach us that his soul left in another domain, YET "I WILL ALSO SURELY BRING YOU UP AGAIN" TO BE BURIED IN THE GRAVES OF HIS FATHERS.

338. "And Yosef shall put his hand on your eyes" (Ibid.). Surely because he was the firstborn, AND IT IS FOR THE FIRSTBORN TO PUT HIS HAND ON HIS FATHER'S EYES. For according to thought, he was the firstborn of the first seed, as we learned. Since the Holy One, blessed be He, knew this secret THAT HE THOUGHT OF RACHEL, He let him know that it would be Yosef, WHO WILL PUT HIS HANDS ON HIS EYES, whom he greatly loved.

339. "Shall put his hand on your eyes": HE ASKS: What does this come to teach us? Rabbi Yisa said: This teaches us of Ya'akov's importance, THAT HIS SON, A KING, WILL PUT HIS HAND ON HIS EYES, and also informs him that Yosef is alive and will be present at his death. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: I have learned something, yet I fear of revealing it, since Wisdom abides with the common customs. Rabbi Aba tapped him and said: Speak up and pluck up your courage, for everything is disclosed in the days of Rabbi Shimon AND THERE IS NO NEED TO BE AFRAID.

340. RABBI CHIZKIYAH said: We learned from the book of Rabbi Yisa Saba (the elder), in the chapter about customs, that when a man merits a son in this world, THE SON should put dust on his eyes when his father is buried as a sign of respect, an indication that the world is now concealed from him, and that he, THE SON, inherits it in his stead.

341. This is because a man's eyes reflect the world and contain all the colors. The white color in them is like a great sea which surrounds the world on all sides. Another is like the ground dug out from the water. The ground stands in the midst of the water and so does the color in the midst of the water; NAMELY IN THE MIDST OF THE WHITE COLOR WHICH INDICATES THE WATER OF THE OCEAN.

342. The third color in the middle of the eye is Jerusalem, the center of the world. The fourth color in the eye is where the power of sight dwells; NAMELY THE BLACKNESS IN THE EYE. It is called "the apple of the eye" (Tehilim 17:8), where the face is seen and the most dear sight of all, Tzion, the innermost point of all, where the whole world is seen, where the Shechinah dwells, which is the beauty and sight of all. The eye is the worldly inheritance, and therefore he WHO DIES leaves this and HIS SON takes it and inherits it.

343. He said to him: This was well said, but this matter has an even deeper meaning, though the children of the world do not know or look for it. For when a man departs from the world, his Nefesh is hidden with him, and before it leaves the body his eyes see certain things, as we have explained in relation to the verse: "For no man shall see me, and live" (Shemot 33:24), that men do not see in their lives what they see in their death.

344. His eyes are opened to the sight they have just seen, and those standing by should put a hand on his eyes and close them, because of what we learned about common customs. When the eyes remain open to the dear vision, if he has a son, the son should be the first to put his hand over his eyes and close them. It says, "And Yosef shall put his hand on your eyes," for another unholy sight is come before him and the eye that beheld the supernal holy sight must not look at the other sight.

345. Another reason is that the Nefesh is close by in the house, and if the eye is open, and the other sight OF THE OTHER SIDE will be upon his eyes, whatever he beholds shall be cursed. AND SINCE THE NEFASHOT IS STANDING IN FRONT OF HIM, HE MIGHT LOOK AT IT AND IT WILL BE ACCURSED. This is not respectful to the eye, or to any of the dead man's relatives, especially to the dead man himself. It is degrading for him to behold what he should not BEHOLD, and lay his eyes on another thing; NAMELY THE OTHER SIDE. Therefore he is covered by dust. The friends have already spoke about the judgment which THE DEAD MAN undergoes in the grave, AND THIS IS NOT THE PLACE TO SPEAK ABOUT IT. It is a sign of respect that the eye be closed by his son he left in the world.

346. Come and see for seven days AFTER THE DEMISE, the Nefesh goes from the grave to the house and back and mourns him. Three times a day, the Nefesh and the body are judged together, though nobody in the world knows it, or observes it so as to awaken his heart.

347. Afterwards, the body is sealed IN THE GRAVE and the Nefesh goes to bathe in Gehenom, then goes out to roam about the world and visit THE BODY IN the grave, until it is wears that which it wears.

348. After twelve months everybody rests. The body reposes in the dust and the Nefesh is bound and enlightened by the Ruach, which in its garment is satisfied in the Garden of Eden. The Neshamah ascends to the bundle of life, THE NUKVA, the greatest pleasure of all. All of them are attached to each other, THE NEFESH TO THE RUACH AND THE RUACH TO THE NESHAMAH, at certain times, ON SHABBAT, HOLIDAYS AND THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH.

349. Come and see: Woe to the people who do not regard, who do not know nor understand why they exist, and neglect to observe the precepts of the Torah. Some of the precepts of the Torah are made into a holy garment above IN THE UPPER GARDEN OF EDEN, and some are made into a holy garment below IN THE LOWER GARDEN OF EDEN. Some precepts are made into a holy garment in this world. Man needs them all. They are made of man's days as we explained.

350. Rabbi Yehuda Saba (the elder) was very anxious one day TO KNOW WHAT HE WOULD HAVE IN THE WORLD OF TRUTH. He was shown in a dream a certain image made of bright light which shines to the four directions. He asked what it was, and they said to him: This is your garment, which you shall wear here. From that day ONWARD, he was happy.

351. Rabbi Yehuda said: On each day the spirits of the righteous sit, clothed in their garments in rows in the Garden of Eden and praise the Holy One, blessed be He, with the highest glory, as it is written: "Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your name: the upright shall dwell in your presence" (Tehilim 140:14). Rabbi Aba said: It is first written, "And Yisrael bowed himself..." As we explained, the bed is the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA; The bed's head is the righteous; "upon the bed's head" refers to the holy King, that the peace is His; NAMELY TIFERET, as it is written: "Behold it his litter, that of Solomon" (Shir Hashirim 3:7). For he bowed to himself, BEING THE CHARIOT OF TIFERET, to him who stands upon the bed's head whose name is Yisrael, AS TIFERET IS CALLED YISRAEL. Therefore, "And Yisrael bowed himself upon the bed's head."

352. Afterwards, when Ya'akov saw that he was perfected in the highest grade, and that his grade, TIFERET, was high, together with the patriarchs, CHESED AND GVURAH, and that he alone was wholly mended, FOR TIFERET IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN WHICH INCLUDES CHESED AND GVURAH AND MEASURED AGAINST ALL CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, his heart rejoiced and he was strengthened by the supernal desire of the Holy One, blessed be He, who was pleased with him. Then it was said of him, "And Yisrael strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed," on the bed itself, THE SECRET OF MALCHUT, since he was perfected in a higher grade, TO WIT, HE WAS MADE WHOLE BY THE ATTRIBUTE OF TIFERET WHICH IS ABOVE MALCHUT. Happy is his portion.

33. The world is judged four times a year

Rabbi Yehuda discusses the four times of the year that the world is judged. During these four times of the year, Chesed, Gvurah, Tiferet, and Malchut are present to judge the world. We learn of the significance of corn to the judgment on Passover, the significance of the fruits of the tree to the judgment on the Feast of Weeks, and the significance of water to the judgment on Sukkot. We are also told that the New Year is the head of God's year, and it is

the time when all the inhabitants of the world pass before God. Finally, Rabbi Yosi reminds us that man's deeds are recorded every day. Each morning his soul entreats him to repent and to follow the righteous path. Those who ignore this warning will have their deeds recorded. Only the righteous have nothing to fear in this world and in the world to come.

The Relevance of this Passage

The awesome power of the major holidays and their particular rituals is released into our world, helping us atone for our sins, lessen judgments decreed against us, and transform our inner character. Relative to the degree of atonement in our heart, this passage helps us alter our destiny in positive ways by controlling the seed and "head of God's year." Awareness of the importance of penitence and spiritual growth is deepened in our consciousness, inspiring us to pursue self-transformation for the purpose of achieving closeness to the Light of The Creator

353. We learned that Rabbi Yehuda said: We have explained in the Baraitha that the world is judged four times a year: in Pesach in respect to corn; in Shavuot in respect to the fruits of the tree; on Rosh Hashanah, when all the inhabitants of the world pass before Him like a flock of sheep; and on Sukkot when water is apportioned to them. We have explained the secret of the Baraitha: that corn on Pesach, corresponded to the supernal Chariot, the secret of the patriarchs, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, and King David, MALCHUT. TO WIT, THE FOUR TIMES BROUGHT UP IN THE BARAITHA ARE THE SECRET OF THE FATHERS AND KING DAVID. HE EXPLAINS, Judgment is pronounced on Pesach in respect to corn literally. And we have already explained, in relation to it why Matzah is connected to Pesach? Because it is a law, and the law of the kingdom is the prevailing law. THUS, THE MATZAH IS A LAW. This is the starting point for Yisrael to enter the holy portion of the Holy One, blessed be He, and remove the leavened bread, which is a strange deity appointed over the idolatrous nations called other Elohim, foreign Elohim, and also called leavened bread and the Evil Inclination. To enter the Matzah, MALCHUT, is to enter the holy portion of the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the reason Judgment is pronounced on Pesach concerning corn, as we explained that the world is sentenced in respect to Hei, MALCHUT. TVUAH (CORN) IS COMPOSED OF THE SYLLABLES TAVO-HEI (HEB. 'HEI SHALL COME').

354. On Shavuot, the fruits of the tree are pronounced. HE ASKS: Why "the fruits of the tree," shouldn't it have said 'the fruits of the trees'? HE ANSWERS: This is the great and strong tree above, ZEIR ANPIN. The fruits of the tree are mentioned in the verse, "I am like a leafy cypress tree; from me is your fruit found" (Hoshea 14:9), WHICH ALLUDES TO THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, THE FRUITS OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED TREE. THEY ARE SENTENCED AT SHAVUOT, AN ALLUSION TO TIFERET.

355. On Rosh Hashanah, they pass before Him like a flock of sheep. We learned that Rosh Hashanah (lit. 'head of the year') is the King's head of the year, which is Yitzchak called head, the head of the King, ZEIR ANPIN, THE HEAD OF GVURAH. This place is called year, and therefore all the inhabitants of the world pass before Him like a flock of sheep. We therefore learned that on Rosh Hashanah, all the inhabitants of the world pass before Him like a flock of sheep, for then Yitzchak abides there, WHO IS THE HEAD OF THE LEFT WHERE JUDGMENTS DWELL. HENCE, IT IS SAID THAT ON ROSH HASHANAH "HIS LEFT HAND IS UNDER MY ARM" (SHIR HASHIRIM 2:6).

356. On Sukkot, Judgment is pronounced in respect to water. This is the beginning OF THE ILLUMINATION of the King's right side, WHICH IS CHASSADIM CALLED WATER. IT IS SAID OF THIS FESTIVAL "AND HIS RIGHT HAND EMBRACES ME" (IBID.). The rejoicing in water is everywhere when water is sprinkled or drawn, for water is known TO BE CHASSADIM. Therefore, everything exists in these four times, ON PESACH THE JUDGMENT IS IN THE SECRET OF MALCHUT CALLED CORN, ON SHAVUOT IT IS IN THE SECRET OF TIFERET CALLED TREE, ON ROSH HASHANAH ON THE SECRET OF GVURAH AND ON SUKKOT THE SECRET OF CHESED.

357. Rabbi Yosi said: When you examine this, there is everything in these four times, Avraham, Yitzchak, Ya'akov, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, and King David, MALCHUT, ACCORDING TO THE EXPLANATION OF THE LAST PARAGRAPH. The world is judged by CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT and people are judged on these four times, THE DAYS WHEN CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT ARE IN THE WORLD. Every day, the books are open and MEN'S deeds are recorded, yet no one heeds or lends an ear. The

Torah gives testimony every day and says, "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here: for him that lacks understanding, she says to him" (Mishlei 9:4), but no one listens to its voice.

358. We learned that when a man wakes up in the morning, witnesses stand before him and adjure him, but he does not heed that the soul adjures him every hour. If he hears, well, but if he does not, the books are open and his deeds recorded. Rabbi Chiya said: Happy are the righteous, who are not afraid of judgment neither in this world and in the World to Come. Hence it says, "But the righteous are secure as a young lion" (Mishlei 28:1) and "the righteous shall inherit the earth" (Tehilim 37:29).

34. "And when the sun was going down"

Rabbi Chizkiyah begins by explaining that the title verse refers to the day of strict judgment, when a man's soul departs from his body. We learn that thirty days before his death, man's Neshamah departs. As a consequence, his shadow disappears and all desire leaves him. When man is judged above, the Neshamah ascends to the Upper court of justice where it gives testimony to the thoughts and deeds of that man. If that man is sick and his judgment is favorable, he may recover. However, if his judgment condemns him, he may yet survive if God sees that he will later have merit or that he will give birth to a righteous son.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we help cleanse our souls of sin and wrongdoing in order to sweeten judgments set forth against us. The desire to pursue spiritual development and growth is increased within us so that we may merit long life in this physical world and draw closer to the Light of The Creator through positive deeds. In addition, blessing and righteousness are bestowed upon our children, helping them to recognize and embrace the benefits of spirituality and Torah, which further increases our quality and length of life.

359. Rabbi Chizkiyah opened the discussion with the verse, "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Avram" (Bereshheet 15:12). This verse has been explained, yet here is the secret of the day of strict Judgment, which removes man from this world. We have learned that when the time is come for man to depart from this world, it is the time of great Judgment, when the sun is darkened and does not shine unto the moon, as is written: "before the sun is darkened" (Kohelet 12:2). It refers to the holy Neshamah, which is withheld from man thirty days before he departs from the world, and he sees that his shadow is withheld and not to be seen.

360. HE ASKS: What is the reason his shadow is gone from him? HE ANSWERS: Because the holy Neshamah is gone and departed from him. It is not that when a man weakens and dies that the soul is removed from him, but in his life, when he is in vigor that his Neshamah departs from him, and does not shine upon the Ruach. The Ruach does not shine upon the Nefesh, and then the shadow is gone and does not illuminate upon him. From that day onward, every one proclaims that he will die, even the birds in the sky. Why? Because his Neshamah is gone from him, the Ruach no longer shines upon the Nefesh, and it is weakened and eating and every desire of the body are gone from him.

361. Rabbi Yehuda said: Even when a man falls ill and cannot pray, the Neshamah is gone and removed from him. The Ruach does not then shine upon the Nefesh until verdict is given. If the sentence is good, the Neshamah returns to its place and shines upon everyone; NAMELY THE RUACH AND THE NEFESH. This is true as long as Judgment is not yet pronounced. When it is, AND IT IS ALREADY DECIDED THAT HE WILL DIE, thirty days before the others, the Neshamah is gone and his shadow passes away.

362. We learned that when a man is sentenced above, his Neshamah is brought up to the court of justice, where the trial proceeds according to its testimony. It testifies to everything and to evil thoughts he harbored, but not to evil deeds, since they are all recorded in a book. A man is judged for everything at the time of sentence above, BOTH FOR THOUGHTS AND DEEDS. The body is then in trouble more than in any other time.

363. If he is favorably judged, he is released. Sweat breaks out over the body and the Neshamah returns later to shine upon all, THE RUACH AND THE NEFESH. A man is never cured from his disease until he is sentenced above. If you say that there are yet many evil people who remain alive; NAMELY RECOVER FROM THEIR ILLNESS. HE ANSWERS: The Holy

One, blessed be He, watches over his sentence. Even if he has no merit yet THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, sees that he will later, He acquits him. Or sometimes He sees he will beget a righteous son and therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, judges him favorably.

364. All the works and judgments of the Holy One, blessed be He, are for the good, and He watches over everything, as it is written: "'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?' says Hashem Elohim: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" (Yechezkel 18:23). Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, judges favorably all the evil in the world who recover.

365. Sometimes, when the illness has run its course that was allotted it to afflict man, as it says, "And severe sicknesses, and of long continuance (also: 'faithful')" (Devarim 28:59), they act faithfully in dwelling upon man and leave after the set period, either the righteous or the evil. All is done according to justice, like we said.

35. "And Yisrael saw Yosef's sons"

Rabbi Yitzchak begins this discussion by explaining the title verse. We learn that through the Holy Spirit, the righteous Yisrael was able to see that Yosef's sons would one day worship idols. We also learn that all the generations of the world stand in the presence of God before they are born into the world.

The Relevance of this Passage

The strength and wisdom to free oneself from idol-worshipping is bestowed upon the reader through the righteousness of Yisrael. Idol worshipping refers to any form of egocentric behavior where pleasure is derived from external sources as opposed to true contentment that is generated internally in our souls. Before a soul enters this world, all the secrets of the Torah are revealed to it. The soul promises The Creator that during physical existence, it will pursue the path of Torah and spiritual growth. Prior to the moment of birth, the wisdom of the Torah is then forgotten, along with our promise, and thus begins the true work of "remembering" our commitment and "reacquiring" our spiritual knowledge. This passage helps us to remain true to our promise to walk the path of the Light, and it regenerates the seeds of mystical wisdom implanted within our soul prior to our birth.

366. "And Yisrael saw Yosef's sons, and said: 'Who are these?'" Rabbi Yitzchak said: This verse is difficult to understand. It is written, "And Yisrael saw," yet also "And the eyes of Yisrael were dim from age, so that he could not see." If he cannot see, how come then: "And Yisrael saw"? HE ANSWERS: "AND YISRAEL SAW" MEANS that he saw through the Holy Spirit Yosef's descendants, Yerovaam and his fraternity, the same Yerovaam who made the two golden calves, and said: "These are your Elohim, Yisrael" (I Melachim 12:28). Hence he said: "Who are these?" Who is he that will say, "These are your Elohim," your idols to worship. It is therefore written: "And Yisrael saw Yosef's sons."

367. From this, WE UNDERSTAND that the righteous see things afar, BEFORE THEY ARE MANIFEST IN THE WORLD, since the Holy One, blessed be He, adorns them with His crown. For the Holy One, blessed be He, sees into the distance, as said: "And Elohim saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Beresheet 1:31), the Holy One, blessed be He, sees all deeds before they are done, and they all pass before Him.

368. In the same manner, all the generations of the world from one world's end to the other stand before Him before coming into the world. This is written in the verse, "He who calls the generations from the beginning" (Yeshayah 41:4), NAMELY before the universe was created, for all the souls that descend into the world stand before the Holy One, blessed be He, before going into it, assuming their worldly shape and names. It is written: "He calls them all by names" (Yirmeyah 40:26).

369. The righteous too are shown by the Holy One, blessed be He, all the generations of the world, before they come into it. Whence do we know that? From Adam, who was the first to be shown by the Holy One, blessed be He, the generations before they came, as it is written: "This is the book of the generations of Adam" (Beresheet 5:1). We learned that He showed him all the generations destined to come into the world. Moshe too was shown, as it is written: "And Hashem showed him all the land" (Devarim 34:1), WHICH MEANS THAT the

Holy One, blessed be He, showed him all the generations of the world and all its leaders and prophets before they were born.

370. Here too, "And Yisrael saw Yosef's sons" means that he saw far off, THAT THEY WILL WORSHIP IDOLS, and he trembled and said: "Who are these?" The verse refers both to this, YEROVAAM WHO SAID: "THESE ARE YOUR GODS, YISRAEL" and to ITS SIMPLE MEANING ABOUT EFRAIM AND MENASHE THEMSELVES. Yosef answered it by saying: 'They are my sons, whom Elohim had given me in this place.' TO WIT, THEY ARE GOOD, YET HE DID NOT ANSWER HIM IN RELATION TO YEROVAAM AND HIS FRIENDS. How do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, showed him through the Holy Spirit ABOUT YEROVAAM AND HIS FRIENDS? From the verse: "And, lo, Elohim has shown me also your children," "also" alludes to THE GENERATIONS that will issue from him, as we said.

36. "And he blessed Yosef"

From the explanations provided by Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Elazar, we learn that the title verse indicates that a blessing was conferred on both Yosef and his sons, since a man's children are his own blessing. We also learn that the particle Et placed before Yosef is an allusion to Malchut. This means that he blessed the sign of the Holy Covenant, Malchut. According to the rabbis, all blessings originate in Binah, the source of life. They are then received by Ya'akov and passed to Malchut. Therefore, when a blessing is given, God must be blessed first if it is to be fulfilled. During morning prayer, we should first bless God and then bless the people of the world. We learn that when Ya'akov's father blessed him, he first blessed God in the statement, "the smell of my son is like the smell of a field"

The discussion then turns to the meaning of the verse, "These are your gods, Yisrael," The word "these," we are told, is a reference to the Serpent and its rider, the male and female of the Other Side who are not joined in unity like the Male and Female of Holiness. Following this, the verse, "For these I weep" is explained as a reference to the sin of the golden calf and the destruction of the temple. The word "these" is also written in relation to Holiness. However, through the Holy Spirit, Ya'akov saw that Yerovaam worshipped idols and correctly interpreted the verse, "These are your gods, Yisrael." He therefore blessed God and his sons, and ensured that his blessing would not be bestowed upon Yerovaam.

The Relevance of this Passage

By connecting us to the supernal blessings bestowed upon Yosef, we draw countless blessings upon our world, the dimension referred to as Malchut. This connection also ensures that all of our blessings take place after the blessings of our Creator. The Light aroused herein helps protect us from the Other Side and remove the negativity and darkness in our world resulting from the building of the Golden Calf and the destruction of the second temple.

371. "And he blessed Yosef" (Beresheet 48:15). We have to examine this verse, since it is written, "And he blessed Yosef," yet no blessing was conferred upon Yosef, but upon his sons. It should have been written: 'And he blessed them.' Why is it said that he blessed Yosef if Yosef was not blessed?

372. Rabbi Yosi said: The particle 'et' before 'Yosef' ALLUDES TO MALCHUT. It is written "Et Yosef," which is the blessing for his sons SINCE HIS SONS, MENASHE AND EFRAIM, ARE CONSIDERED TO BE MALCHUT CALLED ET. When his sons are blessed, he is blessed before them, therefore it is written also "Yosef," for man's children are his own blessing.

373. Rabbi Elazar said: "And he blessed (et) Yosef," et is precise ALLUDING TO MALCHUT. For he blessed the sign of the covenant, NAMELY THE SECRET OF THE COVENANT that Yosef kept, WHICH IS MALCHUT. For this reason, the righteous, Yosef, is called Et, as it is written "Et Yosef" since Yosef includes the secret of the covenant, MALCHUT, that is present with him.

374. "The Elohim, before whom my fathers Avraham and Yitzchak walked": "Elohim" is the secret of the holy covenant; NAMELY MALCHUT CALLED HOLY COVENANT. My fathers indeed walked before him, WHICH MEANS THAT MY FATHERS ARE before and above this secret; NAMELY BEFORE MALCHUT. FOR MY FATHERS ARE Avraham and Yitzchak, CHESED AND

GVURAH OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH PRECEDE MALCHUT AND HIGHER THAN HER, as that place, MALCHUT, is sustained and nourished by them.

375. "The Elohim who has been my shepherd": HE ASKS: What is the reason he repeats the word "The Elohim"? HE ANSWERS: This is a high secret. He blessed the place, MALCHUT, in the secret of living Elohim, BINAH, the source of life, whence blessings are drawn. He therefore mentioned himself in this place by saying: "The Elohim who has been my shepherd." For all blessings originate in the source of life, BINAH, and received by Ya'akov, THE SECRET OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, When he receives them, that place, MALCHUT, receives them from him, as all comes from the male, YA'AKOV. Hence it says, "And he blessed et Yosef," ET BEING MALCHUT WHICH RECEIVED HER BLESSINGS FROM YA'AKOV, ZEIR ANPIN.

376. For this reason, wherever blessings are to be given, the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS MALCHUT, should be blessed first; for if He is not, the blessings are not fulfilled.

377. But you may say that when Ya'akov's father blessed him, he did not first bless the Holy One, blessed be He. HE ANSWERS: Come and see that when Yitzchak blessed Ya'akov, he did not do so before blessing the Holy One, blessed be He. After he did that, he blessed Ya'akov. Whence do we know that? From the verse: "...and said, 'See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which Hashem has blessed'" (Beresheet 27:27). There is a blessing here for the Holy One, blessed be He, in the words "which Hashem has blessed," and He was blessed with the establishment of the blessings. Then it says: "Therefore the Elohim give you" since the field, MALCHUT, was established by the blessings, for they issue only from it after it is already established by the blessings. In the same manner, first Ya'akov blessed the Holy One, blessed be He, and then did he bless his sons. Come and see in the morning, a man should first bless the Holy One, blessed be He, and then the other inhabitants of the world. We have explained it in relation to the verse: "In the morning shall he devour the prey..." (Beresheet 49:27).

378. Come and see: When Ya'akov wanted to bless the sons of Yosef, he saw through the Holy Spirit that Yerovaam, son of Nevat would issue from Efraim. He opened the discussion with the words, "Who are these?" WHO SAID: "THESE ARE YOUR ELOHIM, YISRAEL"? HE ASKS: What is the reason he said, in relation to idol worshipping: "...these are your Elohim, Yisrael"? HE REPLIES: This is a secret. Of all the sides of the evil serpent, there is the side of the spirit of defilement considered to be the aspect of the serpent, and there is its rider, SAMAEL-IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ARE MALE AND FEMALE. When they mate, they are called 'these' IN THE PLURAL, TO SHOW THAT THEY ARE NOT JOINED IN UNITY LIKE THE MALE AND FEMALE OF HOLINESS BUT ARE SEPARATED. BECAUSE THE OTHER SIDE BEGINS UNITED BUT ENDS IN SEPARATION. They appear in the world in their several aspects, ALL THAT ARE DRAWN FROM THE SERPENT, ISSUE FROM THE MATING OF THE MALE AND THE FEMALE CALLED 'THESE'.

379. The spirit of holiness, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, called zot (this, fem.) which is the secret of the covenant, is an imprint that is always upon man, THE IMPRINT OF CIRCUMCISION. Also "this is my El, and I will praise Him" (Shemot 15:2) and "this is Hashem," ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH ARE IN THE SINGULAR. But THE MALE AND FEMALE OF THE OTHER SIDE, SAMAEL AND THE SERPENT, are called these IN THE PLURAL. Hence it is written, "These are your Elohim, Yisrael."

380. Therefore it is written, "Even these may forget" (Yeshayah 49:15), REFERRING TO THE MALE AND FEMALE OF THE OTHER SIDE, "and I"--the secret of this, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN--"will not forget." It is also written: "For these I weep" (Eichah 1:16), for the sin OF THE GOLDEN CALF CALLED THESE, brought them much weeping, BEING THE CAUSE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE. Another explanation for, "For these I weep": The reason for this is that permission was given to this place, NAMELY TO THE SERPENT AND SAMAEL, to rule over Yisrael and destroy the Temple. Since they were given permission I weep, I being the Holy Spirit, NAMELY THE NUKVA called I.

381. It may be said that it is written, "These are the words of the covenant" (Devarim 28:69). CAN YOU SAY THAT 'THESE' IS THE NAME OF THE MALE AND FEMALE OF THE OTHER SIDE? HE ANSWERS: Assuredly those curses are not fulfilled save through these, WHICH ARE OF THE OTHER SIDE, where all the curses abide, like we explained about THE SERPENT that it is cursed, "CURSED ABOVE... EVERY BEAST OF THE FIELD" (BERESHEET

2:14). The Torah therefore preceded, saying "these" for those who transgress the words of the covenant.

382. "These are the commandments, which Hashem commanded" (Vayikra 27:34): HE ASKS: "THESE ARE THE COMMANDMENTS...", WHY IS IT WRITTEN "THESE" EVEN IN RELATION TO HOLINESS? HE ANSWERS: This is because all the precepts of the Torah purify man so he shall not deviate from the path and keep away FROM THE OTHER SIDE. THEREFORE, IT SAYS IN RELATION TO THE COMMANDMENTS THESE. What then about, "And these are the generations of the sons of Noach" (Beresheet 10:1)? WHY DOES IT SAYS 'THESE'? HE REPLIES: Surely here too IT IS A NAME OF THE OTHER SIDE, for Cham, the father of Cna'an, of whom it is written "Cursed be Cna'an" (Beresheet 9:25). This is the secret of 'these'.

383. Therefore it is written, "And they said: 'These are your Elohim, Yisrael'" (Shemot 32:4). It is the molten dross of gold. Aharon offered gold, which is of his side-THE LEFT SIDE-and is comprised of the power of fire. All is one because this side is considered to be gold and fire, AND THE DROSS OF GOLD IS THE KLIPOT AND DEFILEMENT. And the spirit of defilement, which is always in the desert, found then a place to gain power AND CLING TO YISRAEL.

384. Before, the children of Yisrael were purified from the primordial filth OF THE SERPENT, which he injected into the world and brought death unto it THROUGH THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE. FROM THIS, THEY WERE PURIFIED when they stood by Mount Sinai, but it returned again and the serpent defiled them as before and overpowered them and brought death unto them and unto the whole world for generations after. This is the meaning of the words, "I had said: 'You are angels...Nevertheless, you shall die like a man'" (Tehilim 6-7), FOR DUE TO THE SIN OF THE GOLDEN CALF, DEATH HAD POWER OVER THEM LIKE OVER ADAM.

385. Therefore, when Ya'akov saw, through the Holy Spirit, Yerovaam, son of Nevat-who worshipped idols-who said, "These are your Elohim, Yisrael," he was shaken and asked, "Who are these?" When he later wished to bless them, he first blessed the Shechinah and then his sons. After blessing the Holy One, blessed be He, he then blessed them from that place, which he blessed first. Hence it says, "The angel who redeemed me from all evil..."; TO WIT, THE SHECHINAH CALLED ANGEL SHALL BLESS THEM. THIS WAY HE WAS SURE HIS BLESSING WOULD NOT BE CONFERRED UPON YEROVAAM, SON OF NEVAT.

37. "Then Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall"

Rabbi Yehuda explains that he who does not beget children in this world has no life or existence in the world to come. Therefore, because Chizkiyahu had no wife or children, he prayed with his face to the wall, an allusion to the Shechinah, so that the Shechinah would be with him. Chizkiyahu then chose a wife and prayed to The Creator. We learn that he kept and guarded the Covenant, and that he wept before God for redemption.

The Relevance of this Passage

The miraculous power of childbirth is transferred to all those experiencing difficulty bearing children. This divine force also strengthens spiritual bonds between parent and child for those who are blessed with children.

386. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse "Then Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to Hashem" (Yeshayah 38:2). It has been derived from the verse that a man should pray near the wall, and nothing should intervene between him and the wall, in accordance with the verse: "Then Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall." HE ASKS: Why is he different than others who prayed, of whom it does not say that they turned their faces to the wall, but it sufficed to say that they "prayed to Hashem." For whoever prays does so with proper intention, EVEN IF HE DOES NOT TURN HIS FACE TO THE WALL, as it says of Moshe, "And Moshe prayed to Hashem" (Bemidbar 11:2). "And Moshe cried to Hashem" (Shemot, 17:4), but not that he "turned his face toward the wall." Why does it say of Chizkiyahu that he "turned his face toward the wall," then prayed?

387. HE ANSWERS: The secret of the matter is what we learned of Chizkiyahu that he was not married at the time. He had no wife, nor did he beget any children. It is therefore written, "And Yeshayah...came to him, and said to him...'For you shall die, and not live'"

(Yeshayah 38:1). We derived from it that "you shall die" in this world "and not live" in the World to Come. Why? Because he did not beget children.

388. Whoever does not strive to beget children in this world has no existence in the World to Come, nor any portion thereof. His soul is driven from the world, and cannot find rest in any place in the world. This is the punishment indicted in the Torah by the words: "They shall die childless" (Vayikra 20:20). For when he goes to the World to Come, he who has no children dies there AND IS CONSIDERED DEAD in this world and in the World to Come. It is therefore written, "For you shall die, and not live."

389. Moreover, the Shechinah did not rest upon him at all. From the words: "Then Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall," we learned that he made his mind and decided to take a wife, so that the Shechinah, the secret of wall, would rest upon him, AS THE SHECHINAH IS CALLED WALL.

390. Hence it continues: "And prayed to Hashem." From this, we learned that whoever has sinned, and wishes to ask for forgiveness, should first fix his heart and thought upon purifying himself of that sin, and only then to pray, as it says, "Let us search and try our ways" (Eichah 3:40) first, then "turn back to Hashem" (Ibid.). Here too, since Chizkiyahu was conscious of his sin, it is written, "Then Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall," in resolution to be purified before the Shechinah CALLED WALL, for he sinned to that place.

391. Since all the females in the world are in the secret of the Shechinah, the Shechinah rests upon whomever has a wife, but not upon him who does not. Therefore, Chizkiyahu resolved to be purified before her, and took upon himself to marry a wife. Then he "prayed to Hashem."

392. The wall is Master of all the earth, the Shechinah, as it says, "Behold, the Ark of the Covenant (of) the Master of all the earth" (Yehoshua 3:11). HENCE, THE ARK OF THE COVENANT IS THE SHECHINAH CALLED MASTER OF ALL THE EARTH, and also called wall, as in "a breaking down of walls" (Yeshayah 22:5), WHICH MEANS the crying of the wall. For it is Master OF ALL THE EARTH, while the Temple was destroyed, as it says, "Rachel weeping for her children" (Yirmeyah 31:14), which we have already explained. Therefore, "Chizkiyahu turned his face toward the wall."

393. Come and see: It is said in his prayer, "Remember now, O Hashem, I beseech you, how I have walked before you" (Yeshayah 38:3). Here, he hints that he kept the holy covenant not to defile it but to guard it well, as it says here, "I have walked before you" and elsewhere "walk before Me, and be perfect. And I will make my covenant..." (Beresheet 17:1-2). AS "WALK" REFERS TO THE HOLY COVENANT, HERE TOO "I HAVE WALKED" MEANS that he kept well the holy covenant. "In truth and with a perfect heart" means that he was intent upon the secrets of faith comprised in Truth.

394. "And have done that which is good in your sight" (Yeshayah 38:3) means that he did not interrupt his prayer between 'redemption (Ga'al Yisrael)' and the Amidah, YESOD BEING CALLED REDEMPTION AND THE NUKVA, PRAYER. We have already explained, and the friends too, that he meant to declare the unison in a proper manner. He "wept sore" for no gate resists tears AND REMAINS CLOSED. Redemption COMBINED WITH PRAYER is CALLED THE NUKVA, the redeeming angel, which may be found at every redemption in the world, as we have already explained.

38. "The angel who redeemed"

Rabbi Elazar explains that the title verse indicates Ya'akov wished to join the high and the low, so that the blessings he bestowed on Malchut, our physical existence, would also be received by the lower spiritual bodies. We learn that the title verse alludes to Tiferet, who receives blessings from the higher grades and confers them on the upper Cherubs, Sandalfon and Matatron. The upper Cherubs spread out their wings over the place of the Ark three times daily and bestow blessings on the lower Cherubs.

The discourse then turns to address the verse, "House and riches are the inheritance of fathers" but a prudent wife is from The Creator." If man turns to the Other Side, he will receive from the Other Side. However, if God appreciates this man for his good deeds, He redeems him from the Other Side and provides him with a prudent wife. We learn that God

matches couples according to the deeds of the righteous before they enter the world. A man may be matched with a "prudent wife", when he is born, but if he strays from the path of righteousness, his intended wife will be given to another. If he rectifies his ways by the time he is supposed to marry her, the other man will be rejected and he will have his rightful spouse.

Finally, the discussion reverts back to the subject of the hierarchical conferring of blessings. Rabbi Yehuda explains why the word hayoshvi is spelled with an extra Yud ? in the verse, "To You I lift up my eyes" We also learn that the circle of the world is sustained by the central point, called "the house of the Holy of Holies."

The Relevance of this Passage

The celestial spirits that serve as conduits between mortals and the Light of The Creator, are accessible to readers of these mystical verses. Thus, sacred spiritual energy shines brighter in this world, infusing our lives with untold blessings. The good fortune to attract our true soulmate is kindled, as we become more cognizant of the illusionary material trappings that seduce us in this physical existence. This energy also enriches and deepens our marital relationships, enlightening us to the importance of building a marriage on a foundation of spiritual purpose and principles.

395. "The angel who redeemed me from all evil" (Beresheet 48:16). Rabbi Elazar said: After Ya'akov gave the blessing he meant to bring unity from below upwards BY SAYING "HASHEM," MALCHUT, "BEFORE WHOM MY FATHERS...DID WALK," CHESED AND GVURAH, continuing from above downwards in "The Elohim who has been my shepherd" THAT IS BINAH. HE DREW FROM BINAH UNTO HIS GRADE, TIFERET. Now that he has received, he gave to that place, THE NUKVA, and when the blessings reached it he opened the discussion saying: "The angel who redeemed..." SO THAT FROM HER BLESSINGS WILL BE DRAWN UNTO THE LOWER BEINGS.

396. He opened the discussion saying: "For the Cherubs spread out their two wings over the place of the ark" (I Melachim 8:7). The Cherubs stood there by miracle and three times a day spread their wings over the ark below, as it is written that they "spread their wings" and not that their wings were spread, WHICH WOULD MEAN THAT THEIR WINGS WERE ALWAYS SPREAD. BUT "SPREAD THEIR WINGS" MEANING THAT THEY DID SO THREE TIMES A DAY.

397. Come and see: The Holy One, blessed be He, did below as He did above; TO WIT, THE CHERUBS AT THE TABERNACLE ARE LIKE THE CHERUBS ABOVE. The Cherubs above resemble boys and stand underneath that place, THE NUKVA OF ATZILUT, to its right and left. THEY, MATATRON AND SANDALFON, ABIDE AT THE HOLY OF HOLIES AT BRIYAH. They are first blessed from the blessings drawn from above, and from there blessings are drawn downward.

398. It is therefore written "the angel who redeemed me from all evil," me BEING TIFERET, who receives blessings from the higher grades. Once it has received them, it will "bless the lads." This is the secret of the Cherubs, MATATRON AND SANDALFON, from whom blessings are conferred by the higher to the lower.

399. "The angel who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion saying: "House and riches are the inheritance of fathers" (Mishlei 19:14). HE ASKS: How can they be the inheritance of fathers, as it is the Holy One, blessed be He, who gives a man all he has. HE ANSWERS: The Holy One, blessed be He, gives a man a house and riches, which he sometimes bequeaths to his son, for whom it is the inheritance of fathers. "But a prudent wife is from Hashem" (Ibid.), for when a man merits a wife, he receives her only from the Holy One, blessed be He, who gives her to him only after he is proclaimed throughout the firmament.

400. For the Holy One, blessed be He, matches couples before they come into the world. Men are given a wife they deserve according to their deeds, and all men's actions are revealed to the Holy One, blessed be He. According to the deeds of the righteous, He matches couples BEFORE ENTERING THE WORLD.

401. Sometimes they are joined; TO WIT, IT HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED, BEFORE THEY CAME INTO THE WORLD, THAT THE DAUGHTER OF SO-AND-SO IS DESTINED FOR SO-AND-SO,

BUT WHEN HE WAS BORN, man perverted his ways. His spouse was then given to another, until he rectifies his ways. If he does so by the time he is supposed to marry her, the other man is rejected and he comes to take what is his, WHICH MEANS THAT THE OTHER ONE WHO MARRIED HIS SPOUSE BEFORE HE MADE RIGHT HIS DEEDS IS NOW REJECTED; NAMELY DIES, AND HE RECEIVES HIS SPOUSE FROM HIM. This is the most difficult task for the Holy One, blessed be He, to banish one man because of another. Therefore, it is the Holy One, blessed be He, who gives a wife to man, and by Him couples are formed. Hence, it says "but a prudent wife is from Hashem."

402. Hence, THE TRUTH IS THAT the Holy One, blessed be He, gives a man everything. If you say that HE GIVES ONLY a prudent wife and nothing else, come and see, though the Holy One, blessed be He, prepares but goodness for men, if the man turns from the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, to the Other Side, he will receive his due from the Other Side to which he cleft, together with accusations and evils. He does not receive them from the Holy One, blessed be He, but from the evil side to which he clung because of his deeds.

403. Therefore Solomon says of a wife who is not prudent, "And I find more bitter than death the woman" (Kohelet 7:26), for one draws her to himself by the sins and deeds he commits INSTEAD OF FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. Therefore, when the Holy One, blessed be He, takes pleasure in man because of his good deeds, He provides for him a prudent wife, and redeems him from the Other Side.

404. Ya'akov therefore said: "The angel who redeemed me from all evil." "From all evil" means that I was not provided with a wife from the Other Side, and that my children were not defective, but they were all righteous and complete to perfection. Since he was redeemed from all evil, THE OTHER SIDE, and Ya'akov did not cleave at all to the Other Side.

405. Therefore "the angel who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Wherefore are they worthy of being blessed? Because Yosef kept the holy covenant. Concerning this, Yosef said: "They are my sons, whom the Elohim has given me in this." To wit, he showed him the secret of the covenant CALLED THIS, which he kept. Since he observed this, his sons are worthy of being blessed, and he deserves many blessings. Thus Ya'akov gave EACH one blessing, and to Yosef he gave many. This we derive from the verse, "The blessings of your father are potent above the blessings of my progenitors..." "blessings of the breasts, and of the womb... shall be on the head of Yosef" (Bereshet 49:25-26).

406. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion saying: "To you I lift up my eyes, O you who dwells (Heb. hayoshvi) in the heavens" (Tehilim 123:1). This verse has already been explained, yet come and see a man's prayer offered with devotion is to be found above in the sublime deep, BINAH, whence all blessings are drawn FROM THE RIGHT COLUMN and freedom FROM THE LEFT. They all issue FROM ITS CENTRAL COLUMN to support all.

407. Therefore, there is an extra Yud IN "HAYOSHVI" INSTEAD OF 'HAYOSHEV' IN HEAVEN. Thus Yud, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH, is never lacking from this place, AS CHOCHMAH AND BINAH ARE JOINED IN A NEVER-ENDING UNION. Therefore 'hayoshvi' is spelled WITH AN EXTRA YUD, for BINAH is attached above to supernal Chochmah CALLED YUD, and attached below by sitting on the throne of the patriarchs, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, the throne called heaven, ZEIR ANPIN WHICH INCLUDES CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, WHICH ARE THE THREE LEGS OF THE HIGH THRONE BINAH. This is why it is written "hayoshvi" in heaven.

408. From this, we understand that when blessings are drawn from above, from the deep, BINAH, they are all received by the place called heaven, ZEIR ANPIN, from which they flow downward until they reach the righteous men, THE SECRET OF RIGHTEOUS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, that are the covenant of the world, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, from which all the hosts and legions, THE LOWER BEINGS IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH, are blessed as we already explained.

409. Come and behold: the crown of all armies is elevated through the 72 lights. It becomes the circle of the world in seventy places, all of them forming one circle. In it, there is a point in the middle, from which the circle is sustained. It is called the house of the holy of holies, a place for the spirit of all spirits. Here is treasured the innermost secret, hidden among the legions. It is concealed in its innermost place. When it ascends, all THE WORLDS follow, as it is written: "Draw me, we will run after you" (Shir Hashirim 1:3).

39. "O remember not against us former iniquities"

While travelling with Rabbi Chizkiyah and Rabbi Yosi, Rabbi Yehuda explains the title verse. We learn that because of Yisrael's sins, the Other Side and the heathen nations came to rule over the land of Yisrael. Knowing that they could not exist in the world without the mercy and compassion of God, they pray to Him so that He will remove their sins and protect them from the judgment of the Other Side.

The Relevance of this Passage

The knowledge and certitude that only God can protect us from the harsh accusations of the Other Side are awakened within us. The spiritual truth that we are never victims of other people's wickedness is made clearer in our own mind. Moreover, accountability for our own negative actions is kindled, inspiring us to seek out the Light of The Creator to help redeem us from our internal demons and selfish aspirations. This Light of redemption shines for all those who devoutly meditate upon the mystical letters of Hebrew with a contrite heart.

410. Rabbi Chizkiyah, Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Yehuda were journeying along the road. Rabbi Yosi said: Let each of us discourse upon the Torah. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse, "O remember not against us former iniquities: let Your tender mercies speedily come to meet us" (Tehilim 79:8). Come and see: The Holy One, blessed be He, in His love for Yisrael, as they are His lot and portion, lets no one judge them but Himself. When He does, He is filled with compassion for them, like a father for his children, as it says, "As a father pities his children, so Hashem..." (Ibid. 103:13). If it is found that they have sinned, He removes the sins one by one, until all are removed from before Him, so that now there is no power for the Other Side to judge them ON THEIR ACCOUNT.

411. When they sin before Him as before, He is AGAIN reminded of the first sins, which were already removed. Therefore it is written, "O remember not against us former iniquities: let Your tender mercies speedily come to meet us." Unless Your tender mercies come upon Yisrael, they would not be able to exist in the world, for numerous adversaries and accusers await Yisrael from above. For unless the Holy One, blessed be He, would speedily send His mercies upon the children of Yisrael before judging them, they would not be able to exist in the world. Therefore "let Your tender mercies speedily come to meet us: for we are very poor," poor in good deeds and in honest deeds.

412. Come and see: If Yisrael would have accumulated good deeds before the Holy One, blessed be He, the idolatrous nations would not be standing against them. But Yisrael caused the other nations to raise their heads in the world, and if Yisrael would not have sinned before the Holy One, blessed be He, the other nations would be subdued before them.

413. Come and see that were it not for Yisrael, who drew by evil deeds the Other Side to the land of Yisrael, the other heathen nations would not be ruling over it. And they would not be exiled from it. Hence it is written, "For we are very poor" in worthy good deeds: "since we are very poor" "let Your tender mercies speedily come to meet us."

40. "Serve Hashem with fear"

Rabbi Yosi discourses on the title verse, explaining that the righteous should worship God in the morning and in the evening. The prayer should be performed with gladness and singing in order to bring union to Zeir Anpin. In the morning, our realm of Malchut is blessed by the two sides, Chesed and Gvurah, and in the evening she distributes the blessings to those who deserve it.

The Relevance of this Passage

The mystical Light that glows during the morning and evening hours through the prayer-connections made by the righteous radiates throughout this section. Harmony and union between the body and soul, and connection between the Lower and Upper Worlds, are achieved by meditating upon these verses with gladness and song in our hearts.

414. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion saying: "Serve Hashem with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Tehilim 2:10). It is also written: "Serve Hashem with gladness: come before His

presence with singing" (Ibid. 100:2). Come and see, only a man who serves the Holy One, blessed be He, should worship Him morning and evening.

415. When light appears in the morning, there is an awakening of the right side, CHESED, in the world. It behooves man then to cling to the right of the Holy One, blessed be He, and worship Him through prayer, for prayer brings power and strength from above, and draws blessings from the supernal deep, BINAH, to all the SUPERNAL worlds, whence blessings flow upon the lower beings. Thus, upper and lower are blessed through the service of prayer.

416. The service prayer should be performed before the Holy One, blessed be He, with gladness and singing, CHESED AND GVURAH, in order to include the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, between them, and to properly bring about unison TO ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "Know that Hashem He is Elohim" (Tehilim 100:3). This is the secret of unison in the secret of the service.

417. Nevertheless, man should worship the Holy One, blessed be He, with gladness and show joy in his service. Corresponding to the two, gladness and singing, are the two prayers and two daily offerings; of the two, gladness is in the morning and singing in the evening. Therefore, "The one lamb shall you offer in the morning, and the other lamb shall you offer at evening" (Bemidbar 28:4).

418. The evening service is therefore optional, since at that time she distributes prey among the legions. It is no time to be blessed but to deal sustenance. In the daytime, she is blessed by the two sides, CHESED AND GVURAH, in morning and evening with gladness and singing. At night, she gives the blessings to those who deserve it. Hence it says, "She rises also while it is yet night, and gives food to her household..." (Mishlei 31:15).

41. "Let my prayer be set forth before You like incense"

Rabbi Chizkiyah discusses the title verse, explaining why incense is burned during the morning and evening services. We learn that incense is a token of gladness and creates bonds between the Sfirot, removing death, accusations, and anger, so they will have no power over the world. Rabbi Chizkiyah then explains to us the significance of the "evening oblation", mentioned in the title verse.

The Relevance of this Passage

The mystical power associated with the burning of incense is ignited in these verses, helping to remove from our midst the dark influences of the prosecuting Angel of Death.

419. Rabbi Chizkiyah opened the discussion with the verse, "Let my prayer be set forth before You like incense; and the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice" (Tehilim 141:2). HE ASKS: Why does it mention the "evening sacrifice" and not the morning service, for it does not say, 'Let my prayer be set in the morning'? HE ANSWERS: We have learned from the words, "Let my prayer be set forth before You like incense" that incense is a token of gladness, as it is written: "Oil and incense rejoice the heart" (Mishlei 27:9). Therefore, when he lit the candles, the priest used to offer incense, as it says, "When he dresses the lamps, he shall burn incense on it. And when Aharon lights the lamps at evening, he shall burn incense upon it" (Shemot 30:7-8). In the morning, HE BURNS INCENSE because of the joy brought by the season, AS MORNING IS A TIME OF JOY, and in the evening HE BURNS INCENSE to bring joy to the left side, as befits. Incense is ever a sign of joy.

420. Come and see how incense ties bonds BETWEEN THE SFIROT. It is attached above and below and removes death, accusations, and anger so they will have no power over the world, as it says, "And Moshe said to Aharon. Take a censer, and put fire in it from off the altar, and put on incense, and take it quickly... and ran... and made atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed" (Bemidbar 17:11-13). For no evil aspect or accuser can exist before incense. Therefore, it brings gladness and connection among everything.

421. At the time of Minchah, when Judgment rests upon the world, David was intent upon that prayer OF THE INCENSE, as it is written: "Let my prayer be set forth before You like incense." This prayer which he offered removed the wrath of strict judgment which now ruled IN THE EVENING through the power of incense which rejects and removes wrath and any

accusation in the world. Hence it says "evening sacrifice," for IT IS IN THE TIME OF MINCHAH THAT judgment has sway upon the world.

422. Come and see: When the Temple was destroyed, it was burned at the time of Minchah. Therefore it is written, "Woe to us! for the day declines, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out" (Yirmeyah 6:4). The evening shadows are the accusers in the world, and the wrath of judgment that are in wait at the time. We have therefore learned that it behooves man to pray with great intention at all prayers, but at Minchah more than the rest, since judgment then rests upon the world. This is why it was Yitzchak who instituted the prayer of Minchah, WHICH IS OF JUDGMENT AND THE LEFT, as we have already explained.

42. A formidable mountain

While walking, Rabbi Yosi, Rabbi Yehuda, and Rabbi Chizkiyah encounter a formidable mountain. Although Rabbi Yosi is initially afraid of the danger they may encounter, knowing that where danger is obvious, one should be afraid, the three continue on. Since all three are worthy of the Shechinah's protection, and knowing that demons and evil spirits will not attack a threesome, the companions are assured that no harm will come to them. They then discuss the verse, "The angel who redeemed me" Through their discourse, we learn that the "angel" is an allusion to the Shechinah. As long as man prays to God before he begins a journey, the Shechinah accompanies him and delivers him from harm.

The Relevance of this Passage

The protective Light from the righteous threesome of Rabbis Yosi, Yehuda, and Chizkiyah filters into our lives, safeguarding us from unseen negative forces and evil entities that can wreak havoc in our lives. The blessings of The Creator emanate from these words, giving us further protection in our journeys, both physical and spiritual.

423. While they were walking, they reached a mountain. Rabbi Yosi said: This mountain is formidable, let us not remain here but walk on. Rabbi Yehuda said: If you were solitary, I would advise it, for we have learned that he who walks alone on the road endangers his life, but this does not apply to three. Also, each of us is worthy OF PROTECTION, that the Shechinah will not depart from him.

424. Rabbi Yosi said: We have learned that a man should not rely on a miracle. We know this from Shmuel, as it is written: "How can I go? If Shaul hears it, he will kill me" (I Shmuel 16:2), and Shmuel was more worthy OF A MIRACLE than us. He said to him: Even so THAT HE WAS WORTHIER OF A MIRACLE THAN US, he was alone, and the danger was obvious, FOR IT WAS CERTAIN THAT SHAUL WOULD HEAR OF IT AND KILL HIM. But we are three, and there is no danger in sight, TO WIT, IT IS NOT CERTAIN. If it be evil spirits, DEMONS, we have learned that they do not appear before or hurt a threesome; if it is a robber, there are none here, since the mountain is far from inhabited places, and there are no people here, but there is fear of wild beasts here.

425. He opened the discussion saying: "The angel who redeemed (lit. 'redeems') me..." (Beresheet 48:16). HE ASKS: It says "redeems," while it should have been 'who redeemed.' Why the present tense? HE REPLIES: This is because he abides always with people, and never abandons a righteous man. Come and see: The angel who redeems me is the Shechinah, who continually accompanies man, never turns from him as long as he observes the precepts of the Torah. A man should therefore be careful not to go out alone on the road. HE ASKS: What is 'alone'? HE ANSWERS: A man should be careful to keep the precepts of the Torah, so that the Shechinah shall not depart from him, and he will have to go alone, unaccompanied by the Shechinah.

426. Come and see: When a man sets out on his way, he should pray before his Master in order to draw the Shechinah upon him, and then go out on his way, joined by the Shechinah, who would redeem him on the way and save him in time of need.

427. It is written that Ya'akov said: "If Elohim will be with me," referring to the union with the Shechinah "and will keep me in this way" (Beresheet 28:20) to deliver him from any HARM. Ya'akov was solitary at the time, and the Shechinah walked before him. So much more for friends with the words of the Torah among them.

428. Rabbi Yosi said: What shall we do? If we stay here, the day declines and if we climb, it is a great and formidable mountain and I fear the wild beasts. Rabbi Yehuda said: I am amazed at you THAT YOU ARE SO AFRAID. Rabbi Yosi said to him: We have learned that a man should not rely on a miracle, since the Holy One, blessed be He, does not perform miracles at all times. He said to him: This is true for a lone man, but we are three. With words of the Torah between us, and the Shechinah with us, I have no fear.

429. While they were walking they saw a rock with a cave in it. Rabbi Yehuda said: Let us climb to that rock, for I see a cave in it. They went there and saw the cave. Rabbi Yosi said: I am afraid, lest this cave is a lair of beasts, which might harm us.

430. Rabbi Yehuda said to Rabbi Chizkiyah, I see that Rabbi Yosi is afraid. You might say that this is since he is a sinner, for whoever fears is a sinner, as it is written: "The sinners in Tzion are afraid" (Yeshayah 33:14). He is no sinner BUT A RIGHTEOUS MAN, and it is written, "But the righteous are bold as a lion" (Mishle 28:1). Rabbi Yosi said: It is because danger is obvious AND WHEREVER DAMAGE IS OBVIOUS ONE SHOULD BE AFRAID.

43. Three watches

Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Chizkiyah, and Rabbi Yosi enter a cave to rest for the night. They divide the night into three watches and begin discussing the verse, "I will sing the mercies of The Creator forever." We learn that Avraham is aligned completely with the attribute of Chesed. Therefore, God tested him so that he would be included in judgment, thus perfecting him. Another explanation reveals that this verse indicates God's kindness and truth to all creatures. We then learn that God revealed the secret of Faith to Avraham. Avraham in turn recognized that the world, the secret of Malchut, was created by judgment, but could not have endured without Chesed, mercy.

The discussion next turns to the verse, "In the beginning." We learn that this phrase includes the Female Principle and Chochmah as one. The first building of the world, the Female Principle, derived its existence from Chesed. On the second day it was included in Gvurah, thereby perfecting Zeir Anpin. After discussing the verse, "I have made a Covenant with My chosen", the rabbis speak of the verse, "I have sworn to David My servant." We're told that this oath is the secret of Faith and indicates that the Female Principle and Yesod will be separated only during the time of exile. During this joyless time, God finds pleasure only when Yisrael below study the Torah and sanctify the Holy Name.

Rabbi Yosi then opens a discussion of the verse, "Whereupon are its foundations fastened?" This question concerns the foundation upon which the seven pillars of the world rest. That is, if the universe rests on the seven pillars of the world, upon what do the seven pillars rest? There follows a discourse on "the foundation stone", the central point of the world found in Jerusalem, and we learn about the three watches of the night, during which the angels sing and chant praises to God.

The Relevance of this Passage

A delicate balance of judgement and mercy is attained within our souls, giving us the ability to share and love others in a pure and spiritual manner. Judgement, sweetened with the appropriate measure of mercy, is akin to a devoted parent reprimanding their child out of love and concern for the child's welfare. Because the universe reflects all of our behavioral actions towards others back at us, it is vital that we extend mercy and judgement in proper measure so that life treats us kindly in return.

431. RABBI YEHUDA said TO RABBI CHIZKIYAH, If harm is probable, it is so AND WE SHOULD BE AFRAID, but it is not probable FOR WE SEE HERE NO BEASTS WHICH COULD HARM US. And after we enter the cave, WE ARE SAFE for no evil will follow to harm us. THEREFORE IT IS SAID: "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE BOLD AS A LION." They entered the cave. Rabbi Yehuda said: We shall divide the night into three watches. Each of us will stand guard at one watch of the night and we shall keep awake.

432. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion saying: "A Maskil of Eitan the Ezrachie" (Tehilim 89:1). This hymn was sung by the patriarch Avraham when he strove to serve the Holy One, blessed be He, by doing kindness with the people of the world, in making them all

acknowledge that the Holy One, blessed be He, reigns over the land. He is called Eitan (lit. 'strong') since he was strongly attached to the Holy One, blessed be He.

433. "I will sing the mercies (Heb. chassadim) of Hashem forever" (Tehilim 89:1): HE ASKS: Why is singing come from the side of the pious (Heb. chassidim) WHO ARE OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, SEEING THAT SINGING COMES FROM THE LEFT COLUMN? HE ANSWERS: Here the left is included within the right. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, tried Avraham and tested him. We learned that Yitzchak was 37 at the time OF THE BINDING. Why does it say that He tried Avraham? It should have said that He tried Yitzchak. The reason it says that He tried Avraham is to make him be of Judgment, properly included in Judgment, SINCE HE WAS WHOLLY OF THE ATTRIBUTE OF CHESED. In this way will he be perfected. Therefore, "I will sing the Mercies of Hashem forever," SINCE HE WAS ALREADY INCLUDED OF THE LEFT COLUMN, WHENCE SINGING COMES FROM.

434. Another explanation for: "I will sing the Mercies of Hashem forever." These are the mercies that the Holy One, blessed be He, does by the world. "With my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations" refers to the kindness and truth He confers upon all. It is the faith in the Holy One, blessed be He, that Avraham spread in the world, and caused Him to be mentioned on the tongue of all creatures. Therefore "with my mouth I will make known Your faithfulness."

435. The Holy One, blessed be He, revealed to Avraham the secret of faith, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. When he knew it, AVRAHAM knew that the world was created and existed for his sake, FOR HE IS THE SECRET OF CHESED. Hence, "For I have said: 'The world is built by love (lit. 'Chesed')'" (Tehilim 89:3). For when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, THE NUKVA, He saw the world could not endure, so He extended His right hand, WHICH IS CHESED, and it endured. If He had not extended His right upon it, it would not have existed since this world, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, was created by Judgment AND THEREFORE CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT CHESED, as we have already explained.

436. We have learned that the secret of: "In the beginning" is that there are two principals in one. Though we said of it that it is the beginning from below upward, WHICH IS MALCHUT, "the beginning" also MEANS BEGINNING from above downward, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH; TO WIT, BINAH RETURNED TO BE CHOCHMAH. We have explained the word "In (the letter Bet) the beginning" as in the house (Heb. bet) of the Holy of Holies, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, THE HOUSE of the beginning, WHICH IS CHOCHMAH. The word "IN THE BEGINNING" includes THE NUKVA AND CHOCHMAH as one.

437. By this house, the world, THE NUKVA, was created, TO WIT, SHE IS BUILT AS A HOUSE FOR CHOCHMAH, BY RECEIVING FROM THE LEFT COLUMN AND THEREFORE LACKING IN CHASSADIM. Yet it exists only through the right, CHESED, FOR CHOCHMAH CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT CHESED. We have already explained that the word "Behibar'am (Eng. 'when they were created')" (Beresheet 2:4) has the same letters as 'BeAvraham' (Eng. 'in Avraham'), THE SECRET OF CHESED. Therefore it is written: "For I have said: 'The world is built by Chesed.'" The first building of the world, THE NUKVA, derived its existence from the light of the first day; NAMELY CHESED. Then on the second day, it was included within the left, WHICH IS GVURAH, and heaven, ZEIR ANPIN, was perfected by them, as it is written: "You do establish Your faithfulness in the heavens" (Tehilim 89:3).

438. Another explanation for: "You do establish Your faithfulness in the heavens" is that the heaven, ZEIR ANPIN, was established by Chassadim, and the secret of faith, THE NUKVA, was established by them, AS IT SAYS "THE WORLD IS BUILT BY CHESED." THUS, THE HEAVEN INSPIRED CHESED UPON THE NUKVA CALLED 'WORLD', AND HENCE IT IS SAID: "YOU DO ESTABLISH YOUR FAITHFULNESS IN THE HEAVENS." For THE NUKVA cannot be established save by heaven, ZEIR ANPIN.

439. "I have made a covenant with My chosen." THE COVENANT is the secret of faith CONFERRED UPON DAVID. Another explanation is that THE COVENANT is the righteous, YESOD, from whom blessings flow upon the lower beings. The holy living creatures, WHICH ARE ANGELS, are all blessed by the abundance poured upon the lower beings. Therefore it is written, "I have made a covenant with My chosen," FOR HE WILL BE WORTHY OF THE COVENANT.

440. "I have sworn to David My servant" (Tehilim 89:3). This oath is the secret of faith, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, which is always supported by the righteous, YESOD. This oath is forever, so they will never be separated, save at the time of exile WHEN THEY WILL BE SEPARATED, when the abundance of blessings is withheld, the secret of faith cannot be perfected and there is no joy. At night, also, no joys come before the King.

441. Though joys do not waken up AT NIGHT, angels stand and chant hymns outside the King's temple. At midnight, the awakening rises from below upward. The Holy One, blessed be He, then awakens all the celestial armies to weep, and strikes the firmament. There is trembling high and low.

442. He finds no pleasure save when there is awakening below to the Torah. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, and all the souls of the righteous listen joyfully to the sound, and He is pleased. Since the day the Temple was destroyed below, the Holy One, blessed be He, swore that He would not enter the celestial Jerusalem until Yisrael would enter the terrestrial Jerusalem, as it is written: "The Holy One in the midst of you: and I will not come into the city" (Hoshea 11:9), WHICH MEANS THAT "THE HOLY ONE IN THE MIDST OF YOU," NEVERTHELESS "I WILL NOT COME INTO THE CITY," WHICH IS THE CELESTIAL JERUSALEM, UNTIL YISRAEL SHALL ENTER THE TERRESTRIAL JERUSALEM .

443. All the singers stand outside THE TEMPLE and chant during the three watches of the night, WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE THREE COLUMNS, all singing certain praises. The hosts of heaven are all awakened by night and Yisrael by day. Sanctification is not recited above until the children of Yisrael recite it below, then all the heavenly hosts sanctify together the Holy Name. Hence, holy Yisrael are sanctified high and low. This is the secret of the verse, "You shall be holy: for I Hashem your Elohim am holy" (Vayikra 19:2).

444. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion saying: "Whereupon are its foundations fastened?" (Iyov 38:6). The Holy One, blessed be He, said this TO IYOV. For when He created the universe, THE NUKVA, He put it on pillars, the seven pillars of the world CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT, as it says "she has hewn out her seven pillars" (Mishlei 9:1). Upon what the pillars rest is unknown.

445. HE ANSWERS: It is a very deep and inscrutable secret that the world, THE NUKVA, was not created until He took a stone called "the foundation stone." The Holy One, blessed be He, took it and threw it into the abyss, where it was stuck upside down. From it the world, THE NUKVA, was planted. It is the central point of the world, where the Holy of Holies stands; NAMELY THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF THE NUKVA. It is alluded to by the verse, "who laid its corner stone" (Iyov 38:6), "a tried stone, a precious corner stone" (Yeshayah 28:16) as in "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner" (Tehilim 118:22). ALL THESE REFER TO THE SECRET OF THE FOUNDATION STONE.

446. Come and see: This stone was created from fire, wind and water. TO WIT, IT RECEIVES FROM THE THREE COLUMNS OF ZEIR ANPIN, and was hardened into one stone, standing upon the abyss. Sometimes, water flows from it and the deeps are filled. This stone stands as a sign in the middle of the universe. It is the stone which Ya'akov set and implanted for the world to expand and be established by. Hence the words: "And Ya'akov took a stone, and set it up for a pillar" (Beresheet 31:45).

447. "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar" (Beresheet 28:22). HE ASKS: How could this stone be put there by Ya'akov, when if it was created in the beginning, when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world? HE ANSWERS: He only put it there as a support for the high and low. Therefore it says, "Which I have set for a pillar," "I put" so it "shall be Elohim's house" (Ibid.), by putting here the upper storey; NAMELY, THAT HE DREW INTO IT THE SUPERNAL MOCHIN.

448. Come and see: This stone has seven eyes, as said: "Upon one stone are seven eyes" (Zecharyah 3:9). THE EYES ARE THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, AND WHEN CHOCHMAH IS REVEALED BY CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT OF THE NUKVA IT IS CALLED 'SEVEN EYES'. Why is it called a foundation (Heb. shetiyah) stone? Since the world was planted from it. The word 'shetiyah' contains the letters shat Yah (lit. 'Yah put'), for the Holy One, blessed be He, WHO IS BINAH CALLED YAH, has put it so that the world will be blessed by it, and indeed it is blessed by it.

449. Come and see when the sun sets, IN THE FIRST WATCH AT NIGHT, the Cherubs stand in this place, THE HOLY OF HOLIES, WHICH STANDS ON THE CENTRAL POINT, THE FOUNDATION STONE. They stand there by a miracle THROUGH THE LIGHTS OF BINAH, WHICH DO NOT BELONG TO IT, AND ARE THEREFORE CONSIDERED A MIRACLE. They beat their wings and spread them, and the sound of their wings' song is heard above. Then the angels, who chant at the beginning of the night, start to sing so that the Holy One, blessed be He, will be glorified above and below. What do the wings of the Cherubs chant? "Behold, bless Hashem, all you servants of Hashem... Lift up your hands in the sanctuary" (Tehilim 134:1-2). It is then time for the supernal angels to sing.

450. On the second watch, the Cherubs beat their wings above and the sound of their singing is heard. Then the angels of the second watch start to chant. What do the Cherubs' wings sing at that hour? "They who trust in Hashem shall be like Mount Tzion..." (Tehilim 125:1). It is then time for the angels of the second watch to sing.

451. On the third watch, the Cherubs beat their wings and chant hymns. They sing, "Haleluyah! Give praise, O servants of Hashem... Blessed be the name of Hashem...From the rising of the sun..." (Tehilim 113:1-3). Then all the angels of the third watch sing.

452. All the stars and constellations in the firmament start to sing ON THE THIRD WATCH, as it is written: "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy" (Iyov 38:7), and "praise him, all you stars of light" (Tehilim 148:3), as all these stars of light play music upon the light; TO WIT, THROUGH SINGING LIGHT IS DRAWN.

453. When morning rises, the children of Yisrael follow them with their singing and the Holy One, blessed be He, is glorified from below and from above. Yisrael sing below by day and the supernal angels at night. Then Holy Name is perfected on all sides.

454. All the supernal angels and Yisrael below are strengthened by the stone we referred to. It rises above to be adorned by the fathers by day. By night, the Holy One, blessed be He, ZEIR ANPIN, comes to the Garden of Eden to be delighted by the righteous.

455. Happy are those who are established in their existence and study the Torah at night, since the Holy One, blessed be He, and all the righteous in the Garden of Eden listen to the voices of men who study the Torah, as it is written: "You that dwells in the gardens, the companions hearken for your voice: cause me to hear it" (Shir Hashirim 8:13).

456. Come and see: This stone is a precious stone, FOR IT WAS SWEETENED BY BINAH AND IS GOODLY AND WORTHY OF RECEIVING MOCHIN. This is the secret of the verse, "And you shall set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones" (Shemot 28:17). They are the arrangements of the precious stone, the setting of the goodly stone; TO WIT, THEY ARE THE SECRET OF THE MOCHIN OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH RECEIVED IN MALCHUT ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THREE TIMES FOUR WHICH AMOUNT TO TWELVE. For there is another stone, NAMELY MALCHUT THAT WAS NOT SWEETENED IN BINAH, of which it is written, "And I shall remove the heart of stone." "And I will put my spirit within you" (Yechezkel 36:26), WHICH MEANS THAT AS LONG AS THE HEART OF STONE IS NOT REMOVED, THE SPIRIT OF HASHEM DOES NOT DWELL IN US, SINCE IT IS NOT SWEETENED BY BINAH. IT IS ALSO CALLED "a tried stone, a precious corner stone" (Yeshayah 28:16).

457. In regard to this secret, it is written "tablets of stone" (Shemot 31:18), for this is where the stones were hewn, FROM THE PRECIOUS STONE. They are therefore named after this stone. This is the secret of the verse, "From thence the shepherd, the stone of Yisrael" (Beresheet 49:24), as we learned, THAT THIS IS TOO THE SECRET OF THE PRECIOUS STONE.

458. Rabbi Chizkiyah opened the discussion saying: "And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Yisrael, twelve" (Shemot 28:21). These are the supernal precious stones called the stones of the place, as it is written: "And he took of the stones of that place" (Beresheet 28:11), as has been explained. THESE ARE THE SFIROT OF THE NUKVA, AND THE NUKVA IS CALLED PLACE. "And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Yisrael" as there are twelve tribes below, so there above, IN THE NUKVA, twelve tribes which are twelve precious stones. It is also written: "There the tribes go up, the tribes of Yah, for a testimony unto Yisrael" (Tehilim 122:4). This is the secret of the supernal Yisrael; NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN WHICH POURS THESE TWELVE UNTO THE NUKVA. They are all there "to give

thanks to the name of Hashem" (Ibid.), WHICH IS THE NUKVA CALLED THE NAME OF HASHEM. Therefore it is written, "And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Yisrael."

459. Just as there are twelve hours in the day, THE TWELVE OF ZEIR ANPIN, so there are twelve hours at night, THE TWELVE OF THE NUKVA. The daytime ones are above, and the nightly below, THE TWELVE OF ZEIR ANPIN BEING ABOVE AND THOSE OF THE NUKVA BELOW, TO WIT, THEY RECEIVE FROM THE TWELVE OF ZEIR ANPIN WHICH ARE ABOVE. The ones correspond to the others. The twelve nightly hours are divided into three parts, THE THREE WATCHES WE MENTIONED. Numerous legions are stationed beneath them over various grades, all of them in charge by night. They first receive their food, AND THEN CHANT HYMNS, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "SHE RISES ALSO WHILE IT IS YET NIGHT, AND GIVES FOOD TO HER HOUSEHOLD..." (MISHLEI 31:15).

460. At midnight, there are two settings on the one side and two settings on the other side. A Supernal Spirit comes out from between them. Then, all the trees in the Garden of Eden start to sing and the Holy One, blessed be He, enters the Garden of Eden. This is described in the verse: "Then shall the trees of the wood sing for joy at the presence of Hashem, because he comes to judge the earth" (I Divrei Hayamim 16:33), as it is written: "With righteousness shall he judge the poor" (Yeshayah 11:4). For justice, ZEIR ANPIN comes in between them and the Garden of Eden is filled with it.

461. And a northern wind is stirred in the world and joy abounds, FOR AFTER THE BALANCING OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, NORTH IS CLOTHED BY SOUTH, AND CHOCHMAH BY CHASSADIM. THEN THERE IS JOY IN THE ILLUMINATION OF THE NORTH, THE LEFT COLUMN. HE EXPLAINS, The wind, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, blows at the perfumes, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, THROUGH WHICH THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH IS CLOTHED BY PERFUMES OF CHASSADIM WITHIN THE SPIRIT, and THE PERFUMES raise odor from below upward, and the righteous are adorned with their crowns MEANING THAT THEY RECEIVE MOCHIN, and enjoy the splendor of the shining mirror, ZEIR ANPIN.

462. Happy are the righteous who attain that supernal light and the light of the mirror which shines to all sides, RIGHT AND LEFT. Each of the righteous receives his appropriate share, according to his deeds in this world. Some of them are in shame before the light since their neighbor has received more to illuminate. This has already been explained.

463. The watches in the night ARE from the setting of night, several accusers are awakened to roam about the world and the ports OF LIGHTS are closed. THIS IS THE FIRST WATCH. Afterwards, DURING THE SECOND WATCH, all sorts OF EMISSARIES OF JUDGMENT ARE ROUSED as we explained, THAT THE SECOND WATCH PERTAINS TO THE LEFT COLUMN, THE NORTH WIND, FOR AS LONG AS IT IS NOT CONNECTED WITH THE SOUTH WIND, WHICH IS OF THE RIGHT, MANY JUDGMENTS WILL COME FROM IT. At midnight IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SECOND WATCH, the northern wind descends from above downward and holds on to night, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, until the end of the second watch.

464. Then, AT THE THIRD WATCH, the south side, CHESED, is aroused TO BE ATTACHED TO THE NORTH THROUGH THE STRENGTH OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN until morning. When morning comes, SOUTH AND NORTH ARE ALREADY ATTACHED TO THE NUKVA. Then the children of Yisrael come below with their prayer and request and raise her above TO ZEIR ANPIN until she ascends to be concealed among THE LIGHTS OF ZEIR ANPIN. TO WIT, SHE REDUCED HERSELF AND BECAME NULL TO THE GRADE OF ZEIR ANPIN, then receives blessings from the King's head.

465. She is blessed from the dew that flows UNTO ZEIR ANPIN from above. The dew is divided TO ILLUMINATE on several sides, BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT. AND THOUGH THE DEW ITSELF IS BUT THE LIGHT OF CHESED, myriads of grades are sustained by it, which will raise the dead in the future. This is the meaning of the verse: "Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust: for your dew is as the dew on herbs (lit. 'of lights')" (Yeshayah 26:19); TO WIT, the dew from the supernal lights which shine above.

466. While they were sitting, midnight arrived. Rabbi Yehuda said to Rabbi Yosi, Now that the north wind is awakened at midnight, it is time when the Holy One, blessed be He, longs

for the voices of the righteous in this world who are occupied in the Torah. The Holy One, blessed be He, now listens to them. Let us not stop from studying the Torah in this place.

44. "The angel who redeemed," part two

The redeeming angel, Matatron, receives blessings and then bestows them upon the world. This angel is male when procuring blessings for the world, and is female when there is judgment in the world. The angel includes all the colors--red, white, and green--and has many shapes.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power of redemption, blessing, and balance between mercy and judgement and male and female energies, is made available to the readers of this ancient text. This effect is achieved through a mystical connection to the angel Matatron.

467. He opened the discussion saying: "The angel who redeemed me from all evil." We have studied it already, yet it is written, "Behold, I send an angel before you..." (Shemot 23:20). This is the angel who redeems the world, CALLED THE REDEEMING ANGEL, who protects people, AS IT SAYS "TO KEEP YOU IN THE WAY" (IBID.). It secures blessings for the whole world, first receiving them, and then providing them to the world; NAMELY THE ANGEL MATATRON. It is therefore written, "Behold, I send an angel before you" and "and I will send an angel before you" (Ibid. 33:2).

468. This angel is now male, now female. When procuring blessings for the world he is male and called male. As a male, he orders blessings for the female. And when there is judgment in the world, she is called female, and as a pregnant female, she is filled with judgments, and is then called a female. Therefore, now he is male, and now she is female. All this is one mystery.

469. It is likewise written: "And the bright blade of a revolving sword" (Beresheet 3:24); NAMELY there are angel messengers in the world which revolve and turn into several shapes, sometimes female and sometimes male, now Judgment and now Mercy, and all is the same matter. In the same manner, this angel has many shapes, and all the colors, WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, of the world, THE NUKVA, are in this place. This is the mystery of: "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Hashem" (Yechezkel 1:28). THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOW, THE NUKVA, CONTAINS THE THREE COLORS. Since the angel has the three colors, he leads the world.

45. Three colors

Here we first learn that the colors white, red, and green correspond to the Right, Left, and Central Columns respectively. These colors are connected, they encircle the realm of Malchut, and they are reflected in the Malchut. The illumination of Malchut, we learn, is concealed from those below. Whoever tries to behold her will be rejected if they lack the appropriate merit. And whoever understands how to unite and adjust the three colors properly will be preserved in this world and in the next.

The Relevance of this Passage

The ability to balance and manage the three primal spiritual energy forces known as Right, Left and Central Columns is bestowed up the reader. The colors white, red, and green embody these three forces and they shine brightly in our souls so that our lives are more balanced, harmonious, and aligned with the spiritual structure of creation. This balance brings forth the wisdom to know when and how to receive for the purpose of sharing with others.

Tosefta (addendum)

470. Exalted, beloved men of intelligence, behold THE SOULS FROM THE RIGHT COLUMN. Litigants with a sailor stick, approach so you may know, THOSE OF THE LEFT COLUMN, WHENCE ARE JUDGMENTS. Those of you of intelligent eyes, OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHO GAINED CHOCHMAH RECEIVED THROUGH TEVUNAH, know that when it came up in the

wish of the mystery of mysteries to issue forth three colors bound together, the white, red, and green, THE THREE COLUMNS: RIGHT IS WHITE, LEFT IS RED, AND THE CENTRAL GREEN, the three colors combined and mingled together. Then the lower shovel, THE NUKVA, was dyed and came out of these colors.

471. All these colors, WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, are reflected IN THE NUKVA, a looking mirror, SINCE ONLY IN IT ONE CAN SEE when it is crystal-like. When he struck it, THE NUKVA was seen outside. The three colors circle it TO ITS RIGHT, LEFT AND MIDDLE; the color goes up and down. TO WIT, THE WHITE COLOR, RIGHT, GOES TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE LEFT; THE RED COLOR, LEFT, GOES UP, NAMELY SHINES FROM BELOW UPWARD; THE GREEN IN THE MIDDLE GOES DOWN, BY SHINING FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD. There are executioners in charge within it-WHO PUNISH THOSE WHO DRAW THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD.

472. The colors that are connected which encircle THE NUKVA, raise her up by day, and she descends by night. SHE IS LIKE a burning candle, WHOSE ILLUMINATION is seen by night, and by day it is concealed AND CANNOT BE SEEN. The light is hidden in 248 worlds, which all shine within her from above downward into 365 parts, which are concealed and covered from below.

473. Whoever solicits to attain her will break the wings WHICH CONCEAL HER and the hidden Klipot, and then open the gates. Whoever may look will behold with knowledge and intelligence as if from behind a wall, save the exalted faithful prophet Moshe, who saw it eye to eye above, where it is inconceivable.

474. Whoever did not merit it is rejected outside. Several battalions of angels are ready for him, to go out to him and escort him out so he will not behold the pleasure of the King. Woe to the wicked in the world, who have not the merit of beholding, as it says, "But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered..." (Bemidbar 4:20).

475. Rabbi Yehuda said: I was looking and, behold, through these lights, THE THREE COLORS, the souls of the righteous are looking. When they cleave to this place, THE NUKVA, the souls of the righteous look from among these lights. The colors, WHITE, RED, AND GREEN, go up to be included together. Happy is he who knows how to comprise and unite them all as one, and correct all where it is needed to be, high above. Then is man preserved in this world and in the World to Come.

(End of Tosefta)

46. "The king's strength also loves judgment"

Rabbi Yosi explains that the title verse refers to God and the power by which He strengthened the realm of Malchut. This power was derived through judgment. Malchut, and therefore the congregation of Yisrael, was established through judgment--that is, the Mochin that includes Chochmah and Chassadim together.

The Relevance of this Passage

Spiritual balance between mercy and judgment is created within our souls and the world around us by virtue of the spiritual energy bottled up within the mystical words of this ancient text. Balance is critical if we are to live a life of fulfillment. For instance, if the scales are tipped towards the side of judgement, we'll find the world extra hard on us. The objective of this passage is to balance our ability to extend mercy and judgement to others so that we receive the same compassionate blend of judgment and mercy from the world.

476. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion saying: "The king's strength also loves judgment (or justice), you do establish equity" (Tehilim 99:4). "The king's strength also loves judgment" refers to the Holy One, blessed be He; NAMELY THE NUKVA WHO LOVES JUSTICE, WHICH IS MOCHIN INCLUDED OF RIGHT AND LEFT TOGETHER. "The king's strength" is the power with which the Holy One, blessed be He, strengthened THE NUKVA, which comes only through justice, as it is written: "The king by justice establishes the land" (Mishlei 29:4) BY BEING INCLUDED OF CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM TOGETHER, CHASSADIM ON THE RIGHT AND CHOCHMAH ON THE LEFT.

477. This is the reason SCRIPTURE SAYS, "The king's strength also loves justice," for the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, is not established save through justice, WHICH IS MOCHIN INCLUDED OF CHOCHMAH AND CHASSADIM TOGETHER. Since it is fed thereof, THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM and all the blessings it receives are from there, THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH. Therefore, "the king's strength also loves Judgment," for all it desires and craves is to receive justice. "You do establish equity (lit. 'equities')" is the secret of the two Cherubs below CALLED EQUITIES, who rectify and render the world inhabited.

47. "Haleluyah! Give praise, O servants of Hashem"

The rabbis explain that when one person praises another, the praise should be in accordance with that person's merit. This is because praise given that is not deserved becomes a reproach. Through a discussion of the title verse, we learn that the name 'Haleluyah' is among the highest kinds of praise to God since it contains both the highest name as well the praise itself. The rest of the title portion reveals the name of the praised and those who address the praise. This means that they, the servants of The Creator, praised the place called "the Name of Yah," Malchut. We're then told of the significance of the Yud ? in the Hebrew translation of the word let, and its relationship to "the drawing from the most hidden." The discourse then reveals the meaning of the words, "From the rising of the sun to its setting." This alludes to Zeir Anpin, whence the sun shines and Malchut, the place to which Faith is bound.

The Relevance of this Passage

The wisdom to offer praise to others with purity and in the appropriate measure is awakened in us. The Holy Name of "Haleluyah" and the letter Yud ? connect us to lofty levels in the spiritual atmosphere, arousing Light, blessing, and praise throughout our physical world [Malchut]. We are inspired to become worthy of praise through spiritual growth and transformation.

478. Rabbi Chizkiyah opened the discussion with the verse, "Haleluyah! Give praise, O servants of Hashem, praise the name of Hashem" (Tehilim 113:1). Let us examine this verse. After saying Haleluyah, why ADD "Give praise, O servants of Hashem" and then "praise the name of Hashem"? HE ANSWERS: We have so learned that whoever praises someone else should do so in accordance with his merits, and praise should be the extent of that person's merit. We have learned that he who gives him praise which he does not deserve, it is considered to be a reproach; TO WIT, his blame shall be revealed. Therefore, he who mourns another man should do so according to his merit and no more. For the praise might turn EVENTUALLY into blame. Praise should always agree with merits.

479. Come and see: "Haleluyah." There is here a supreme praise to the Master of everything, whom no eye can behold or know, who is most hidden. Who is He? THE NAME OF Yah, the highest name of all.

480. Therefore "Haleluyah (lit. 'praise Yah')" contains a praise and a name in one. Here it is undisclosed since he says Haleluyah, yet does not mention the speaker, or to whom the word is addressed. As the name Yah is undisclosed, so is the praise, and I do not know who are those who address the praise. All should be thus covered in the supernal secret. After being concealed by the supernal secret, it is now revealed and said: "Give praise, O servants of Hashem, praise the name of Hashem," BY WHICH THE NAME OF THOSE WHO PRAISE AND THE PRAISED ARE MADE KNOWN. This is because the place is not as hidden as that supernal and most hidden of all, WHICH IS YAH, but is the place called name, NAMELY THE NUKVA, as it is written: "Whose name is called by the name of Hashem" (II Shmuel 6:2), WHICH MEANS THE NUKVA CALLED NAME.

481. The first one, YAH, is covered and undisclosed, while the second, THE NAME OF YAH, is both undisclosed and disclosed. And since it may be revealed, SCRIPTURE says that they praise the place CALLED THE NAME OF YAH. Who are those who praise? The servants of Hashem, who are worthy of praising this place, THE NUKVA.

482. "Blessed be the name of Hashem" (Tehilim 113:2). HE ASKS: Why does it say here "be (Heb. yehi-or Yud-Hei-Yud)"? HE REPLIES: This word is the secret of drawing from that

supernal, hidden place we mentioned, Yah, unto the secret of the covenant, the lower Yud which resembles the upper Yud, the beginning is like the end.

483. Therefore 'Yud-Hei-Yud' is the secret of drawing from the most hidden, THE FIRST YUD OF YUD-ALEPH-HEI-DALET-VAV-NUN-HEI-YUD unto the lower grade, THE LAST YUD OF YUD-ALEPH-HEI-DALET-VAV-NUN-HEI-YUD. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE TWO YUD OF YUD-HEI-YUD. With its support the Creation prevailed, as it says, "Let (Heb. yehi) there be firmament," "let there be lights," and "let there be light."

484. In all the works above, THE FIRMAMENT, LIGHT AND THE LIGHTS, it is written Yud-Hei-Yud; in all the works below, THE EARTH, THE SEAS AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, it does not say Yud-Hei-Vav, since the secret OF YUD-HEI-VAV, the drawing from the most hidden, THE FIRST YUD OF YUD-ALEPH-HEI-DALET-VAV-NUN-HEI-YUD, does not prevail save by the supernal works above and not those below.

485. Through this, the most Holy Name is blessed by everything. It is therefore written: "Blessed be (Yud-Hei-Yud) the name of Hashem." "From the rising of the sun" (Tehilim 113:3) is the supernal place whence the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, shines from, the place of the supernal undisclosed head, THE HEAD OF ARICH ANPIN.

486. "To its setting" (Ibid.): To this place to which faith, THE NUKVA, is well bound, BEING THE PLACE OF THE UNISON BETWEEN ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA, whence blessings issue forth to all, and the world, THE NUKVA, is fed thereof, as we learned. Hence this place, THE NUKVA, is fed and blessed from above. All depends upon awakening below, when the servants of Hashem are aroused while blessing the holy name, THE NUKVA, like we said. And when she is revealed, it is written, "Give praise, O servants of Hashem, praise the name of Hashem."

487. By this time, the morning broke and they came out of the cave, not having slept that night. They walked along the way and when they came out of the mountains, they sat down and prayed. They reached a village where they sat the whole day. At night, they slept until midnight when they rose to study the Torah.

48. "And he blessed them that day"

The discussion begins with an interpretation of the title verse. We are told that the phrase "that day" signifies the unity between Zeir Anpin and Binah. "By you" alludes to the unity of the blessings from both high and low grades. "Yisrael," we learn, is an allusion to Yisrael-Saba, who receives blessings from above and confers them on Malchut. The rabbis then explain why the name Efraim is mentioned first in the verse, "Elohim make you as Efraim and Menashe." The first explanation of the title verse concludes with the teaching that love of one's grandchildren often surpasses the love of one's own children.

Rabbi Yosi provides an additional explanation for the title verse, revealing that men are blessed first, since women are blessed only through the blessings of men.

The Relevance of this Passage

In order for a lamp to illuminate a darkened room, it must be connected to a source of energy. Likewise, for spiritual Light to brighten our darkened world, we must connect ourselves to the source of energy that powers the entire cosmos. The word "that day" indicates a connection between Zeir Anpin and Binah, two Sfirot that occupy the Upper Worlds. The phrases "By you" and "Yisrael" correspond to the connection between our souls and the entire physical dimension to Zeir Anpin. Spiritual current is now free to flow and illuminate all of mankind once these cosmic "power stations" are connected to one another.

488. "And he blessed them that day, saying (Heb. lemor), 'By you shall Yisrael bless'" (Beresheet 48:20). HE ASKS: What is the meaning of "that day"? It would have been enough to say just "And he blessed them." Also the word 'lemor' is normally spelled without Vav, but here there is an additional Vav. What is the reason for the difference?

489. HE ANSWERS: "And he blessed them that day" is a mystery. That day is the secret of the grade in charge over the blessings above, BINAH; "That day" is the day, ZEIR ANPIN, which is from the supernal place called "that (lit. 'he')" WHICH IS BINAH. "That day"

INDICATES THAT there is no separation between "day" and "he." Wherever IT IS SAID "that day," there are two grades: the supernal grade, BINAH, and the lower, ZEIR ANPIN, when they are together; TO WIT, WHEN ZEIR ANPIN ASCENDED TO BINAH AND BECAME LIKE IT.

490. This is why when Ya'akov wished to bless Yosef's children, he blessed them all as one by the unison of high and low, so that their blessing would prevail. He then included them all together, saying: "By you shall Yisrael bless." What is "By you"? Assuredly this is the secret of unison. First he blessed from below upward, TO WIT, IN "AND HE BLESSED THEM THAT DAY," WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN AND BINAH TOGETHER, and then he descended into the middle TO ZEIR ANPIN and down TO THE NUKVA. 'Lemor' with Vav is the middle, SINCE VAV IS AN ALLUSION TO ZEIR ANPIN. He then went down, SAYING "by you," WHICH REFERS TO THE NUKVA. Thus THE BLESSING is well formed, being from below upward and from above downward.

491. "By you shall Yisrael bless": HE ASKS: What is Yisrael? HE ANSWERS: It is Yisrael Saba, ZEIR ANPIN OF BINAH. It does not say, 'Shall Yisrael be blessed' but "Shall Yisrael bless," WHICH MEANS HE WILL BLESS OTHERS. This is because Yisrael SABA receives blessings from above and then blesses all through the low grade, THE NUKVA, by saying "By you shall Yisrael bless, saying:" WHICH MEANS THAT THROUGH "BY YOU (HEB. BECHA)," BY THE NUKVA, YISRAEL SABA SHALL BLESS ALL.

492. "Elohim make you as Efraim and Menashe": He mentions Efraim first, since Efraim is called by the name of Yisrael. Whence do we know that? The tribe of Efraim left before the time was over of the Egyptian enslavement, by trying to force time and come out of exile, and their foes rose against them and killed them. It is written, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Yisrael" (Yechezkel 37:11). From this, it is understood that EFRAIM IS CONSIDERED AS YISRAEL, since it says "the whole house of Yisrael." Ya'akov therefore put Efraim before Menashe. Thus Efraim journeyed on the west side, which was his path, AS THE SHECHINAH IS ON THE WEST, WHO COMPRISES ALL YISRAEL. THEREFORE EFRAIM, BEING CALLED YISRAEL, WAS ON THE SIDE OF THE SHECHINAH.

493. Come and see: Why did the blessing he gave to Yosef's children precede that of his own children? HE ANSWERS: This teaches us that love of grandchildren surpasses the love of one's own children. Therefore, SINCE HIS LOVE FOR HIS GRANDCHILDREN IS STRONGER THAN THAT FOR HIS CHILDREN, he blessed them first.

494. "And he blessed them that day, saying": Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion saying: "Hashem has remembered us: He will bless, He will bless the house of Yisrael" (Tehilim 115:12). WHY IS IT WRITTEN TWICE "BLESS"? HE SAYS, "Hashem has remembered us: He will bless" refers to the men. "He will bless the house of Yisrael" refers to the women. For the men should be blessed first and then the women, since women are blessed only through the blessing of men. When the men are blessed, the women are blessed. THIS MAY BE DERIVED from the verse, if you wish "And shall make atonement for himself and for his house" (Vayikra 16:6). One should first atone for himself and only then for his house, SINCE MEN COME BEFORE WOMEN, so that she will be blessed from him.

495. Come and see: Women are blessed only through men, who are blessed first, and by their blessings they are blessed, AND NEED NO SPECIAL BLESSING FOR THEMSELVES. HE ASKS: How can we account for the words: "He will bless the house of Yisrael," SEEING THAT WOMEN NEED NO SPECIAL BLESSING FOR THEMSELVES? HE ANSWERS: The Holy One, blessed be He, gives an additional blessing to a married man, so that his wife may be blessed from him. So always, the Holy One, blessed be He, gives an extra blessing to a married man, and gives him two portions, the one for him and another for his wife. And he receives everything, his own, and his wife's portion. HENCE THERE IS A SPECIAL BLESSING FOR THE WOMEN "HE WILL BLESS THE HOUSE OF YISRAEL?," SINCE IT IS THEIR OWN PORTION. THOUGH MEN RECEIVE THEIR PORTION TOO, THEY LATER GIVE IT TO THEM, AS EXPLAINED.

496. "And he blessed them that day" is joined by the word 'lemor' (saying), with Vav. Here is an allusion to a firstborn son, SINCE VAV ALLUDES TO BIRTHRIGHT, as it is written: "Yisrael is my son, my firstborn" (Shemot 4:22) and "Efraim is my firstborn" (Yirmeyah 31:8). For this, there is an additional Vav, FOR EFRAIM WHO WAS INCLUDED WITHIN THAT BLESSING.

49. "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh"

Rabbi Chizkiyah discourses on the title verse, revealing that before descending to earth, all souls stand before God in the same shape and form that they will possess in this world. The title verse alludes to this fact, since God sees all before they are seen in the world.

The Relevance of this Passage

Before a soul descends into the physical dimension, it stands before The Creator and promises to complete its correction process, seeking redemption for past life iniquities by way of spiritual transformation. The negative angel Satan and the trappings of our seductive material world cause forgetfulness. We succumb to temptations that glorify our own ego and thus, break our commitment to The Creator. Here we can awaken remembrance of our divine promise and receive inspiration and passion to pursue the path of spiritual transformation.

497. Rabbi Chizkiyah opened the discussion saying: "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh; for in Your book all things are written" (Tehilim 139:16). This verse has been expounded in several places. Yet come and see: All the souls which have existed since the Creation of the world, all stand before the Holy One, blessed be He, before descending into the world, assuming the very shape in which they are seen in the world. In that same appearance of the person's body that stands in this world, so does it stand above.

498. When the soul is ready to descend into the world with the very shape it is about to have in this world, it stands before the Holy One, blessed be He, who adjures it to observe the precepts of the Torah and never transgress them.

499. Whence do we know that THE SOULS stand before Him? From the verse: "As Hashem, the Elohim of Yisrael lives, before whom I stood" (I Melachim 17:1), stood assuredly BEFORE BEING CREATED, as has been explained. Therefore, "Your eyes did see my unshaped flesh" before it was seen in the world; "for in Your book all things are written" as all the souls in their very shapes are recorded in a book. "The days also in which they are to be fashioned" (Tehilim 139:16), indeed they are fashioned, as explained, TO WIT, THEY ARE MADE A GARMENT TO WEAR; "and there is one not one among them" (Ibid.), AS NOT ONE DAY in this world could stand properly before its Master.

50. "The measure of my days, what it is?"

The discussion opens to reveal that the days of the righteous who gain merit through good deeds are blessed from Binah. We're also told that the phrase "my end" indirectly alludes to David. Rabbi Yehuda then states that the title verse relates to the seventy years that were taken from Adam and apportioned to David. We learn that David corresponds to Malchut, upon whom the seven Sfirot shine. David wished to know why the rest of the supernal lights had light of their own while he did not--he was, however, denied permission.

The Relevance of this Passage

The quality and length of one's days is directly affected by the deeds and degree of spiritual change a person seeks and attains in his lifetime. Upon the merit of the righteous, we draw blessings of long life from above [Binah] and shower them upon the entire world [David, the embodiment of Malchut]. We are inspired to use this Light and increased longevity to accomplish our spiritual purpose and correction.

500. Come and see that when a man has merit in this world through good deeds, his days are blessed above from the place called "the measure of days" (Tehilim 39:5), WHICH IS BINAH. He opened the discussion saying: "Hashem, make me to know my end, and the measure of my days, what it is" (Ibid.). This verse has already been explained, yet "my end" is the end of the right, which is connected to David. "The measure of my days" is in charge of his days, WHICH IS BINAH.

501. Rabbi Yehuda said: I have heard from Rabbi Shimon that this verse talks about the days that were portioned from Adam, seventy years. For we have learned that David had no life whatsoever, but the seventy years given him by Adam.

502. It is a mystery THAT THE FIRMAMENT IS a curtain WHICH CORRESPONDS TO MALCHUT, which serves no purpose, since the moon, MALCHUT, has no light of her own. THE SECRET IS THAT DAVID, WHO CORRESPONDS TO MALCHUT, HAS NO LIFE. Seventy years shine upon her, UPON MALCHUT, on all her sides, BEING THE SECRET OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT OF ZEIR ANPIN, EACH INCLUDES OF TEN, WHICH ALTOGETHER AMOUNT TO SEVENTY. This is the life of David. He therefore desired to learn from the Holy One, blessed be He, this secret of why the moon has no life of her own, and wanted to know of her root.

503. "And the measure of my days, what it is": This is a supernal, undisclosed grade, BINAH, CALLED THE MEASURE OF MY DAY, since it is situated over all the days which form the life OF MALCHUT, AS CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT ARE DRAWN FROM BINAH, a place which shines upon everything. "I will know how frail I am" (Tehilim 39:5). David said: Let me know wherefore I have not MY OWN light, and cannot be like the rest of the supernal lights, which have THEIR OWN lives. Why MY LIGHT IS frail, and wherefore it is withheld from me. This is what David desired to know, but was not given permission to know.

51. All blessings were given to this grade

Malchut is called "a cup of blessing," because although she has no light of her own, all the blessings, joy, and goodness are in it and issue from her. All the Sfirot are included in Malchut, and she possesses all the supernal blessings. We therefore recite the Hallel prayer to praise Malchut. The three grades of the Hallel are the pious, the righteous, and the Congregation of Yisrael, corresponding to the right, left, and central Columns.

The Relevance of this Passage

The supernal blessings embedded into the world of Malchut are unleashed in all their splendor. The balance and harmony of the Three Column System, and the energy aroused through the prayer, connection known as Hallel, are instilled within us as our eyes make contact with the mystical verses composing this passage.

504. Come and see: All the supernal blessings were given to this grade, MALCHUT, so it would bless everything. And though it has not its own light, yet all the blessings, joy and goodness are in it, and issue from it. It is therefore called "a cup of blessing," an actual blessing, as it says, "The blessing of Hashem, it makes rich" (Mishlei 10:22), AS THE BLESSING OF HASHEM IS MALCHUT. It is therefore written: "And full with the blessing of Hashem: possess you the west and the south" (Devarim 33:23).

505. Hence MALCHUT has a residue of all THE SFIROT, SINCE THEY ARE ALL INCLUDED WITHIN HER, and she is filled by them all and has something from them all. She is blessed from supernal blessings, which were handed to her to confer. HE ASKS: Whence do we know that? HE REPLIES: Rabbi Yitzchak said: Ya'akov blessed Yosef's sons from this place, which was given all the blessings to confer, as it says, "And you shall be a blessing" (Beresheet 12:2), WHICH MEANS HE WILL MERIT MALCHUT, THE SECRET OF BLESSING, AND THEN from now on the blessings were delivered to you, SINCE ALL BLESSINGS ARE IN THE HANDS OF MALCHUT.

506. Come and behold: in the same manner SHE IS ESTABLISHED BY THE SEVEN SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN, we bless and praise this name, MALCHUT, and hence the Hallel (lit. 'praise') prayer we recite during certain days. Rabbi Chiya said: We need three grades to the Hallel: the pious, the righteous and Yisrael. The pious are on the right, the righteous on the left and Yisrael on all sides, since the children of Yisrael comprise all, BEING THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH INCLUDES THE TWO COLUMNS RIGHT AND LEFT. THEY CORRESPOND TO THE THREE COLUMNS, WHICH MALCHUT RECEIVES FROM ZEIR ANPIN, THOUGH SHE HAS NOTHING OF HER OWN. Therefore the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He, MALCHUT, was raised above THE SFIROT. Also, wherever the children of Yisrael praise the Holy One, blessed be He, from below, THAT IS, RAISE MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS), His glory is elevated throughout THE SFIROT.

52. The sound of a wheel rolling

The powers appointed over punishment and reward turn the wheel continually. The sound of the chirping of the two birds, Chochmah and Binah, joins with the sound of the wheel, illuminating the lights described in the poem for Shabbat day. Blessings are drawn by a whisper from the Right Column to the Central Column through the sound of the Shofar or ram's horn. When the turning wheel, the Central Column, is filled with Chesed, Chochmah is clothed with Chassadim and ceases to whisper, shining fully. When someone has merit, the wheel brings the illuminations of the three columns under the power of the right, and that person enjoys the illumination of supernal blessings. However, the wheel draws judgment upon he whom does not deserve supernal blessings.

The Relevance of this Passage

Conversing in the lyrical language of metaphor, the Zohar describes the intimate connection between human behavior, the cosmos, the concepts of punishment and reward, and the spiritual tools of the Torah that can help one draw blessing into their life and remove judgments. By virtue of this discourse, the energy of blessing and the cleansing power of the Light fill our lives so that judgement and mercy shine upon us in perfect measure.

Tosefta (addendum)

507. The sound of a wheel rolling from below upward, closed Chariots roll about, a pleasant voice rises and falls, roams about the world. The sound of a Shofar is heard through the depth of the grades and the wheel turns round.

508. Two shovels are placed, THE POWERS APPOINTED OVER PUNISHMENT AND REWARD, DRAWN to the right and left, included within each other by two colors, the one white, and the other red. Both turn the wheel up. When it turns to the right, the white ascends and when it turns to the left, the red descends. The wheel keeps turning and never rests.

509. Two birds, CHOCHMAH AND BINAH OF THE NUKVA, go up and chirp, the one, CHOCHMAH, to the south and the other, BINAH, to the north, and soar in the air. TO WIT, THEY SHINE ONLY UPON THE SIX EXTREMITIES OF CHOCHMAH AND BINAH CALLED AIR. The chirping OF THE BIRDS, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and the pleasant sound of the wheel, THE SECRET OF ZEIR ANPIN, join together and then: "A Psalm, a poem for the Shabbat day" (Tehilim 92:1). TO WIT, WHEN THEY JOIN THE LIGHTS ILLUMINATE WHICH ARE DESCRIBED IN THE POEM FOR THE SHABBAT DAY. All the blessings, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, are drawn by a whisper, clothed by the pleasantness OF THE WHEEL, WHICH IS THE RIGHT COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS CHASSADIM through the love of the sound of the Shofar, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN OF ZEIR ANPIN.

510. In order to receive the blessings, SO THAT CHOCHMAH WILL BE CLOTHED BY CHASSADIM, the blessings go down from above, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF CHOCHMAH, to be treasured deep inside the well, THE NUKVA; TO WIT, IT CANNOT SHINE WITHOUT CHASSADIM. The spring from the well does not cease to whisper, WHICH MEANS IT DOES NOT ILLUMINATE, until the turning wheel is filled, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL COLUMN, THE PRINCIPAL THAT TURNS THE WHEELS.

511. Of the two turning shovels, the one to the right, WHICH ROLLS THE THREE COLUMNS UNDER THE POWER OF THE RIGHT, cries loudly, saying, the illumination of the lights which ascend and descend, SINCE BEING RIGHT, ITS ILLUMINATION GOES FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD, the two thousand worlds, CHOCHMAH AND BINAH CALLED THOUSANDS AND DRAWN FROM THE TWO COLUMNS RIGHT AND LEFT, shine! The middle world inside them, DA'AT, DRAWN FROM THE CENTRAL COLUMN, shine by the light of your Master! All those have eyes; TO WIT, THOSE WORTHY OF ATTAINING CHOCHMAH CALLED EYES, look and open your eyes, to attain this light, this delight. These are the blessings which are drawn from above. When someone has merit, the wheel goes up and turns to the right. TO WIT, IT BRINGS THE ILLUMINATIONS OF THE THREE COLUMNS UNDER THE POWER OF THE RIGHT, and brings and draws them upon he who achieved it, and he takes pleasure in the supernal luminous blessings. Happy are those who attained them.

512. For he who does not achieve it, the wheel turns and the shovel on the left side turns it. TO WIT, IT BRINGS ABOUT THE ILLUMINATION OF THE COLUMNS UNDER THE POWER OF

THE LEFT, and brings LIGHT down BY DRAWING THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD, thus drawing Judgment upon he who did not attain it. A voice resounds, saying: Woe to the wicked who have no merit. From the LEFT side, a flame comes out to burn and abides on the head of the wicked. Happy are those who walk the true path in this world and attain the supernal light, the blessings of brightness, as it says, "And satisfy your soul in drought (also: 'brightness')" (Yeshayah 58:11).

(end of Tosefta).

53. "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you"

Rabbi Aba first discourses on the verse, "He turned to the prayer of the lonely" He explains that God accepts all public prayers, whether they are from righteous or sinful people. However, when a solitary man offers a prayer to God, he becomes subject to scrutiny. God examines that man's sins and virtues. Therefore, we're told, a man should say his prayers in public. Another explanation for this verse interprets it as a reference to Ya'akov, who is included within the many. Therefore, his prayer is like a public prayer.

The discourse then reveals the meaning and significance of the word "called" (Heb. vayikra) in a number of contexts. We learn that when Ya'akov called for his sons, they appeared, accompanied by the spirit of the Shechinah. The title verse, we're further told, indicates that Ya'akov commanded his sons to bond themselves to their supernal roots in Malchut, so that he could draw the secret of wisdom upon them. Ya'akov then quoted the title verse and told them of the exile that would occur when the Yisrael entered the Holy Land.

The Relevance of this Passage

The power of unity and harmony between people underscores this passage of Zohar. When people congregate in love and unity to make connections with the Light of The Creator, the most sinful soul among the group will see his prayer ascend to the same lofty heights as the most righteous soul among the group, such is the power of unity. By connecting us to Ya'akov, who embodies the collective souls of humankind, this passage ensures that all our prayers will be considered to have been made in public and thus, will reach the same majestic heights as the prayers of Ya'akov.

513. "And Ya'akov called to his sons, and said: 'Gather yourselves together...'" (Beresheet 49:1). Rabbi Aba opened the discussion saying: "He turned to the prayer of the lonely and did not despise their prayer" (Tehilim 102:18). This verse has already been explained, yet the friends found it difficult as to why it says "turned" when it should have been 'listened' or 'hearkened.'

514. HE ANSWERS: All the prayers in the world, THAT IS, THE PUBLIC PRAYERS, are considered prayers, but the prayer of a solitary man does not enter before the holy King, save through great effort. For before the prayer enters to be adorned in its place, the Holy One, blessed be He, examines it and searches that man's sins and virtues. He does not do this to the prayers of the many, and though some of the prayers come not of the righteous, yet they all come before the Holy One, blessed be He, and He does not regard their sins.

515. Therefore, "He turned to the prayer of the lonely." It means that He turned the prayer and examined every side to find out with what mind it was offered, who is the man who prayed and what his deeds were like. A man therefore should say his prayers in public. Why? Since He "did not despise their prayer," though not all are offered with devotion and a willing heart.

516. Another explanation for: "He turned to the prayer of the lonely": IT SIMPLY MEANS THAT HE ACCEPTS HIS PRAYER, ONLY THAT this is the individual who becomes part of the many, AND THEREFORE HIS PRAYER IS AS A PUBLIC PRAYER. Who is the individual, who is included within the many? He is said to be Ya'akov, who is included within the two sides, RIGHT AND LEFT, AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK. He called to his sons and prayed for them. What is the prayer which is wholly accepted above? That Yisrael shall not perish in exile.

517. When Ya'akov sent for them, the Shechinah departed from him, as was already explained. Come and see: When Ya'akov called for his sons, Avraham and Yitzchak appeared

there with the Shechinah upon them. The Shechinah rejoiced in Ya'akov, that he would be united with the fathers, to become a Chariot together with their souls.

518. When Ya'akov opened the discussion saying: "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the latter end of days," the latter end being the Shechinah, THE LAST OF THE SFIROT, BY MENTIONING "THAT WHICH SHALL BEFALL YOU IN THE LATTER END OF DAYS," HE MENTIONED THE EXILE. The Shechinah was saddened and departed. Later, his sons brought her back by the unison created by the words they uttered, "Hear, O Yisrael..." (Devarim 6:4). Then Ya'akov stayed her and said: 'Blessed be the name of the glory of His sovereignty for evermore.' The Shechinah then settled in her place.

519. "And Ya'akov called": HE ASKS: What call is this? HE REPLIES: This call establishes their place, MALCHUT CALLED PLACE, FOR WHEN HE CALLED THEM HE CONNECTED THEM TO THEIR ROOT; to establish them above IN THEIR ROOT, and below IN THIS WORLD. Come and see, wherever "calling" is mentioned, it is always in the same way, as it is written: "And Moshe called Hoshea son of Nun, Yehoshua" (Bemidbar 13:6), IN ORDER to secure his place, WHICH IS MALCHUT, where it should be and connect him to it. It also says, "And he called his name Ya'akov" (Beresheet 25:26), and "and called it El, the Elohim of Yisrael" (Beresheet 33:20), thus establishing this place through the name he gave it, as naming brings securing AND STRENGTHENING.

520. You may ask about the verse: "And called mightily to Elohim" (Yonah 3:7), and "I called from my sorrow unto Hashem" (Yonah 2:3), WHAT ESTABLISHING IS HERE? HE ANSWERS: Assuredly THE CALLING HERE connects and establishes it above. How so? The arranging of the praises of his Master and all the words of prayer give strength and might to his Master, thus showing that all depends upon Him and not on any other place. Hence, THE CALLING HERE brings endurance. In the same manner "Ya'akov called to his sons," thus wholly establishing them, and also "Hashem called (Heb. vayikra) to Moshe" (Vayikra 1:1), THUS establishing him in his place.

521. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Why is the Aleph in the word 'vayikra' small, IF IT IS SUPPOSED TO INDICATE EXISTENCE AND STRENGTH? He said to him: Moshe was established in wholeness THROUGH THE CALLING, but not completely, since he abstained BECAUSE OF THIS from his wife. THEREFORE THE ALEPH IS SMALL. In ancient books, it is said that THE SEPARATION FROM HIS WIFE is a praise to him AND DOES NOT DIMINISH HIM. But we have learned that he separated FROM HIS WIFE AND CLOVE above, when he had to connect both above and below, TO WIT, TO HIS WIFE TOO. Then would he be perfect. THE SEPARATION FROM HIS WIFE IS THEN CONSIDERED AS DIMINISHING, TO WHICH THE SMALL ALEPH ALLUDES. Also, the small Aleph indicates the small place it came from; TO WIT, THE CALLING IS FROM THE SMALL PLACE, MALCHUT, which is great when united above WITH ZEIR ANPIN, THE SECRET OF MOSHE. THEREFORE "HASHEM CALLED TO MOSHE" TO MAKE IT GREAT.

522. "And said": HE ASKS: THE WORDS "AND SAID: GATHER YOURSELVES" MEAN THAT THEY WERE NOT WITH HIM THEN. What means "and said"? TO WHOM DID HE THEN ADDRESS THE WORDS? HE ANSWERS: as in the verse "If you shall say in your heart" (Devarim 7:17), he whispered them; TO WIT, HE ADDRESSED UPWARDS THE WORDS "GATHER YOURSELVES," AND NOT TO HIS SONS. "GATHER YOURSELVES": HE ASKS: IF HE TOLD THE MESSENGERS TO GATHER HIS SONS, he should have said 'Gather' instead of "Gather yourselves," as in "Gather my pious ones together" (Tehilim 50:5). HE ANSWERS: It is clear to us that "Gather" is from a high place; TO WIT, HE TOLD THEM TO GATHER THEMSELVES TO THEIR SUPERNAL ROOTS WITHIN MALCHUT, SO THAT THEY WOULD BE GATHERED into a complete bond, and union. "That I may tell you": HE ASKS: What does it mean? HE REPLIES: It is the secret of Wisdom; TO WIT, "I MAY TELL YOU" MEANS THAT HE WILL DRAW UPON THEM THE SECRET OF WISDOM.

523. Rabbi Yosi asked Rabbi Shimon, "I may tell you," "he may tell" or "they may tell" are all DERIVED FROM "TELL" (HEB. HAGADAH), which we learned to be of the secret of Wisdom. Why does this word contain the secret of Wisdom? He said to him: It is because the word is spelled with Gimel and Dalet without division between them, WHICH HINTS AT THE WHOLE UNISON, FOR GIMEL IS THE SECRET OF YESOD AND DALET THE SECRET OF MALCHUT. It is the secret of wisdom that a word is perfected by the secret of the letters GIMEL AND DALET, because they are in THE SECRET OF Wisdom. But Dalet without Gimel brings no perfection, and also Gimel without Dalet, since they are connected to each other with nothing dividing

them, and whoever separates them, brings death unto himself. This is the secret of Adam's sin, THE DRAWING OF LIGHT OF MALCHUT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD AND SEPARATING HER FROM YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, AND DALET FROM GIMEL.

524. Therefore, hagadah (telling) is a word which pertains to the secret of Wisdom, and though there may be Yud between Gimel and Dalet, LIKE IN "VE'AGIDAH (THAT I MAY TELL)," there is no separation and all is connected into one knot, SINCE YUD ALSO ALLUDES TO YESOD. Therefore, this is surely the meaning of this word. HERE TOO: "That I may tell you" is the secret of Wisdom. He wished to reveal the outcome of Yisrael's deeds, NAMELY THE SECRET OF THE END.

525. You may say that he did not reveal what he wanted to reveal. Why then are the words of perfect Ya'akov written in the Torah, SEEING THAT they were belied later and were not perfected? Assuredly they were perfected, he revealed whatever was needful for him to reveal, and he concealed, revealing outwardly and withholding internally. A word of the Torah can never be defective.

526. Everything in the Torah is undisclosed, since the Torah is the perfection of all, perfection above and below, not a word or a letter in the Torah is defective. Ya'akov said whatever he had to say, but he revealed and concealed. From what he wanted to reveal, he did not render defective not one letter.

527. Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yosi sat one day at the gate of Lod. Rabbi Yosi said to Rabbi Yehuda, We know that Ya'akov blessed his sons from the verse: "And blessed them" (Beresheet 49:28), but what are their blessings? He said to him: these are the blessings he blessed them, such as "Yehuda you are he whom your brethren shall praise," "Dan shall judge his people" and "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat" (Beresheet 49).

528. But he did not reveal that which he wanted to reveal, for he wanted to reveal the end to them. It has been explained that there is an end of the right and an end of the left. He wanted to tell them of the end OF THE RIGHT, so that they will be kept and be purified from the foreskin OF THE END OF THE LEFT. What he revealed to them pertained to when they came to the Holy Land. But he did not disclose other things openly; they are hidden within the Torah in this portion of Ya'akov and in these blessings.

54. "Reuven, you are my firstborn"

The discussion first reveals that the title verse indicates that Ya'akov placed Reuven's blessings in the hands of God to hold until Reuven was worthy of them.

Rabbi Elazar then comments on the verse, "Prophecy to the wind," revealing that it alludes to the lower and upper awakening of wisdom.

Rabbi Shimon then explains why God brings souls into the world knowing that they will one day die. We also learn that when the soul ascends to be attached to Malchut, it becomes perfected and Malchut and Zeir Anpin are united.

Finally, we are told that when Ya'akov departed from the world, the Shechinah was in front of his bed. Seeing this, he gathered his sons around her and he blessed his sons.

The Relevance of this Passage

Sometimes a person performs a positive action, but their previous sins create a black hole of negativity that consumes their rewards. However, the Light that we arouse in life can be entrusted into the hands of The Creator until such time that we cleanse ourselves of our negativity. Then we can receive our recompense. It's interesting to note that the Hebrew word for sin also means "to give over." This passage ensures that our Light is given over to The Creator for safekeeping, as opposed to the dark forces that seek to nourish from it. The power of Ya'akov's blessings, plus the energy of the Shechinah and the uniting of our Lower World with the Upper, takes place when our eyes allow the Light of these mystical verses to shine upon our souls. Other benefits associated with this Light include protection and the removal of darkness from the world and our personal lives.

529. He opened the discussion saying: "Reuven, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength." HE ASKS: Why did Ya'akov begin by blessing Reuven. Why not start with Yehuda, who, WHEN THE STANDARDS TRAVEL, is a king and is the first to journey among the camps, AS IT SAYS, "THESE SHALL FIRST SET FORTH" (BEMIDBAR 2:9). Moreover, we saw that he did not bless REUVEN and the blessings were removed from him until Moshe prayed for him, as it says, "Let Reuven live, and not die" (Devarim 33:6). ACCORDING TO THIS, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO BEGIN WITH YEHUDA AND START WITH A BLESSING.

530. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly he blessed REUVEN, and the blessing arose to its place. This is like the story of a man who had a son. When the time came for him to pass away from the world, the king came to him. He said: Let all my money be in the hands of the king, who will keep it for my son. When the king sees that my son is worthy of it, he will give it to him. Ya'akov also said: "Reuven, you are my firstborn," you are beloved of my heart and bowels, yet your blessings shall be in the hands of the holy King until He shall see you ARE WORTHY OF THEM. THIS IS BECAUSE you followed your anger LIKE WATER, according to the Aramaic translation TO "UNSTABLE AS WATER."

531. "Reuven, you are my firstborn": Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion saying: "Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to the wind (also: 'breath')...'" (Yechezkel 37:9). How obtuse are people, who neither know nor care for the glory of the King. Though the Torah announces it to them daily, no one lends an ear. This verse is difficult to understand. After saying "Prophesy to the wind," why add: "Prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind."

532. From this, we learned the secret of Wisdom. There are two commands here, the first is to arouse from below upward, for if they are not wakened FIRST from below, there is no awakening above. Through the lower awakening, there is an upper awakening. THE SECOND COMMAND IS TO AROUSE FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD. "Prophesy to the wind" is from below upward, and "prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind" is from above downward.

533. For even above, when there is stirring below, the supernal receives from that which is even superior to it, like it is said in the next words, "Come from the four winds, O wind" (Yechezkel 37:9). The four winds are south, east, north, west-CHESED, TIFERET, GVURAH, AND MALCHUT. The wind coming from the west, MALCHUT, joins the others, SOUTH, NORTH, EAST, WHICH ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, as it says "that the nobles of the people delved" (Bemidbar 21:18).

534. Spirits and souls issue forth from MALCHUT to receive the impression from the inhabitants of the world; NAMELY TO RECEIVE THEIR SHAPES, THE SHAPE OF THE FIRST THREE SFIROT. "And breathe UPON THESE SLAIN" as in the verse: "And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Beresheet 2:7). Come and see: MALCHUT receives on one side and gives on another. This is the reason why "all the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full" (Kohelet 1:7). It is not full since it receives and gives, takes in and out.

535. Rabbi Elazar asked Rabbi Shimon a question. He said: Since it is known to the Holy One, blessed be He, that people die, why then did he bring souls down into the world? What purpose do they serve? He said to him: Many sages were asked this question by their students. They explained it THOUGH IT IS DIFFICULT. The Holy One, blessed be He, sends souls into the world to declare His glory. Yet He takes them away. Wherefore did they descend?

536. HE ANSWERS: The explanation is as follows: He opened the discussion saying: "Drink waters out of your own cistern, and flowing streams out of your own well" (Mishlei 5:15). We have explained that a cistern is a place out of which no water flows, WHILE A WELL FLOWS BY ITSELF. When does water flow BY ITSELF? When the soul is perfected in this world, and ascends to where it is attached, MALCHUT. Then it is completed on all sides, above and below.

537. When the soul ascends, the desire of the female is stirred toward the male, and then the water flows IN MALCHUT from below upward, AND THAT WHICH WAS a cistern becomes a well of flowing water. Then there is a joining in union and desire, for that place, MALCHUT, is perfected by the souls of the righteous, friendship and goodwill are aroused above, AND ZEIR ANPIN AND MALCHUT are joined as one.

538. "Reuven, you are my firstborn." Assuredly so, for he was of the first seed of Ya'akov, WHO HAD NO POLLUTION IN HIS DAYS, whose thoughts were directed to another place, NAMELY RACHEL as we learned. Come and see Reuven and all the twelve tribes were joined with the Shechinah. When Ya'akov saw the Shechinah upon him, he called his sons to be united with her.

539. Come and see: There was never a more complete bed since the universe was created. At the time when Ya'akov wanted to depart from the world, Avraham was on his right, Yitzchak on his left and Ya'akov was lying between them with the Shechinah in front of him. When Ya'akov saw this, he called his sons and placed them around the Shechinah with perfect order.

540. Whence do we know that he arranged them around the Shechinah? From the words "Gather yourselves," THAT IS, GATHER ABOVE AROUND THE SHECHINAH. Then was everything brought to perfection with several supernal Chariots around them. They opened the discussion saying: "Yours, O Hashem, is the greatness, and the power..." (I Divrei Hayamim 29:11). Then the sun, NAMELY YA'AKOV WHO IS ZEIR ANPIN, was gathered to the moon, THE NUKVA, and east, ZEIR ANPIN, drew near to the west, THE NUKVA. This is what is meant by the verse: "He gathered up his feet into the bed" (Beresheet 49:33), WHICH IS AN INDICATION OF MATING, and the moon shone by him and attained perfection. We therefore learned that surely Ya'akov did not die, BUT MATED WITH THE SHECHINAH. When Ya'akov saw the perfect order, which had never been vouchsafed to any man, he rejoiced and praised the Holy One, blessed be He, and started blessing each of his sons according to what he deserved.

55. "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat"

Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Yisa go to visit Rabbi Shimon to discover the meaning of the title verse. We learn that Asher is one of the pillars that support the world. It is the supernal gate of the righteous that, when blessed, gives blessings to the world. The meaning of the title verse, we're told, is that when the two Columns are joined, the bread of poverty is rectified by Asher.

The Relevance of this Passage

The Light that shines from the supernal gate of the righteous radiates into our lives, helping to remove poverty from the landscape of human civilization, while bringing readers of this passage the blessing of sustenance.

541. Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Yisa were walking along the road. Rabbi Yisa said: We have surely learned that all of Ya'akov's sons were put in a perfect order, BY BECOMING A CHARIOT TO THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUPERNAL SFIROT. They were blessed each according to his worth. What then is the meaning of this verse, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat..."? He said to him: I do not know, for I have not learned it from the holy lamp, WHICH IS RABBI SHIMON. Let us go, you and I, to the holy lamp. When they came before him, they spoke and raised that question. He said to them, Surely this is the secret of Wisdom.

542. He opened the discussion saying: "Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode by his bays" (Shoftim 5:17). HE ASKS: Why did he dwell there? HE ANSWERS: For whoever dwells by the sea shore, YESOD OF MALCHUT CALLED SEA, has access to luxuries of the world, NAMELY MOCHIN FROM EDEN. Here, Asher is the supernal gate of the righteous, YESOD, which, when blessed, pours blessings upon the world. This is the gate which sends blessings to the world, and is called Asher. It is one of the pillars upon which the world is supported.

543. The place called bread of poverty, THE NUKVA WHILE RECEIVING FROM THE LEFT COLUMN ALONE, is rectified by the place ASHER, WHICH BECOMES A CURTAIN TO THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH JOINS THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT COLUMNS. The meaning of, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat," is that what was previously bread of poverty became once more, AFTER THE TWO COLUMNS WERE JOINED TOGETHER, millet bread, since he poured and gave it blessings and dainties, as shown by the end of the verse, "and he shall yield royal dainties (lit. 'dainties of the king')." Who is the king? It is the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY MALCHUT, from which THE WORLD is nourished by royal dainties. It is he who gives the king, MALCHUT, all blessings, joy and goodness. He gives MALCHUT, and from

her it pours down upon THE LOWER BEINGS. They said; were we to come into the world only to hear this, it would have sufficed.

56. "Unstable as water, you shall not excel"

Rabbi Chiya interprets the title verse, explaining that it signifies Reuven was blessed. However, the kingship, priesthood, and birthright to which he was entitled were taken from him. This verse also reveals, we learn, that Reuven would dwell outside of the land of Yisrael. We are then told that Reuven is aligned with both Chesed and Gvurah. Rabbi Shimon next tells the rabbis that Reuven's sons are in exile, dispersed among the four corners of the world. One day, we hear, they will wage two wars in the land of Yisrael, and they will try to seize the kingship from the Messiah when he rises up to conquer the nations.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we ignite a particular frequency of spiritual energy that helps to hasten the arrival of the Mashiach in a merciful manner, for us personally, and for our neighbors who inhabit our global village.

544. Reuven was Ya'akov's firstborn. Rabbi Chiya said: He was entitled to everything, KINGSHIP, BIRTHRIGHT AND PRIESTHOOD, but it was all taken from him. Kingship was given to Yehuda, the birthright to Yosef and the priesthood to Levi. This is the meaning of the words: "Unstable as water, you shall not excel (lit. 'leave')"; NAMELY you shall not be left with them. In saying "my might and the beginning of my strength," he blessed him and remembered him to the Holy One, blessed be He.

545. This is like the favorite of the king. One day when his son went in the city, he said to the king, This is my son, beloved of my soul. The king heard and understood that he was asking of him TO FAVOR his son. Ya'akov said: "Reuven, you are my firstborn..." to ask the King TO BE KINDLY TOWARD HIM.

546. "Unstable as water, you shall not excel." Here he stated his fate, that he would not remain in the land of Yisrael but dwell outside it, NAMELY EAST OF THE JORDAN. Correspondingly, the officer in charge, on the side of the tabernacle above, THE NUKVA, in charge under Michael, IS ALSO REJECTED OUTSIDE THE TABERNACLE. Some say THAT THE TRUSTEE THAT WAS REJECTED FROM THE TABERNACLE ABOVE WAS under Gavriel. AND THOUGH REUVEN IS CHESED, Michael is the first OF THE ANGELS on the side of Chesed, and Gavriel is THE FIRST on the left side, Gvurah, REUVEN IS NEVERTHELESS ALSO OF THE SIDE OF GVURAH, WHICH WE LEARN FROM THE VERSE, "But Yehuda still rules (also: 'descends') with El" (Hoshea 12:1), THE DESCENT WHICH INDICATES THAT HE IS OF the side of Gvurah and called court of justice. Reuven's inheritance was adjacent to his. YEHUDA'S PORTION WAS WEST OF THE JORDAN AND REUVEN'S WAS EAST OF THE JORDAN. THIS SHOWS THAT REUVEN, TOO, IS OF THE SIDE OF GVURAH. And though kingship (Malchut), THE SECRET OF LOWER GVURAH, was taken from Reuven and belongs to Yehuda, HE IS NEVERTHELESS NOT WHOLLY CLEANSED OF GVURAH, SINCE THE INHERITANCE OF Reuven is adjacent to his, WHICH IS AN INDICATION OF GVURAH.

547. Rabbi Shimon said: Reuven's sons will in the future wage two wars in the land of Yisrael. Come and behold: it is written "my might," namely, the exile in Egypt; "and the beginning of my strength," NAMELY they were the first among the brothers to fight. "The excellency of dignity" is the exile of Assyria (Ashur), where the sons of Gad and Reuven were the first to go down and suffered much torture, and did not return FROM THERE until now.

548. "And the excellency of power" refers to the time when Mashiach will rise in the world and they will go forth and make war in the world and win, and conquer the nations. The inhabitants of the world will fear them and tremble before them. THE SONS OF REUVEN will plan to seize the kingship yet shall not retain it, hence the words: "Unstable as water, you shall not excel." Why will they not retain mastery even in one place in the world? Because "you went up to your father's bed," for they are going to wage war within the Holy Land. "Your father's bed" is Jerusalem. THEY WILL STRIVE TO TAKE IT FROM MASHIACH.

549. Come and see the sons of Reuven dispersed into exile in the four corners of the world, in correspondence with all of Yisrael, who were exiled four times into the four corners of the world. Hence it says, "My might," which is the first exile; "and the beginning of my strength,"

the second; "the excellency of dignity" the third and "the excellency of power" the fourth. Likewise, they will wage war in the four corners of the world, thus ruling over everything. They will conquer many peoples and rule over them.

550. "Unstable as water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your father's bed." Here is an allusion to the first thought Ya'akov had when issuing the first seed, which was about Rachel. Were the thought combined with the first seed in its place, LEAH, Reuven would retain all, THE KINGSHIP, THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE BIRTHRIGHT, but "unstable as water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your father's bed" namely you came up through other thoughts, and "then you did defile it..."

551. Another explanation for "unstable as water, you shall not excel": When the sons of Reuven will wage war in the world and conquer many nations, they will not remain rulers. HENCE IT IS WRITTEN, "YOU SHALL NOT EXCEL." What is the reason for this? "Because you went up to your father's bed (lit. 'beds')," as they are destined to wage war in the Holy Land, precisely mentioned in the words "your father's bed," which refer to Jerusalem. HE ASKS: WHY DOES SCRIPTURE SAY "beds," instead of 'bed'? HE ANSWERS: "Your father" is Yisrael Saba, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, AND THEREFORE IT SAYS "beds" instead of 'bed', since Jerusalem was twice destroyed, and WILL BE BUILT a third time at the time of Mashiach. Hence the plural. Here, the blessing is revealed IN THE VERSE: "YOU ARE MY FIRSTBORN, MY MIGHT AND THE BEGINNING OF MY STRENGTH." And also what happened at that time THAT THE BIRTHRIGHT, KINGSHIP AND PRIESTHOOD WERE TAKEN FROM HIM, AS SAID "UNSTABLE AS WATER, YOU SHALL NOT EXCEL," that which will be when Yisrael shall come to the land of Yisrael, THAT HE WILL HAVE NO PORTION IN IT BUT ACROSS THE JORDAN. And Reuven's deeds at the time of Mashiach, NAMELY THAT HE WILL WAGE WARS AGAINST MANY PEOPLES AND IN JERUSALEM.

57. "Shimon and Levi are brothers"

Rabbi Yitzchak explains to Rabbi Yosi that Shimon was not worthy of a blessing and that Levi came from the side of strict judgment. After explaining the meaning of the verse, "So is the great and wide sea", Rabbi Yehuda reveals that Shimon and Levi were not blessed by their father, but rather were delivered to Moshe to receive blessings. Rabbi Shimon then explains the reason for this. We learn that Ya'akov wished to bless Shimon and Levi when he was about to depart from the world; however, he did not because of the Shechinah, who stood over him. Knowing that to bless them would render the Shechinah defective, he decided to deliver them to Moshe, the master of the house. Ya'akov knew that he would be able to bless Shimon and Levi without damaging the Shechinah. Rabbi Chiya concludes the passage by explaining that because they were both of strict judgment, Shimon and Levi were divided and dispersed so that all of Yisrael received from their strict judgment.

The Relevance of this Passage

Strict judgement is removed from our midst through the power of Moshe, even though we and the rest of world may not be worthy of such cleansing. In addition, the Light of the Shechinah showers us with protection upon the merit of Moshe.

552. "Shimon and Levi are brothers." Rabbi Yitzchak said: Here he attached them to the left side of the Shechinah, for he saw they have acted with strict judgment, which the world cannot endure. Rabbi Yosi asked, Where is their blessing? Rabbi Yitzchak said: Shimon was not worthy of it, for he saw in him many evil deeds. Levi came from the side of strict judgment, from which blessing does not stem. Even Moshe did not attach his blessing to him, as said: "Bless, Hashem, his substance, and accept the work of his hands" (Devarim 33:11), so that his blessing came from the Holy One, blessed be He.

553. Come and see it is written: "So is the great and wide sea, wherein are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts" (Tehilim 104:25). The great sea is the Shechinah, which stood over Ya'akov when he wished to depart from the world. It is wide, for all the world is filled and made whole, and contracted within THE SHECHINAH, SINCE SHE WAS FILLED AND MADE WHOLE BY THE SOUTH AND CONTRACTED BY THE NORTH. "Wherein are creeping things innumerable," since there are many supernal and holy angels there. The "small and great beasts" are the twelve tribes, Ya'akov's sons, who are found there in wholeness. There is a hind, NAFTALI; a wolf, BINYAMIN; a lion, YEHUDA; and a lamb, YOSEF, AS SAID "THAT LEADS YOSEF LIKE FLOCK" (TEHILIM 80:2). Rabbi Yitzchak said: A

lion and a lamb, a wolf and a kid (Heb. gedi), NAMELY GAD, and so on, there are small beasts with great ones.

554. Rabbi Yehuda said: It was well said about all THE TRIBES, THAT THERE ARE GREAT AND SMALL BEASTS, but Yehuda is a lion and Shimon an ox, AS SHIMON IS OF GVURAH, WHICH IS THE FACE OF AN OX. The friends have explained that they were facing each other, YEHUDA on the right and SHIMON on the left. THIS IS LIKE A MAN WHO HAD a vicious ox. He said: I shall paint the figure of a lion in his stall, and it will see it and fear it. Thus Shimon is an ox and Yehuda a lion, AS SHIMON THE OX, NAMELY GVURAH, IS SUBDUED THROUGH LOOKING AT YEHUDA THE LION, WHICH IS CHESED.

555. Shimon did not receive any blessing FROM YA'AKOV, but Moshe attached him to Yehuda, as it is written: "Hear (Heb. sh'ma), Hashem, the voice of Yehuda" (Devarim 33:7) and elsewhere "because Hashem has heard (Heb. shama) that I was hated" (Beresheet 29:33). THEREFORE, SHE NAMED HIM SHIMON. THERE IS AN ANALOGY BETWEEN THE VERSES. AS THERE IS HEARING IN THE NAME OF SHIMON, SO THE HEARING IN REALATION TO YEHUDA INCLUDES SHIMON. Rabbi Yehuda said: Shimon and Levi WERE NOT BLESSED BY their father SINCE HE brought them to Moshe TO BLESS THEM. Rabbi Yosi said to him: Wherefore DID their father NOT BLESS THEM BUT delivered them to Moshe? Rabbi Yehuda said to him: We too shall bring THE QUESTION before the holy lamp, RABBI SHIMON.

556. They came and asked Rabbi Shimon. He said: How sweet are the words. He clapped his hands and wept. He said: Who will uncover you, holy faithful, NAMELY MOSHE. In your lifetime you were raised above men, and in your death you were elevated and your image covered. The keys of your Master were always delivered to your hands.

557. Come and see: Ya'akov had four wives. He begot children by them all, and was perfected through his wives. When Ya'akov wished to depart FROM THE WORLD, the Shechinah stood over him. He wanted to bless SHIMON AND LEVI but could not, since he feared the Shechinah. He said to himself, How can I do this, seeing that both of them come from the side of strict judgment, AND TO BLESS THEM WILL RENDER THE SHECHINAH DEFECTIVE. I cannot force the Shechinah, since I had four wives WHO WERE DRAWN FROM THE FOUR ASPECTS, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT OF THE SHECHINAH, AND I WAS PERFECTED THROUGH THEM, SINCE THEY BORE ME TWELVE TRIBES, THE SECRET OF ALL PERFECTION. SINCE I RECEIVED MY PERFECTION FROM THE SHECHINAH, HOW CAN I BLESS SHIMON AND LEVI AGAINST HER WISH? I shall deliver them to the landlord of the house, MOSHE, THE HUSBAND OF THE MATRON, who is the owner, and he shall do as he pleases.

558. Ya'akov said: I have received my portion of wives and children in this world FROM THE SHECHINAH, and became perfected. How can I force the Matron, THE SHECHINAH? I shall deliver the matter to the master of the Matron, MOSHE, who will do as he pleases without fear.

559. Come and see it is written, "And this is the blessing, with which Moshe the man of the Elohim blessed" (Devarim 33:1), which means master of the house, master of the Matron, SINCE MAN MEANS MASTER, as it is written: "Her husband (man) may let it stand, or her husband may make it void" (Bemidbar 30:14) and "Moshe had finished (Heb. kalot)," FOR THE SHECHINAH IS CALLED 'MOSHE'S BRIDE (HEB. KALAT)'. Therefore, Moshe may bless whomever he pleases, without fear OF DAMAGING THE SHECHINAH, SINCE HE CAN FIX HER ACCORDING TO HIS WISHES, as has been explained. Therefore Ya'akov said: I see that these sons of mine are from the side of strict judgment, let the master of the house come and bless them.

560. Assuredly Moshe was a man of Elohim, and did as he pleased in his house, as it says, "Her husband may let it stand" BY GIVING HER MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH CALLED RISING UP, in accordance with the verse, "Moshe said: Rise up, Hashem, and let your enemies be scattered" (Bemidbar 10:35). BECAUSE ON THE WAY, THERE IS FOOHOLD TO THE KLIPOT AND THE MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH SCATTER THE KLIPOT. "Or her husband may make it void," which agrees with the words "And when it rested, he said: 'Return, Hashem'" (Ibid. 35), FOR WHEN THE SHECHINAH IS AT REST, THE KLIPOT CANNOT HOLD HER AND THERE IS NO FEAR. THEREFORE, "HER HUSBAND MAY MAKE IT VOID." BY STRENGTH OF THE CENTRAL COLUMN, HE MAKES VOID THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF CHOCHMAH IN ORDER TO CLOTHE HER WITH CHASSADIM, THE SECRET OF THE VERSE "AND WHEN IT RESTED, HE

SAID: 'RETURN, HASHEM.'" Assuredly the master of the house does as he pleases and no one may protest, as a man who has decided for his wife and she does his bidding. Therefore, Ya'akov, though he was attached to The Tree of Life, ZEIR ANPIN, was not the master of the house LIKE MOSHE for he was attached below and Moshe above. Ya'akov therefore delivered them to the landlord TO BE BLESSED BY HIM.

561. "Let my soul not come into their council" (Beresheet 49:6). Rabbi Aba opened the discussion saying: "The counsel of Hashem is for them that fear Him" (Tehilim 25:14). It is the supernal mystery of the Torah that the Holy One, blessed be He, gives only to those who fear sin. Whoever fears sin, the supernal secret of the Torah is revealed to him, the sign of the holy covenant called the secret of Hashem.

562. Shimon and Levi took pains on account of that secret OF THE HOLY COVENANT, that the people of Shchem will circumcise themselves and accept that secret upon them; TO WIT, TO PRESERVE THE SIGN OF THE HOLY COVENANT. But the scripture bears testimony that it was done with guile. Also Zimri, son of Salu, WHO WAS A CHIEF OF A FAMILY OF THE TRIBE OF SHIMON, defiled that secret WITH KOZBI, THE DAUGHTER OF TZUR. IN RELATION TO THIS, Ya'akov said: "Let my soul not come into their council (lit. 'secret')" (Beresheet 49:6). What soul is this? The soul which rises up to be united with the supernal covenant above, NAMELY MALCHUT WHICH IS UNITED WITH THE SUPERNAL COVENANT, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, called the soul of the bundle of life.

563. "To their assembly let my honor not be united." This has been explained to refer to the words, "And Korach gathered all the congregation" (Bemidbar 16:19), FOR YA'AKOV'S NAME IS NOT MENTIONED, ONLY "KORACH, THE SON OF YITZHAR, THE SON OF KEHAT," AND NOT "THE SON OF YA'AKOV." "Let my honor not be united," the honor of Yisrael. Therefore, DUE TO THESE DEEDS, their father did not bless them but delivered them to Moshe. Rabbi Chiya said: From these verses, we understand that they were not joined together, BUT SCATTERED, AS IT SAYS "I WILL DIVIDE THEM IN YA'AKOV, AND SCATTER THEM IN YISRAEL" (BERESHEET 49:7), as should be, FOR THEY NEED SCATTERING DUE TO THEIR BEING OF STRICT JUDGMENT. Therefore there is everything in it, SINCE THEIR STRICT JUDGMENT PERVADES THROUGHOUT YISRAEL, FOR BY SCATTERING THEM IN YISRAEL, YISRAEL RECEIVED FROM THEIR STRICT JUDGMENT. There is no generation in the world, upon which their Judgment has not descended to bring accusation on the world, which causes beggars to multiply. Thus, all OF YISRAEL WERE HURT BY THEIR JUDGMENT.

58. The nations by the sun and Yisrael by the moon

Here we find a discourse on the moon. The Yisraelites use the cycles of the moon to calculate seasons, holidays, and years. In contrast, the nations of the world use the cycles of the sun, which, we're told, comprise an inferior system.

The Relevance of this Passage

Like the moon, mankind has no Light of its own. As the moon derives its light from the sun, mankind and this entire earthly realm draw spiritual Light from the Upper World domain known as Zeir Anpin. This passage helps us rise above any negative celestial influences that appear throughout the lunar/solar calendar year, connecting us only to the positive energy that the moon and sun release into the cosmos.

564. "Yehuda you are he whom your brethren shall praise: your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies" (Beresheet 49:8). Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion saying: "He made the moon for seasons" (Tehilim 104:19). "He made the moon" with which to sanctify the first day of months and new years. The moon never shines but from the sun. When the sun reigns, the moon does not; when the sun is gathered, the moon rules. The moon is of no account, save when the sun is gathered.

565. The Holy One, blessed be He, made both so that they will shine, as it is written in the verse, "And Elohim set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth" (Beresheet 1:17), to "let them be for signs," Shabbat CALLED SIGNS, as in "It is a sign" (Shemot 31:17). "And for seasons," the holidays; "and for days," the days of the beginning of the month; "and years" (Beresheet 1:14), are new year days. The nations in the world reckon by the sun and Yisrael by the moon.

566. This accords with Rabbi Elazar's discourse upon the verse: "You have multiplied the nation, and increased its joy" (Yeshayah 9:2). The "nation" is Yisrael, of whom it says, "For what nation is there so great" (Devarim 4:7) and "a single nation on the earth" (I Divrei Hayamim 17:21). "Its" means 'for it', "increased its joy" of the moon, which light grew for Yisrael's sake. The nations of the world RECKON TIMES BY THE CYCLE OF the sun and Yisrael BY THE CYCLE OF the moon. HE ASKS: Which one is superior, THE RECKONING BY THE SUN OR BY THE MOON? HE REPLIES: Surely the moon is above, and the sun of the peoples of the world is underneath this moon. That sun RECEIVES LIGHT from the moon and illuminates. See the difference between Yisrael and THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD: The children of Yisrael are attached to the moon and linked to the Supernal Sun. They are united with the place which shines by the Supernal Sun and cleave to it, as it is written: "But you that did cleave unto Hashem your Elohim are alive every one of you this day" (Devarim 4:4).

59. "Yehuda you are he whom your brethren shall praise"

Rabbi Shimon explains that the kingship was given to Yehuda, since he is the fourth leg of the supernal Throne and the Chariot to the attribute of Malchut. Rabbi Shimon proceeds by discussing the meaning of the verse, "The King's daughter is all glorious within." This, we learn, signifies that the Female Principle within Atzilut is clothed by and joined with Gvurah. The discourse then turns to address the verse, "So He drove out the man" This refers to Adam, who by his sin, brought death upon himself and the entire world, and drove the Female Principle out of the Garden of Eden. We learn that fiery flames guard the way to the Tree of Life, the Female Principle, which rests on the angels Matatron and Sandalfon. We also learn that after she was driven out, the Female Principle was flawed until she was rectified--first by Noah, and then by Avraham. She stood in wholeness by Avraham and his sons, and Yehuda cleaved to her and became stronger in his kingship because of this. Indeed, the verse, "The sons of your father shall bow down before you," signifies that all the tribes shall bow down to Yehuda. We also learn that Yehuda, referred to as a "lion," escaped the Angel of Death. The mighty Shechinah is also compared to a lion and a lioness because of her strength and because she crouches to await her prey, the idolatrous nations. Finally, we are told that the verse, "The staff shall not depart from Yehuda," indicates that the Shechinah shall rise up in exile.

The Relevance of this Passage

An abundance of Light radiates throughout this complex passage of Zohar. This Light helps correct the original sin of Adam, which in turn, assists in weakening the grip of the Angel of Death over mankind. Our souls are strengthened by the Light of Noah, Avraham, and Yehuda, which helps us correct our own transgressions and cleanse us of negativity, which also helps correct the original sin of Adam.

567. "Yehuda, you are...": Rabbi Shimon said: The kingship was assigned to Yehuda, as we said in relation to the words, "Now will I praise Hashem" (Beresheet 29:35), because he was the fourth. "I will praise Hashem," since he is the fourth leg of the throne. Yud-Hei-Vav, WHICH ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, are the impress of the supernal name ZEIR ANPIN, which is completed by Hei, MALCHUT, the last Hei of the Holy Name, THROUGH WHICH the Holy Name is made whole with its letters. AND IT IS the knot which binds THE LETTERS OF THE HOLY NAME. Therefore "your brethren shall praise" you, for thanks to you the kingship, Malchut, is able to exist, YOU BEING THE CHARIOT TO THE ATTRIBUTE OF MALCHUT. It is written, "Yehuda still rules with El, and is faithful with Holy Ones" (Hoshea 12:1). HE ASKS: Who are these Holy Ones? AND ANSWERS, They are the supernal Holy Ones, THE HOLY SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, who all acknowledged him and made him faithful, TO WIT, BY GIVING HIM ALL THAT IS IN THEM. He is therefore first in everything and king over all.

568. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "The king's daughter is all glorious (Heb. kevudah) within" (Tehilim 45:14). "Kevudah" refers to the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, CALLED 'KEVUDAH', because He, ZEIR ANPIN, IS CALLED 'kavod' (glory); the one upon the other, AS BOTH ARE ONE; the one, ZEIR ANPIN, a male, IS CALLED 'KAVOD,' and the other, MALCHUT, a female, is called 'kevudah,' WITH THE ADDITIONAL HEI OF THE FEMININE. The king's daughter is Bat-Sheva (lit. 'daughter of seven'), WHICH IS THE NUKVA, AND ALSO an echo (lit. 'a voice's daughter'), while he is called a great voice, being the supernal King, ZEIR ANPIN, WHILE THE NUKVA IS CALLED THE DAUGHTER OF A VOICE. It is "within" as there is a king, NAMELY MALCHUT, which is not as far within as him, FOR

SOMETIMES MALCHUT IS CLOTHED IN BRIYAH, while the king's daughter is all glorious within IN ATZILUT.

569. "Her clothing is inwrought with gold," since she is clothed and joined by the supernal Gvurah, NAMELY THE LEFT SIDE OF IMA, WHO IS CALLED GOLD, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "GOLD COMES OUT OF THE NORTH" (IYOV 37:22). IMA is also called a king, and on her account the land endures, WHICH IS MALCHUT. When is MALCHUT established? When coupled with justice, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, as it says, "The king by justice establishes the land" (Mishlei 29:4), WHICH IS MALCHUT. We call it the kingdom of heaven. Yehuda was united with it, and he therefore inherited the kingdom on earth.

570. Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yitzchak were walking along the way. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Let us discourse on the words of the Torah as we go. Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion saying: "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden..." (Beresheet 3:24). This verse has been expounded upon by the friends. Yet "He drove" has the same meaning of a man divorcing his wife, TO WIT, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, DIVORCING THE NUKVA. "The man" is correct, AS THE NUKVA IS CALLED ET (THE).

571. Come and see the secret meaning of this matter. Adam was caught for his sin and brought death upon himself and upon the world, and caused the tree, by which he sinned, NAMELY THE NUKVA, to be driven on his account, and be driven because of his descendants' SINS forever. Hence it says, "So He drove out the man," Et (the) having a precise meaning, such as in, "I saw (et) Hashem" (Yeshayah 6:1), WHICH MEANS THE NUKVA. Here too, "the man" REFERS TO THE NUKVA.

572. "And He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden," This is below ATZILUT. As there are Cherubs above IN ATZILUT, A MALE AND A FEMALE, so there are Cherubs below ATZILUT, THE ANGELS MATATRON AND SANDALFON. The tree, WHICH IS THE NUKVA CALLED THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, rests upon them, and "the bright blade of a revolving sword" is the shapes of fiery flames come out from the brightness of the sword, WHICH GUARD THE WAY TO THE TREE OF LIFE, NOT THE BRIGHT BLADE OF THE SWORD ITSELF. "Revolving" refers to the sword, which sucks from the two sides, RIGHT AND LEFT, and revolves now to this side now to the other. According to another explanation, "revolving" alludes to the shapes of the fiery flames which are revolving, like we said. They revolve and change forms, now to men, now to women. They revolve in their places and change forms, in order to guard the way to The Tree of Life. What is a way? As in "who makes a way in the sea" (Yeshayah 43:16), IT REFERS TO YESOD OF THE NUKVA.

573. Rabbi Yehuda said: Well said, and assuredly correct. Adam caused that tree, in regard to which he sinned, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, to be driven out. So did other men, WHICH CAUSE IT TO BE DRIVEN OUT THROUGH THEIR SINS, as said in the verse, "And for your transgressions was your mother put away" (Yeshayah 50:1). And yet it is true to say that it refers to himself, as it is written, "the man," ET (THE) BEING THE NUKVA, man's perfection. BY DRIVING HER OUT, HE LOST HIS WHOLENESS.

574. From the day SHE WAS DRIVEN OUT, the moon, THE NUKVA, became flawed, until Noah entered the ark. Then came evil men, and she was flawed again, until Avraham came AND RECTIFIED HER. She stood in wholeness by Ya'akov and his sons, and Yehuda came, held on to her and became stronger through the kingship, and inherited it for ever, for him and his sons after him. Hence the verse: "Yehuda you are whom your brethren shall praise." Indeed, when Yisrael stood by the sea AND THE TRIBE OF YEHUDA WERE THE FIRST TO ENTER IT they all praised him and went into the sea after him.

575. "Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies" as it says, "Yehuda shall go up" (Shoftim 1:2) TO WAR. "The sons of your father shall bow down before you" includes all the tribes, and hence the words: "The sons of your father" instead of 'your mother' as the sons of your father are the other tribes. And though the children of Yisrael were divided into two kingdoms, yet when they went up to Jerusalem, they would kneel and bow to the king in Jerusalem, since the kingdom of Jerusalem WHICH DREW from the holy kingdom, THE NUKVA, was from YEHUDA.

576. "Shall bow down before you": It does not say, 'And shall bow', which would include other nations, AND MEAN THAT ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD WILL BOW DOWN TO HIM. It does not say 'And shall bow' save at the time of Mashiach, WHEN it is written:

"Princes also shall prostrate themselves" (Yeshayah 49:7). For now, he ONLY said "shall bow" to show that Yisrael alone shall bow down to the exilarch in Babylon, and no other nation.

577. "Yehuda is a lion's whelp" First he was a whelp and then a lion. HENCE THE REPETITION: A WHELP AND A LION. The secret of the matter is that first, WHEN ZEIR ANPIN IS IN MOCHIN OF SMALLNESS, IT IS CALLED a youth, and later, WHEN IN MOCHIN OF GREATNESS, IT IS CALLED a man, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "Hashem is a man of war" (Shemot 15:3). YEHUDA TOO, WHEN IN MOCHIN OF SMALLNESS, IS CALLED A WHELP, AND WHEN IN MOCHIN OF GREATNESS, HE IS CALLED A LION. "From the prey, my son, you are gone up." HE ASKS: What prey is this? It includes the Angel of Death, who stands by its prey to exterminate the world, and none can save from it, as in "and tears in pieces, and none can deliver" (Michah 5:7). From that prey, the Shechinah was gone up. THE WORDS: "FROM THE PREY, MY SON, YOU ARE GONE UP" MEAN THAT YEHUDA ESCAPED THE ANGEL OF DEATH, WHICH IS THE SATAN, THE EVIL INCLINATION, INSTEAD OF STUMBLING BY IT.

578. "He stooped down" in the exile in Babylon "and he couched" in the exile of Edom "as a lion" which is mighty "and as a lioness" which is mightier than a lion. So are the children of Yisrael mighty, for though the idolatrous people of the world entice and oppress them, they adhere to their laws and customs like a lion and a lioness.

579. The Shechinah also is as strong as a lion and a lioness when she thus falls, though it is written, "The virgin of Yisrael is fallen; she shall no more rise" (Amos 5:2). As a lion and a lioness only crouch to hunt their prey, and when they smell it from afar they fall; TO WIT, THEY CROUCH ON THE GROUND TO PREPARE TO JUMP ON THE PREY and do not rise until they jump upon it and eat it. The Shechinah also does not fall but as a lion and a lioness, in order to revenge the idolatrous nations, leap upon them, as it says "striding in the greatness of his strength" (Yeshayah 63:1).

580. "Who shall rouse him up?" (Beresheet 49:9). He shall not rise to take petty vengeance upon them, but who shall rouse him, 'who' being, as in the verse "who can heal you" (Eichah 2:13). It is the supernal world, NAMELY BINAH CALLED WHO, which has dominion over all. It is written "out of whose womb (Lit. 'the womb of who') came the ice?" (Iyov 38:29), which has been explained THAT THROUGH THE JUDGMENT CALLED ICE, IT SUBDUES ALL THE KLIPOT.

581. "The staff shall not depart from Yehuda" has been explained by the friends, but "until Shilo come" is spelled with Hei, while in other PLACES IT IS SPELLED SHILO with Vav. This is an indication of the secret of the Holy Name Yud-Hei, for in other places it is spelled Shilo without Hei, or without Yud. Here it is spelled Shiloh with both Yud and Hei, which is the secret of the supernal Holy Name, and means that the Shechinah shall rise FROM HER FALL IN THE EXILE through this name of Yud-Hei, which, as we said, is the mystery of 'who', FOR YAH IS THE NAME OF BINAH, ALSO NAMED 'WHO'.

60. "Binding his foal to the vine," part one

Here we learn that God protects and preserves the deserving in this world and in the next. The soul of he who does not have merit, however, will be dragged to Gehenom by legions of demons. This soul is then delivered to the angel Dumah, who takes it to be locked behind the seven gates of fire. Every Shabbat, the souls in Gehenom are allowed to go to the outer gates, where they meet with other souls that convene there but do not enter Gehenom. It is said that the evil are sentenced to the heat of the burning fire and then the intense cold of snow. Though they first feel relief when they enter the snow, they soon moan again, realizing they are still in Gehenom. The rabbis then explain that the title verse signifies the children of Yisrael and the Messiah are destined to conquer the idolatrous nations. The Mashiach is called "poor", we're told, because He is drawn from the moon, Malchut, who has no illumination of her own. Proceeding on from this, the discussion turns to the subject of dreams and prophecy. Dreams are of a much lower grade than prophecy and are accessible to all, even the wicked. We learn that Yosef was able to correctly interpret his dream about the Pharaoh's cup of poison. Indeed, we are told that through the power of the vine, the Female Principle, the heathen nations were subjugated and their force subdued. The discourse then remarks upon the double precepts practiced by the Yisraelites so that they may avoid being sent to Gehenom of snow. Following an explanation of the verse, "She is

not afraid of the snow of her household", the section concludes when the rabbis meet a young boy who travels without his former companion.

The Relevance of this Passage

The cleansing power of this passage purifies our souls, helping us merit a place in the world to come without having to pass through the gates of Gehenom. The arrival of the Messiah is also quickened, and readers who peruse these verses with a pure heart, help to ensure that the appearance of the Mashiach happens in a manner that is merciful for all mankind. In addition, we gain the ability to utilize our sleep and dream states in a fashion that will facilitate our spiritual development.

582. "Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine": Rabbi Chiya opened the discussion saying: "Hashem shall preserve you from all evil: He shall preserve your soul" (Tehilim 121:7). HE ASKS: After saying: "Hashem shall preserve you from all evil," why add "He shall preserve your soul"? HE ANSWERS: "Hashem shall preserve you from all evil" in this world and "shall preserve your soul" in the world of Truth.

583. By the keeping in this world is meant that a man is protected from evil accusing demons, which go in the world to bring charges against people and cling to them. By the keeping in the world of Truth is meant that when a man passes away from this world, if he be meritorious, his soul ascends to be adorned in its place. But if he is not MERITORIOUS, several legions of demons appear before him and drag him into Gehenom, where he is delivered to the hands of Dumah, who hands him to the chief in charge over Gehenom. There are 13,000 chieftains with him, who all await the souls of the wicked.

584. Come and see: There are seven chambers in Gehenom, and seven gates. The soul of the wicked enters THERE. There are several fiends, spirits and gate keepers, and one chief in charge over each gate. The souls of the wicked are delivered to these chiefs by Dumah. Once they are delivered, THEY close the gates of burning fire.

585. There are double gates, which are opened and closed, the outer ones are open and the inner closed. Every Shabbat all of them are open. The wicked go out as far as the outer gates, where they meet other souls, which tarry there, BUT DO NOT ENTER GEHENOM. When Shabbat goes out, the herald comes out to each gate and said "The wicked shall return to Sh'ol" (Tehilim 9:18). Come and behold: the souls of the righteous are protected by the Holy One, blessed be He, from being delivered into the hands of the chieftain Dumah, as it is written: "Hashem shall preserve your going out and your coming in" (Ibid. 121:8) and "He shall preserve your soul."

586. "Binding his foal to the vine": HE ASKS: What is a vine? HE SAYS, It is the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, as it says, "You have brought a vine out of Egypt" (Tehilim 80:9) and "Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine" (Ibid. 128:3). Your wife is as the holy vine, THE SUPERNAL NUKVA. Rabbi Yosi said about the vine over which we say the benediction--'Who created the fruit of the vine (Heb. bore peri hagefen)'--'created' means "a tree yielding fruit" (Bereshheet 1:12). 'The fruit of the vine' is a fruit tree, 'yielding fruit' is the male, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, and the 'fruit tree' is a female, NAMELY THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN. Therefore, "who created the fruit of the vine" includes a male and a female together, ZEIR AND NUKVA.

587. "Binding his foal to the vine": This is King Mashiach, who will rule over the nations' armies, and over the hosts in charge upon the idolatrous nations who derive their strength from them. King Mashiach is destined to overpower them.

588. Because the vine, THE NUKVA, rules over the lower crowns, through which the idolatrous nations reign, and is victorious above. The children of Yisrael, who are called "the choice vine," will conquer and annihilate the other legions below, and King Mashiach will overpower all of them. It is written "poor and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt" (Zecharyah 9:9). The ass and the colt are two crowns, through which the idolatrous nations rule. They are of the left side, the side of profanity. AND KING MASHIACH OVERCOMES THEM.

589. HE ASKS: Why DOES SCRIPTURE SAY ABOUT KING MASHIACH THAT he is poor? Can King Mashiach be called poor? HE ANSWERS: Rabbi Shimon said it is so, because he has

nothing of his own, SINCE IT IS THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN which is called King Mashiach. But it is the holy moon above, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, which has no light of her own, save what she receives from the sun, ZEIR ANPIN. SHE IS THEREFORE CALLED POOR.

590. King Mashiach , THE NUKVA, will have dominion and will be united in his place above. Then "behold, your king comes to you" (Zecharyah 9:9). It does not say what king, SINCE HE INCLUDES THE NUKVA ABOVE AND MASHIACH BELOW. Below he is poor because he is of the aspect of the moon, WHICH IS THE SUPERNAL NUKVA. FOR MASHIACH BELOW IS DRAWN FROM THE NUKVA, AND IS THEREFORE CALLED POOR LIKE HER. Above she is poor, THE NUKVA HERSELF, because she is the mirror which does not shine OF HER OWN, BUT FROM ZEIR ANPIN, AND IS THEREFORE CALLED bread of poverty. With all that, MASHIACH IS "riding upon an ass, and upon a colt," which are the stronghold of the idolatrous nation, to subdue them. The Holy One, blessed be He, THE NUKVA, will be strengthened in His place ABOVE, AS THE VERSE: "BEHOLD, YOUR KING COMES TO YOU" INCLUDES THEM BOTH.

591. "He washes his garments in wine" is like the verses: "Who is this that comes from Edom, with crimsoned garments from Botzra?" (Yeshayah 63:1) and "I have trodden the winepress alone" (Ibid. 3). The wine is the side of Gvurah OF ZEIR ANPIN, of strict Judgment upon the idolatrous nations. "And his clothes in the blood of grapes" refers to the lower tree, THE NUKVA, the court of law called grapes. The wine is mingled with the blood of grapes in order to be clothed by both THE STRICT JUDGMENT OF ZEIR ANPIN AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE NUKVA, to crush beneath it all the other idolatrous nations and the kings of the world.

592. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verses, "Binding his foal to the vine" and "And on the vine were three tendrils: and it was as though it budded, and its blossoms shot forth" (Beresheet 40:10). Come and see how stupid are people who neither know nor care for the glory of their Master, or regard the words of the Torah. They do not know their ways, or what they are caught in, as it is written: "The way of the wicked is like darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Mishlei 4:19).

593. At the earliest time, prophecy rested upon people who would know and look to know the highest glory. When prophecy was stopped from them, they resorted to divine voices. Now both have ceased, and people resort only to dreams.

594. The dream is from the lower grade outside, for we learn that a dream is the sixtieth part of prophecy. Why? Because it comes from the sixth grade below, as was already explained, THAT IT IS FROM HOD OF THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THE SIXTH GRADE FROM NETZACH AND HOD OF ZEIR ANPIN WHERE PROPHECY IS. Come and behold: dream is accessible to all, since it is from the left side, HOD OF THE NUKVA, and descends many grades DOWN TO THE ANGEL GAVRIEL, WHO DELIVERS THE DREAMS. A dream may be seen even by wicked men and even by gentiles.

595. Sometimes evil angels receive and hear the dream, and inform men. Some of them mock at men and tell them false things, and sometimes true things which they heard. Sometimes, they are sent to the evil to tell them lofty matters.

596. It is written of this wicked man that he saw a true dream, as it is written: "And on the vine were three tendrils." What is the vine? It is the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, as it is written: "Look down from heaven, and behold, and be mindful of this vine" (Tehilim 80:15). It says "from heaven" IN "LOOK DOWN FROM HEAVEN," since it has been cast from there, according to the words: "And cast down from heaven to earth" (Eichah 2:1). "And be mindful of this vine," NAMELY the vine which is "this," THE NUKVA CALLED THIS.

597. "Three tendrils" as in the verse: "There were three flocks of sheep lying by it" (Beresheet 29:2), ARE THE SECRET OF THE THREE COLUMNS. "And it was as though it budded," as it is written: "And Solomon's Wisdom excelled" (I Melachim 5:10) means that the moon shone, THE NUKVA CALLED SOLOMON'S WISDOM; "and its blossoms shot forth" refers to the lower Jerusalem, THE NUKVA. Another explanation for, "and its blossoms shot forth": It refers to the grade above THE NUKVA, which suckles her, NAMELY YESOD, as it says, "whose seed is in itself, upon the earth" (Beresheet 1:11), WHICH ALLUDES TO YESOD, THAT POURS UPON THE NUKVA CALLED EARTH. "And its clusters brought forth ripe grapes," in which to keep the preserved wine, SO THAT THE KLIPOT WILL NEVER HAVE A HOLD ON IT.

598. See how much this wicked man saw. It is written: "And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them" (Bereshheet 40:11). He saw here the cup of poison, the sucking of the court of justice, which issues from these grapes. It was given to Pharaoh, who drank it, as it came to pass AT THE TIME OF THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT, on account of Yisrael. When Yosef heard this, he rejoiced and recognized the truth in that dream. Hence, he interpreted his dream for the good, for bringing him good tidings.

599. Come and see: "Binding his foal to the vine" since strong forces of the heathen nations were subjugated underneath this vine, as we said that through the power of the vine, THE NUKVA, their force was bound up and subdued, as has been explained.

600. Rabbi Shimon said: There is a vine and there is a vine. There is a holy supernal vine, THE NUKVA, and there is a vine called "the vine of Sdom" (Devarim 32:32), WHICH IS AN EVIL KLIPAH. There is also "a strange vine" (Yirmeyah 2:21), the daughter of a strange El. Therefore, it is written "this vine," WHICH HINTS THAT SHE IS THE NUKVA CALLED this, the same that is called "an entirely right seed" (Ibid.) "a noble vine," AS IT SAYS, "AND I HAD PLANTED YOU A NOBLE VINE" (IBID.), refers to the children of Yisrael who issued from this vine. When Yisrael sinned and abandoned this vine, it says, "For their vine is of the vine of Sdom" (Devarim 32:32).

601. Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yitzchak were walking along the road. Rabbi Yehuda said to Rabbi Yitzchak, Let us walk through this field, which is more level. While they were walking, Rabbi Yehuda said: It is written, "She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet" (Mishlei 31:21). This verse has been explained by our friend Rabbi Chizkiyah. He said that the evil are sentenced to twelve months in Gehenom, half of them in heat OF BURNING FIRE and half in snow.

602. When they enter the fire, they say, This must be Gehenom. When they go into the snow, they say, This is surely the intense cold of the Holy One's, blessed be He, winter. They start with, 'Hurrah', AND REJOICE FOR COMING OUT OF GEHENOM, but later, WHEN THEY UNDERSTAND IT IS A GEHENOM OF SNOW, they say, 'Woe'. David said: "He brought me up also out of the gruesome pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet..." (Tehilim 40:3); NAMELY from where they first say 'Hurrah' and then 'Woe', AS THE WORD HAYAVEN (MIRE) CONTAINS BOTH VAV-HEI (HURRAH) AND VAV-YUD (WOE).

603. Where are their souls perfected? In A GEHENOM OF snow, as said: "When the Almighty scatters kings in it, snow falls in Tzalmon" (Tehilim 68:15). One might think this also applies to Yisrael, THAT THEY ARE SENTENCED TO SNOW. Of this, the verse says, "She is not afraid of the snow for her household" Why? "For all her household are clothed with scarlet." The word shanim (scarlet) may also be pronounced 'two (Heb. shnayim)'; to wit, the circumcision and uncovering, the Tzitzit (fringes) and the Tefilin, the Mezuzah and the Chanukah candle, and so on. TO WIT, YISRAEL ARE QUICK IN OBSERVING THE PRECEPTS AND HAVE DOUBLE PRECEPTS, FOR IN CIRCUMCISION THERE IS BOTH CIRCUMCISION AND UNCOVERING, IN PRAYER-THE TZITZIT (FRINGES) AND THE TEFILIN, ON THEIR DOORS THEY HAVE THE MEZUZAH AND THE CHANUKAH CANDLE. THEREFORE THEY ARE NOT AFRAID OF THE GEHENOM OF SNOW, WHICH COMES FOR LAZINESS AND SLACKNESS IN OBSERVING THE PRECEPTS.

604. Come and behold: "She is not afraid of the snow for her household." This is the Congregation of Yisrael, whose "household are clothed with scarlet," like we said in relation to the words "crimsoned garments" (Yeshayah 63:1), which is a robe of strict Judgment, in which punishment is exacted from the idolatrous nations. The Holy One, blessed be He, will don a red garment and a red sword and punish the red, ESAV. The garment is red as in "crimsoned garment" and "Why is your apparel red" (Ibid. 2). Of the red sword, we learn from the verse "The sword of Hashem is filled with blood" (Yeshayah 34:6). He will punish the red, as it is written: "For Hashem has a sacrifice in Botzra" (Ibid.). Also "her household are clothed with scarlet," since THE NUKVA comes from strict judgment, AND THEREFORE "SHE IS NOT AFRAID OF THE SNOW."

605. Rabbi Yitzchak said: This is indeed so, but we should explain the words "her household are clothed with scarlet (Heb. shanim)." These are the primordial years (Heb. shanim), THE SECRET OF THE SEVEN SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT, for she is included of them all and sucks from all sides, as it is written: "All the

rivers run into the sea" (Kohelet 1:7). SHE THEREFORE DOES NOT FEAR THE JUDGMENTS, WHICH ARE SNOW.

606. While they were walking, they met a child who was walking to Cappadocia behind a donkey, upon which rode an old man. The man said to the child, My son, read to me a passage of scripture. He said to him: I know not one but many passages, but alight first, or let me ride before you, and I will recite it. THE OLD MAN said to him: I am old and you are a child and I do not want to be put on the same level WITH YOU. THE CHILD said to him: Why then did you ask me to recite verses to you? He said: so that we shall walk together. The child said: may this old man hang himself, who rides and knows nothing but says he does not wish to be on a level with me. He left the old man and walked on the road.

607. When Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yitzchak arrived, the child approached them. They asked him and he told them what happened. Rabbi Yehuda said: You have acted rightly, come with us and let us sit here and hear your words. He said to them, I am weary since I have not eaten today. They took out bread and gave it to him. A miracle happened and they found a streamlet under a tree. He drank of it, and they drank and sat down.

61. "Fret not yourself because of evil doers"

The child whom the rabbis encounter in the previous section opens a discussion about the title verse. We learn that this verse is not a prayer or a song, but rather, it was spoken by the Holy Spirit. The verse warns us not to challenge the wicked, since we do not know about the previous incarnations of our own souls, let alone anyone else's. Furthermore, this verse instructs us that we should not look on the deeds of others for fear of feeling envious. Envy of another, we're told, transgresses three negative precepts commanded by God.

The Relevance of this Passage

Casting a jealous eye towards our friends and foe's possessions and/or positions in life diverts our attention away from our own lot. We fail to appreciate our good fortune. Continued lack of appreciation inevitably leads to the loss of all that we should've held dear to our hearts. The mystical effect of these verses shifts our attention away from others and redirects it towards our own spiritual treasures. Additionally, passing judgement upon others causes us to neglect negative deeds and immoral traits ingrained in our own nature. A spiritual individual realizes that the trials and tribulations that challenge us are a direct result of prior incarnations and they cannot be measured against the deeds and fortunes of others, for all is relative in the overall scheme of spiritual evolution.

608. The child opened the discussion saying: "To David. Fret not yourself because of evil doers, nor be envious against the workers of iniquity" (Tehilim 37:1). HE ASKS: "To David" shows it is not a song, like in "A psalm of David" nor a prayer, AS IN "A PRAYER OF DAVID." HE ANSWERS: Wherever it says just "To David," it was spoken by the Holy Spirit.

609. "Fret not yourself because of evil doers." HE ASKS: What is the meaning thereof? It should have been 'Join not EVIL DOERS.' HE REPLIES: Do not challenge the wicked, for you do not know your origins, TO WIT, THE INCARNATIONS OF YOUR SOUL. IT MIGHT BE that you will not prevail against him, if he is a tree which was never uprooted, A SOUL WHICH WAS NEVER INCARNATED BEFORE, WHICH IS VERY STRONG. Then you will be repulsed by him.

610. "Nor be envious against the workers of iniquity": Do not look at their deeds, for you might be envious against them. For whoever sees their works and is not zealous for the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, transgresses three negative precepts: "You shall have no other Elohim beside me: You shall not make for yourself any carved idol, or any likeness of any thing...you shall not bow down to them, nor serve them: for I Hashem your Elohim am a jealous El" (Shemot 20:5).

62. Small Aleph

Here, the child, whom the rabbis encountered in section 59, first discourses on the verse, "And The Creator called to Moshe." The small Aleph ? in this verse, he explains, refers to Malchut alone. This is also the case in the verse, "and The Creator spoke to him out of the tent of meeting," since these words also came from Malchut alone. The Tent of Meeting is the

Malchut, upon whom the calculation of time, all festivals, and Shabbat depends. The verse indicates that God spoke from above, from Binah. Zeir Anpin receives from Binah and gives to Malchut. In this way, Malchut was given permission from above to reveal supernal knowledge. We then learn about the verse, "And they brought the Tabernacle to Moshe." The reason the Tabernacle was brought to Moshe is that he corresponds to Zeir Anpin. Therefore, Moshe is the master of the house and may do what no other man can. When Moshe is addressed in the verse, "If any man of you bring an offering," it is Binah who is speaking. We are told that "an offering to The Creator" involves bringing the lower to join with that which is above, and "your offering" involves joining the upper with that which is below. All this is alluded to in the opening verses of Vayikra.

The Relevance of this Passage

Light radiates in the lives of all mankind when the realm of Zeir Anpin, the Upper World, enjoins with Malchut, our Lower World. Here, we connect to the Hebrew letter, the small Aleph א, which embodies our physical dimension of time, space, and motion, known as Malchut. The Zohar's reference to the festivals, Shabbat, the Tabernacle, and Moses, is the mechanism by which Malchut [our world] makes contact with Zeir Anpin. Thus, each time our eyes fall upon these words, the two worlds are united and the Light of The Creator sparks our souls.

611. A man should therefore keep away from them, and turn his way from them. I therefore left and turned away from him. Now that I have found you, I shall recite these verses before you. He opened the discussion saying: "And Hashem called (Heb. vayikra) to Moshe" (Vayikra 1:1). Here IN VAYIKRA, the Aleph is small. HE ASKS why? HE ANSWERS: THIS SHOWS US that this calling was not perfect. Why? Because it was only in the tabernacle, WHICH IS TEMPORARY, and in a foreign land. For perfection is to be found only in the land of Yisrael.

612. WE HAVE TO EXPLAIN further ABOUT THE SMALL ALEPH, THAT IT IS SO BECAUSE here, IN THIS CALLING TO MOSHE, is the Shechinah, while there is perfection of a male and a female TOGETHER, AS IT IS WRITTEN "Adam, Shet, Enosh" (I Divrei Hayamim 1:1), 'Adam' IS SPELLED WITH A BIG ALEPH, WHICH ALLUDES TO the perfection of male and female IN UNION. But here THE ALEPH IS SMALL, WHICH ALLUDES TO the Nukva ALONE; NAMELY THE SHECHINAH. ANOTHER EVIDENCE comes from the end of the verse "and Hashem spoke to him out of the Tent of Meeting." THE TENT OF MEETING IS THE NUKVA, HENCE THE WORDS CAME FROM THE NUKVA ALONE. Therefore the Aleph is small, AS SMALL LETTERS ALLUDE TO THE NUKVA, REGULAR ONES TO ZEIR ANPIN AND THE BIG TO IMA, OR TO THE PERFECTION OF MALE AND FEMALE TOGETHER, WHICH COMES THROUGH IMA ALONE.

613. Further explanation CONCERNING the small Aleph: There is a story of a king who sat upon his throne, with a crown on his head. He is then called the supreme king. When he goes down to visit the house of his servant he is called little king. The Holy One, blessed be He, too, as long as He is above all, is called a supreme King. Once He comes to dwell below in the tabernacle, he is still a King, but not supreme as before. Therefore the Aleph is small.

614. "And he called" as we learned MEANS THAT he called and invited him to his palace. "From the Tent of Meeting (Heb. moed)": What is it? It is a tent, upon which depends the reckoning of times (Heb. moed), festivals and Shabbat, as it says, "And let them be for signs, and for seasons" (Beresheet 1:14). In her abides the reckoning. Who is she? The moon, NAMELY THE NUKVA, FROM WHICH COME ALL THE CHANGES FROM WEEK DAYS TO FESTIVALS AND SHABBAT, THROUGH CHANGES IN THE STATURE OF HER MOCHIN, as it says, "A tent that shall not be taken down: its pegs shall not be removed for ever" (Yeshayah 33:20), WHICH ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA CALLED TENT.

615. "Saying": HE ASKS: What does this mean? HE ANSWERS: IT MEANS revealing what is hidden inside. Wherever it says "saying," like in: "And Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying," it means that permission was given to reveal. Yet all is one, and it is well since the revelation was given to the moon, THE NUKVA, from where Moshe stands, ZEIR ANPIN, ACCORDING TO ORDER.

616. "And Hashem spoke," above, BINAH, "to Moshe," who is in the middle, ZEIR ANPIN, AS BINAH GIVES TO ZEIR ANPIN, "saying," which is the last one, THE NUKVA, WHO RECEIVES FROM ZEIR ANPIN. She is the place where permission to reveal is given. "And Hashem called

to Moshe": It is written before, "And they brought the tabernacle to Moshe" (Shemot 39:33). Why bring it to Moshe? They said: "Moshe saw it upon mount Sinai, for the Holy One, blessed be He, showed it to him, as it says "as it was shown you in the mountain" (Shemot 27:8) "according to the pattern which Hashem had shown Moshe" (Bemidbar 8:4) and "And look that you make them after their pattern, which was shown to you in the mountain" (Shemot 25:40). They THEREFORE brought him THE TABERNACLE now, so he will see whether it resembles the tabernacle he has seen.

617. But ACCORDING TO THIS, IT IS YET HARD TO UNDERSTAND why they brought the tabernacle to Moshe, INSTEAD OF MOSHE COMING TO THE TABERNACLE. This is like a king who wanted to build a palace for the Matron. He ordered the craftsmen to build a room in one place, and a room in another place. Here will be the bed and there a place to recline. When the craftsmen finished it, they showed it to the king. So "they brought the tabernacle to Moshe," who is the master of the house and a man of Elohim. MOSHE DID NOT GO TO THE TABERNACLE BUT IT WAS BROUGHT TO HIM. When the palace was built, the Matron invited the king to it, invited her husband THE KING to be with her. Therefore He "called to Moshe," IS SPELLED WITH A SMALL ALEPH. THE SMALL ALEPH, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, CALLED TO MOSHE, ZEIR ANPIN, HER HUSBAND, TO BE WITH HER.

618. And since Moshe is the master of the house, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, THE HUSBAND OF THE MATRON, it says, "And Moshe would take the Tent" --THE NUKVA CALLED TENT--"and pitch it outside the camp" (Shemot 33:6). Moshe, who is the master of the house, may do what no other man may.

619. "And (Hashem) spoke to him." This is a different, supernal grade, BINAH. "AND HE CALLED," THE NUKVA CALLED "TO MOSHE," TIFERET, "AND SPOKE" IS BINAH. And so when Moshe was entering THE NUKVA, BINAH opened the discussion saying: "If any man of you bring an offering" (Vayikra 1:2), BINAH IS THE SPEAKER HERE. HE ASKS: Why say "man" here when IT WOULD HAVE SUFFICED TO SAY, "IF ANY OF YOU BRING AN OFFERING"? HE ANSWERS: When the sun and moon were united, TIFERET AND MALCHUT TOGETHER, BINAH opened and said: "Man." AND THEY WERE BOTH NAMED "MAN" IN THE SINGULAR, as it is written: "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation" (Chavakuk 3:11), "stood still" in the singular instead of the plural, BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURE SPEAKS OF THEIR BEING IN UNION.

620. "If any man of you bring an offering": It is hinted here that whoever makes a service of sacrifice flawlessly, should be there as male and female; NAMELY BE MARRIED. This is derived from the words "of you (plur.)," which indicates that he will have your images; TO WIT, BINAH SAID THIS TO TIFERET AND MALCHUT, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF MOSHE CALLED "MAN." "An offering to Hashem," by sacrificing all in order to be united both above and below. HENCE IT IS FIRST SAID "AN OFFERING TO HASHEM," WHICH IS THE JOINING FROM BELOW UPWARD, AND THEN "YOUR OFFERING," JOINING FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD, AS WAS SAID BEFORE.

621. "Of the cattle" shows the unity of man and beast as one, AS WAS SAID BEFORE: "AN OFFERING TO HASHEM" IS MAN, WHO IS THE UNISON FROM BELOW UPWARD, WHENCE IT IS DRAWN DOWNWARD BY THE SECRET OF "YOUR OFFERING" OF THE CATTLE. THE TWO UNISONS ILLUMINE TOGETHER. "Of the oxen and of the sheep": These are pure Chariots. In saying "of the cattle (lit. 'animal')," one might think it refers to all living creatures, both clean and unclean. It therefore continues "of the oxen and of the sheep."

622. "Shall you bring your offering": HE ASKS: It should have been "His offering," AS IT IS WRITTEN BEFORE "AN OFFERING TO HASHEM." Why say "your offering"? HE ANSWERS: First it should have been "an offering to Hashem" and now "your offering." HE EXPOUNDS UPON IT: "An offering to Hashem" is THE UNITY CALLED MAN, NAMELY THE RAISING OF THE NUKVA TO BE UNITED ABOVE THE CHEST OF ZEIR ANPIN, CALLED man. "Your offering...of the oxen, and of the flock" CONTINUES THE ILLUMINATION OF THE UNION OF THE CHEST UPWARD UNTO THE LOWER BEINGS WHO ARE FROM THE CHEST DOWNWARD in order to demonstrate the unison from below upward and from above downward. From below upward is "the offering to Hashem" and from above downward is "your offering."

623. This is like a king who sits high upon a great mountain, and his throne is fixed on it. The king WHO SITS ON THE THRONE is higher than anyone. A man who offers the king a present, should take it up step by step until he reaches the top where the king sits up high.

Everyone knows then that a present is brought up to the king. And this is the present to the king. When a present is brought down, then surely it is a present from the king above to his friend below.

624. So at first, man mounts the grades from below upward. This is "an offering to Hashem." "Of the cattle and of the oxen," he descends down the grades from above. This is "your offering." Hence it is written, "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk" (Shir Hashirim 5:1), which is a man and "an offering to Hashem," FOR IT IS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, WHO SAYS, "I HAVE EATEN..."; "Eat, O dear ones" "of the cattle, of the oxen and of the sheep." Then, "shall you bring your offering."

625. Rabbi Yitzchak and Rabbi Yehuda came to him and kissed his forehead. They said: 'Blessed by the Merciful one that these words were not wasted on that old man', WHO WOULD NOT HAVE UNDERSTOOD THEM, AND THE WORDS WOULD BE LOST. They rose and went. While they were walking, they saw a vine planted in a garden.

63. "Binding his foal to the vine," part two

This second discussion of the title verse interprets it as containing a warning against the Klipah of the mule and the foal. Were it not for the aspect of the Holy Name included here, we are told, these Klipot would have destroyed the world. The vine signifies the congregation of Yisrael, which accepts none, but God, as a vine will receive no graft from another tree. The child and the rabbis then discuss the verse "He washed his garments in wine." This is interpreted as signifying the Mashiah, the Female Principle, who will overpower the idolatrous nations. Another explanation is that the Yisraelites draw from Malchut in Holiness and she therefore brings them mercy and joy. The idolatrous nations, however, draw from Malchut excessively and are consequently subject to Judgment. We then learn the significance of the verse, "His eyes are red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." The Written Law of the Torah is called milk, and the Oral Law is called wine. The passage is an allusion to the illumination of Binah and the intoxicating Torah, Malchut, which transfers judgment to those who draw it downwards from above. Following this, through an interpretation of the verse, "And wine that makes glad the heart of man", we learn that wine begins in joy and ends in judgment. The "oil to brighten the face" signifies the drawing of Chassadim from Aba, through which all judgments are cancelled. The final verse of this discourse is "and bread which sustains the heart of man." It is a reference to the bread that sustains the world, signifying Zeir Anpin. The world depends on both bread and wine, the Female Principle and Zeir Anpin, since they sustain the world together. Therefore, when saying grace, there must be bread on the left side of the table and wine on the right, in order to pronounce a proper blessing on the Holy Name.

The Relevance of this Passage

All things must be in balance in order to generate and sustain fulfillment. Too much of a good thing eventually brings negativity. Common phrases, such as "killing him with kindness," help convey the lesson and Light being distilled in this passage. The wisdom and discipline to balance our desires to receive with our desire to share are infused into our being. We are inspired to direct and channel our desires for spiritual purposes as opposed to selfish, indulgent pursuits, the former generating fulfillment, the latter bringing judgement down upon this world.

626. The child opened the discussion saying: "Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine." This verse contains a high mystery. HE ASKS: Why does it say "osri (binding)" instead of the customary 'oser' and "iroh (ass)" instead of 'ayir'? HE ANSWERS: It is the secret that the schoolchildren should beware of the sharp edge OF THE KLIPAH of the ass. The Holy Name Yud-Hei is included there in order to subdue it, TO WIT, THE YUD OF 'OSRI' TOGETHER WITH THE HEI OF 'IROH'.

627. Just as the Holy Name is hinted here, IT IS HINTED ALSO IN THE WORDS "AND HIS ASS'S COLT TO THE CHOICE VINE." It says "sorekah" (choice vine) instead of 'sorek' and bni (colt) instead of ben, as it is written: "And I have planted you a noble vine (Heb. sorek)" (Yirmeyah 2:21) WITHOUT HEI and "upon a colt (Heb. ben)" (Zecharyah 9:9) WITHOUT YUD. Why then is it written here sorekah and bni?

628. As there is a Holy Name which subdues the KLIPAH foal, so there is a Holy Name to subdue the power of another KLIPAH, the ass. IT IS THE YUD OF 'BNI' AND THE HEI OF 'SOREKAH'. Were it not for the Holy Name hinted here, THESE TWO KLIPOT would have destroyed the world. Therefore, there is Yud-Hei against this force and Yud-Hei against the other force, which protect the world against them, and preserve man so they would have no mastery over him in the world.

629. "Binding his foal to the vine": What is the vine? It is the Congregation of Yisrael. Wherefore is it called vine? As a vine will receive no graft from another tree, so the Congregation of Yisrael accepts none but the Holy One, blessed be He. Therefore, in front of the Congregation of Yisrael all other forces are subdued, THE FOAL AND THE ASS, and they cannot harm and rule the world. Therefore scripture inserts between them the Holy Name Yud-Hei on the side OF THE FOAL and the side OF THE ASS. The ass's colt is uprooted due to the choice vine, THE CONGREGATION OF YISRAEL, as said: "And I have planted you a noble vine."

630. "He washed his garments in wine." HE ASKS: Why does it say "washed" IN THE PAST TENSE instead of "washes"? HE ANSWERS: He has been washing since the world was created. Who has? King Mashiach, THE NUKVA, THEREFORE "WASHED" IS IN THE PAST TENSE. "In wine" is the left side, NAMELY GVURAH OF ZEIR ANPIN; "the blood of grapes" is the left side below; NAMELY THE LEFT SIDE OF THE NUKVA. WITH THE TWO GVUROT, OF ZEIR ANPIN AND OF THE NUKVA HERSELF, SHE WASHES HER GARMENTS. Mashiach, THE NUKVA, will rule above over all the other forces of the idolatrous nations, and crush their stronghold above and below.

631. Another explanation for "He washed his garments in wine": Wine is a sign of joy, AS IN THE VERSE, "MY WINE, WHICH CHEERS ELOHIM AND MAN" (SHOFTIM 9:13), and is all judgment, so King Mashiach, WHO IS THE NUKVA, brings joy to the children of Yisrael, WHO DRAW FROM IT IN HOLINESS, but is all judgment to the idolatrous nations, WHO DRAW FROM IT EXCESSIVELY. It is written, "And the spirit of Elohim hovered over the surface of the waters" (Beresheet 1:2). This is the spirit of King Mashiach, WHICH HOVERS TO AND FRO BETWEEN JUDGMENT AND MERCY. From the Creation of the world, He washes His garment in the holy wine, AS SAID ABOVE.

632. The following words are, "His eyes are red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." "HIS EYES ARE RED WITH WINE" refers to the supernal wine, NAMELY THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT OF BINAH. The Torah, THE NUKVA, when it intoxicating NAMELY TRANSFERS JUDGMENT TO THOSE WHO DRAW IT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARD, drinks it AND THEREFORE BINAH IS CONSIDERED, AS IF JUDGMENT COME FROM HER. "And his teeth white with milk" REFERS TO THE WRITTEN TORAH, ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH ACCEPTS CHASSADIM CALLED MILK, for the Torah is called wine and milk, the Written Torah, ZEIR ANPIN, IS CALLED MILK, and the Oral Law, THE NUKVA IS CALLED WINE. WINE IS COME FROM BINAH AND MILK FROM ABA.

633. It is written, "And wine that makes glad the heart of man; oil to brighten the face" (Tehilim 104:15). Indeed it is from the place called oil, WHICH IS ABA. HE EXPLAINS HIS WORDS, Come and behold: wine first makes glad, because it is a place whence all joys come from, NAMELY BINAH, and ends in Judgment WHEN IT EXPANDS TOWARDS THE NUKVA. Why? Because its ending is the place of gathering of all THE SFIROT, NAMELY THE NUKVA, WHICH IS THEREFORE CALLED THE CONGREGATION OF YISRAEL; NAMELY THE PLACE OF GATHERING OF ZEIR ANPIN. It is Judgment by which the world is sentenced. Therefore, since wine starts with joy and ends in Judgment, therefore there is "oil to brighten the face," whence all the joys issue, FOR IN ORDER TO DRAW THE JOY OF WINE, AS IT WAS IN BINAH, IT DRAWS CHASSADIM FROM ABA, CALLED OIL. THROUGH THIS, ALL JUDGMENTS IN IT ARE CANCELLED AND IT ATTAINS THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, WHICH ARE CALLED FACE, THE SECRET OF "OIL TO BRIGHTEN THE FACE."

634. "And bread which sustains the heart of man" (Tehilim 104:15): HE ASKS: What is the bread MENTIONED HERE? HE RESPONDS: It is the bread which sustains the world, THE SECRET OF CHASSADIM DRAWN FROM CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN. You might say that the world depends on it alone. This is not true. IT NEEDS ALSO WINE, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH, AS WAS SAID BEFORE, since night cannot exist without day. BUT THE DAY, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, AND THE NIGHT, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, SHOULD BE JOINED TOGETHER. HENCE WE NEED BREAD FROM ZEIR ANPIN

AND WINE FROM THE NUKVA, WHICH BOTH TOGETHER NOURISH THE WORLD. One must not separate them, AND DRAW BREAD ALONE FROM ZEIR ANPIN WITHOUT THE NUKVA. Whoever separates them is separated from life, as it is written: "That He might make you know that man does not live by bread only" (Devarim 8:3). Thus one should not separate them.

635. It may be asked why David said: "And bread which sustains the heart of man," seeing that the world does not depend on it alone for nourishment. HE ANSWERS: The exact meaning of the words IS THAT in "and bread" there is an extra Vav (= and) like "and Hashem," WHICH INCLUDES THE NUKVA, FOR WHEREVER IT SAYS "AND HASHEM," IT INCLUDES HIM AND HIS COURT OF JUSTICE, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. HERE TOO "AND" INCLUDES THE NUKVA, and therefore all is together, NAMELY IN UNISON.

636. HE FURTHER EXPLAINS, Come and see when saying grace after meals, one should not bless over an empty table. There should be bread, THE ABUNDANCE OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH IS RIGHT, on the table, WHICH IS THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, ON THE LEFT SIDE, and a glass of wine, WHICH IS THE ABUNDANCE OF THE NUKVA, on the right side, WHICH ALLUDES TO ZEIR ANPIN. What is the reason thereof? It attaches the left to the right AND BINDS THEM. Thus the bread, WHICH IS RIGHT, will be blessed by them, THROUGH THE UNION WITH THE LEFT, and be attached to them, and they will all become one knot for the proper blessing of the Holy Name. For bread, WHICH IS THE RIGHT, FROM ZEIR ANPIN, is connected to wine, WHICH IS LEFT, FROM THE NUKVA; and wine, WHICH IS OF THE LEFT, will be attached to the right. Then blessings rest on the world and the table, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, is properly perfected.

637. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Had we gone this way only to hear these words, it would have been worth our while. Rabbi Yehuda said: It would have been better for this child not to know so much and I fear that for this, he might not survive in the world. Why, said Rabbi Yitzchak. He said: Since this boy can look upon a place where a man is not permitted to look, I am afraid for him that he will observe and look there before the time will come for him to marry, BEFORE HE WILL COME OF AGE, and be punished for it.

638. The boy heard and said: I never fear punishment, because when my father passed away, he blessed me and prayed for me, and I know that my father's merit will protect me. They asked him, And who is your father? He said: I am the son of Rav Hamnuna Saba (the elder). They took him on their shoulders for three miles.

64. "Out of the eater came forth food"

The rabbis explain the title verse to the young son of Rav Hamnuna Saba (the elder). Their interpretation reveals that Yesod consumes the abundance from the Sfirot of Zeir Anpin. Through the strength of the Strict Judgment of Zeir Anpin, the Upper Worlds, signifying the Written Law, Malchut, our physical world, receives an abundance of illumination from the left. The Oral Law, called "honey," is this illumination of the left within Malchut. The righteous, we're told, provide "food" for the world, without which Malchut would be unable to endure. After delivering the young boy to his mother, the companions relate their experiences to Rabbi Shimon. A discussion of the verse, "Gird your sword upon your thigh," ensues. One interpretation provided reveals that this alludes to the vengeance of the Holy Covenant that the avenging sword wreaks on he who impairs the imprinted sign of the Holy Covenant. He who desires to protect the Holy Covenant should prepare and arm himself against the Evil Inclination by drawing this sword upon his thigh before it. Another explanation instructs us that before setting out on a journey, one should prepare oneself through prayers and supplication, and gird oneself with righteousness.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here, judgments that are hanging over us are sweetened with supernal "honey". The Light and the blessings of the righteous blanket us with protection and help generate sustenance. We are inspired to seek the path of the Torah and, in turn, we gain the strength to triumph over our Evil Inclinations. Finally, this passage provides us with protection for all of our journeys by igniting sparks of righteousness within our soul.

639. They recited the verse, "Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Shoftim 14:14). The boy said to them: You have spoken THIS VERSE, now

explain it. They said to him: The Holy One, blessed be He, appointed us a path of life, you speak!

640. He opened the discussion saying: "Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." There is another verse which shows that the eater is the righteous, which says, "The righteous eats to satisfy his soul" (Mishlei 13:25). The righteous, YESOD, indeed eats and takes all THE ABUNDANCE FROM THE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN. Why? "To satisfy his soul" and to satisfy that place called David's soul, NAMELY THE NUKVA. "Came forth food": Were it not for the righteous, no food would be provided for the world, and the world THE NUKVA would not have been able to endure. "And out of the strong came forth sweetness." This is Yitzchak, who blessed Ya'akov "of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth" (Bereshheet 27:28).

641. TO EXPLAIN further, though all THE SFIROT ARE one, YET were it not for the strength of the strict judgment OF THE LEFT OF ZEIR ANPIN, no honey would have come forth, WHICH IS THE ABUNDANCE OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT WITHIN THE NUKVA, RECEIVED FROM THE LEFT OF ZEIR ANPIN. What is this honey? It is the Oral Law, THE NUKVA, of which it says, "Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (Tehilim 19:11). According to this, "the strong" is the Written Torah, WHICH IS THUS CALLED as it is written: "Hashem gives strength to His people" (Ibid. 29:11), ZEIR ANPIN WILL give strength. "Came forth sweetness": The Oral Law, NAMELY THE NUKVA, IN WHICH IS THE SECRET OF HONEY.

642. They went together for three days until they reached the village where the CHILD'S mother LIVED. When she saw them she prepared the house and they stayed there for three more days, blessed him and went. They related what happened to Rabbi Shimon. He said: Surely he inherited the Torah. Were it not for ancestral merits OF RABBI HAMNUNA SABA (THE ELDER), he would have been punished from above. But the Holy One, blessed be He, is with those who follow the Torah. They inherit it and their descendants after them forever, as it is written: "As for me, this is my covenant with them, says Hashem; My spirit that is upon you" (Yeshayah 59:21).

643. "Zvulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea; and he shall be a haven for ships, and his border (or: thigh)..." Rabbi Aba opened the discussion saying: "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty warrior: Your glory and your majesty" (Tehilim 45:4). HE ASKS: Is there glory and majesty in girding and wearing a weapon? Whoever studies the Torah and is engaged in war for the Torah, and arms himself with it, he is praiseworthy. This is glory and majesty. Why does it say, "Gird your sword...YOUR GLORY AND YOUR MAJESTY"?

644. HE ANSWERS: Assuredly the meaning of this is that the Holy One, blessed be He, imprinted the sign of the holy covenant upon men to preserve it and not blemish the impress of the King. Whoever impairs it, avenging sword rises before him and takes the vengeance of the holy covenant, which was imprinted upon him who impaired it.

645. He who desires to keep this place, THE HOLY COVENANT, should prepare and arm himself and when the Evil Inclination assails him, he should draw before it this sword which is upon the thigh, thus taking vengeance upon him who impairs that place CALLED THIGH. Hence, "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty warrior." He is mighty, WHO VANQUISHES THE EVIL INCLINATION, and is called mighty. This is "your glory and majesty."

646. Another explanation for, "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty warrior": Before setting out on a journey, one should prepare himself with a prayer to his Master, and gird himself with righteousness, NAMELY MALCHUT, which is the supernal sword, through prayers and supplication, as it is written: "Righteousness shall go before him, and walk in the way of his steps" (Tehilim 85:14).

647. Come and see: Zvulun always went out on ways and paths, and engaged in wars, and armed himself with this supernal sword, WHICH IS THE NUKVA ON THE SIDE OF JUDGMENTS OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, with prayers and supplication, before setting out on his way. He then overcame and conquered nations. You may say that this was assigned to Yehuda, who was ready with the sword to wage wars and prepare amendments, FOR HE IS OF THE ASPECT OF MALCHUT, why then Zvulun? HE ANSWERS, Come and behold: the twelve tribes were the adornments of the Matron, WHO IS MALCHUT. THUS ZVULUN TOO IS OF THE ASPECT OF MALCHUT.

65. Two improvements of the Nukva

In Shir Hashirim, King Solomon made two corrections of the Nukva [Malchut]. One relates to the Jubilee, signifying Binah, and the other to the adornment of the bride, the Shmitah, signifying the Nukva. We learn that the creation was manifest in two places, the Upper and the Lower Worlds resembling each other perfectly. The upper Female Principle was corrected by Binah. These corrections were then drawn to the lower Nukva, thereby perfecting Malchut. The supernal correction is both concealed and revealed, because prophecy does not dwell outside the land of Yisrael. The lower correction is more exposed.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here we draw down Divine Light from the realm known as Binah that helps correct our souls and the entire world from previous iniquities. We draw the force of perfection from King Solomon, which helps bring about the final correction of the world and the age of Mashiach.

648. Solomon mentioned two improvements of the Nukva in "Shir Hashirim," one for the supernal shepherdess, the Yovel (Jubilee), NAMELY BINAH, and one for the bride, the Shmitah (Sabbatical year), NAMELY THE NUKVA. One correction above IN BINAH and one below IN THE NUKVA. The Creation too was manifest in two places, one work above IN BINAH, and one below IN THE NUKVA. This is why the Torah begins with Bet (=two), WHICH ALLUDES TO THE TWO NUKVAS. The work below resembled IN ITS PERFECTION the work above. ABA made the upper world, BINAH, and ZEIR ANPIN made the lower world, THE NUKVA. In the same manner, of the two improvements of the Nukvas mentioned by Solomon, the one is above and the other below. The upper one is fixed by the upper establishment of the Holy Name, WHICH IS BINAH, and the lower by the establishment of the lower one, THE NUKVA, like the upper establishment IN BINAH. ALL THE IMPROVEMENTS HE MADE IN THE SUPERNAL NUKVA, HE DREW UNTO THE LOWER NUKVA, BY WHICH THE LOWER NUKVA, MALCHUT, WAS PERFECTED AS THE UPPER ONE, BINAH.

649. Come and see: Happy is the portion of holy Ya'akov, who merited this. We learned that since the world was created, there was not a more complete bed as Ya'akov's bed. When Ya'akov prepared to depart from the world, he was whole on all sides, Avraham, CHESED, on his right, Yitzchak, GVURAH, on his left, and he himself, TIFERET, in the middle. The Shechinah was before him. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE PERFECTION OF THE FOUR LEGS OF THE SUPERNAL THRONE, EACH OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT INCLUDES THREE, AMOUNTING TO TWELVE, AND BINAH ABOVE THEM. When Ya'akov saw this, he called his sons and said to them, "Gather yourselves" so there will be adornment above and below.

650. Come and see: The secret of the matter is that two establishments were there, an upper and a lower one, so that all will be perfected; TO WIT, THE NUKVA PERFECTED LIKE BINAH. HE EXPLAINS, The supernal correction is concealed and revealed, since it is the adornment of the Yovel (Jubilee), which Solomon mentioned in "Shir Hashirim," which we said TO BE BINAH. The head, THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN, is concealed, since it is not revealed here, nor should it be, AS THE HEAD OF ZEIR ANPIN IS ESTABLISHED BY CHESED AND GVURAH; the arms and the body, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, are exposed and known; the legs, NETZACH AND HOD, are concealed and cannot be seen. Why? Because prophecy, THE SECRET OF ABUNDANCE OF NETZACH AND HOD, does not dwell outside the land of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, TO WIT, THEIR ABUNDANCE IS REVEALED IN THE NUKVA, THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH WHICH BELONGS TO HER, AND NOT TO ZEIR ANPIN. And this establishment is concealed and revealed.

651. Another lower establishment (also: 'adornment') is the adornment of the bride, which Solomon mentioned in "Shir Hashirim," THE NUKVA. This adornment is more visible SINCE THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH IS SHINING HERE. This adornment is done through the twelve tribes under her, and the adornment of her body; THEY ARE THE FOUR SFIROT CHESED AND GVURAH, NETZACH AND HOD, THREE KNOTS IN EACH AND TWELVE IN ALL. THE NUKVA, TIFERET BETWEEN THEM, IS ABOVE THEM, AS WAS SAID BEFORE.

66. Corrected by twelve in two worlds

Rabbi Aba begins the discussion by quoting the verse, "And he made a molten sea" It stood upon twelve oxen" We learn that when Ya'akov saw the adornment of the upper sea by the

twelve chariots appointed from above, he wished to complete the adornment of the lower sea. He therefore called to his twelve sons to prepare to perfect the Faith. Thus, the Lower World, the Nukva, [Malchut] was perfected by the twelve tribes. Three tribes look to each of the four directions of the world, signifying Chesed, Gvurah, Netzach, and Hod, the arms and legs of the body of the Shechinah. We also learn that "The seven eyes of The Creator" allude to the seventy members of the Sanhedrin. The hairs on his head are signified by the great numbers in the camp of Reuven and in the camp of Yehuda. The discourse then turns again to supernal correction of the Jubilee discussed in the previous section. Finally, the rabbis expand upon the significance of the twelve supports of Binah and the Nukva, the structure of the metaphorical body, the seven supernal eyes, and the hairs of the head.

The Relevance of this Passage

Readers of this passage rise above the negative celestial influences of the twelve constellations. Ascending over the signs allows us to become the captains of our own destiny. In addition, the protective Light of the Shechinah encircles our souls. The twelve tribes also signify the support and foundation of the spiritual worlds, and thus, we draw support for our own efforts towards spiritual evolvement.

652. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the verse, "And he made a molten sea... It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking towards the north, and three looking towards the west, and three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east: and the sea was set above upon them" (1 Melachim, 7:23-25) and "twelve oxen under the sea" (Ibid. 44). "It stood upon twelve oxen" surely, for the sea is adorned by twelve within both worlds, THE SUPERNAL WORLD BINAH AND THE LOWER WORLD THE NUKVA. The upper twelve are the Chariots appointed from above, and the lower twelve are the twelve tribes. When Ya'akov saw the supernal adornment, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, and the Shechinah in front of him, WHICH IS MALCHUT, THE SECRET OF THE FOUR LEGS OF THE SUPERNAL THRONE, he wanted to complete the adornment, so he called for his twelve sons and said to them "Gather yourselves" and prepare yourselves to perfect the faith, THE NUKVA. THEY SHOULD RECTIFY THEMSELVES WITH THE SECRET OF THE ADORNMENT OF THE NUKVA'S TWELVE, SO THAT THE NUKVA WILL BE COMPLETED, LIKE THE NUKVA ABOVE, BINAH, AND THE ADORNMENT WILL BE COMPLETED.

653. Come and see the twelve tribes with four standards to the four directions: "Three looking towards the north, and three looking towards the west, and three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east: and the sea was set above upon them." So three tribes look to each of the four directions of the world, three tribes to the right arm, CHESED, and three tribes to the left arm, GVURAH, three tribes to the right leg, NETZACH, and three tribes to the left leg, HOD. And the body of the Shechinah, TIFERET CALLED BODY, is above them, as it is written: "and the sea was set above upon them," AS THE SEA IS THE SHECHINAH.

654. Why are there three tribes per arm and three tribes per leg? The secret of this is that there are three joints in the right arm OF THE LOWER BODY, and so in the left arm, the right leg and the left leg. They are twelve altogether, attached to the body as above. Whence do we know that? From the verse, "All these are the twelve tribes of Yisrael: and this" (Beresheet 49:28). HE ATTACHED: "AND THIS IS THAT WHICH THEIR FATHER SPOKE TO THEM," THE NUKVA CALLED 'THIS', because the reckoning is complete with her, as it says, "And the sea was set above upon them," WHICH IS THE NUKVA CALLED SEA. THUS, THE TWELVE TRIBES ARE ATTACHED TO THE BODY OF THE NUKVA ABOVE THEM.

655. "The seven eyes of Hashem" (Zecharyah 4:10) are the seven eyes of the congregation, the seventy members of the Sanhedrin, AS EACH OF CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT IS INCLUDED OF TEN, SEVENTY IN ALL, IN THE SECRET OF THE VERSE "FOR THE JUDGMENT IS HASHEM'S" (DEVARIM 1:17). The hairs THAT GROW FROM THIS HEAD ARE ALLUDED TO in the verse, "All that were numbered in the camp of Yehuda were a hundred thousand" (Bemidbar 2:9). "All that were numbered in the camp of Reuven..." (Ibid. 16). ALL THOSE GREAT NUMBERS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE THE HAIRS OF THE NUKVA.

656. You may ask: In Egypt, when Ya'akov departed from the world, where was perfection at that time, where were all those WHO WERE NUMBERED IN THE CAMPS, WHO ARE CONSIDERED THE HAIRS OF THE NUKVA? IF THEY WERE NOT THERE, THE NUKVA WOULD

THEN BE IMPERFECT, FOR THEY ARE HER HAIRS. HE ANSWERS: Indeed they were seventy souls WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN EGYPT, CORRESPONDING TO THE MOCHIN OF THE SEVENTY MEMBERS OF THE SANHEDRIN, and they begot innumerable descendants during the seventeen years THAT YA'AKOV LIVED IN EGYPT, as it is written: "And the children of Yisrael were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and grew exceedingly mighty (Heb. vaya'atzmu)" (Shemot 1:7). THEY WERE ALSO CONSIDERED AS THE HAIRS OF THE NUKVA, as it is written: "They are more (Heb. atzmu) than the hairs of my head" (Tehilim 40:13). THE WORD 'VAYA'ATZMU' ALSO REFERS TO HAIRS. THEY LIVED AT THE TIME OF YA'AKOV'S DEPARTURE FROM THE WORLD, AND THEREFORE PERFECTION WAS NOT INCOMPLETE. Happy is the portion of perfect Ya'akov, who was perfected above and below.

657. Rabbi Elazar said TO RABBI ABA, Surely this is AS YOU SAID. But concerning the supernal correction of the Yovel (Jubilee), BINAH, how could there be so much there, NAMELY THE TWELVE ASPECTS? RABBI ABA said to him: After the lion was set to enter the vineyard, who should follow? WHICH MEANS, EXPLAIN IT YOURSELF.

658. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the verse, "But He is unchangeable (lit. 'in one'), and who can turn Him? and what His soul desires, even that He does" (Iyov 23:13). The supernal establishment IN BINAH is all one, and there is no division in it, like in the lower ESTABLISHMENT IN THE NUKVA, as it says "and from thence it was parted, and branched into four streams" (Beresheet 2:10), FOR THERE IS SEPARATION WITHIN THE NUKVA. Though it is divided, it all comes to one when you examine it, FOR EVEN THE SEPARATION IN HER IS FIXED BY THE CORRECTION OF THE TWELVE, AND THEN SHE IS ALL ONE. BUT BINAH WAS NEVER DIVIDED, AND NEEDS NO CORRECTION OF THE TWELVE TO FIX HER.

659. But the establishment of the supernal Yovel (Jubilee), BINAH, is also supported by twelve like the lower one, THE NUKVA. And though it is one, AND WAS NEVER PARTED, yet it perfects every side, this and that side-- IN OTHER WORDS, THE ONENESS OF THE SFIROT TO THE RIGHT COMPLETES THE LEFT SIDE, AND VICE VERSA. Thus the six supernal extremities, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD OF BINAH, become twelve, since each of them lends ITS LIGHTS to its neighbor and is included of its neighbor's LIGHTS. Hence they are twelve, with the body OF BINAH above THEM. What is the body? It is Ya'akov, as we learned, NAMELY TIFERET, AND NOT BINAH WHICH IS THE HEAD AND NOT THE BODY. HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT BINAH IS THE BODY OVER THE TWELVE? HE ANSWERS: the head and the body are together, TO WIT, THEY ARE INCLUDED WITHIN EACH OTHER, AND THEREFORE THE ASPECT OF TIFERET EXISTS ALSO IN THE HEAD OF BINAH.

660. WE SHOULD further EXPLAIN THE SECRET OF twelve. There are three joints in the right arm, Chesed-Chassadim, WHICH MEANS ALL THREE PERTAIN TO CHESED, and three joints in the left arm, Gvurah-Gvurot, THAT IS THREE TIMES GVUROT, three joints in the right leg, Netzach-Netzachim, THAT IS, THREE TIMES NETZACH, and three joints in the left leg, Hod and Hodot. Together, there are twelve, and with the body, TIFERET, which stands above them, there are thirteen. The Torah too is expounded by the thirteen attributes, THE THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES OF MERCY DRAWN FROM THE THIRTEEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BEARD OF ARICH ANPIN, which are all one WITHOUT, HEAVEN FORBID, ANY SEPARATION. They are drawn from above downward as one, until they reach that place, which is in division, THE NUKVA.

661. There are seven supernal eyes, THE SEVEN SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT OF THE MOCHIN OF CHOCHMAH CALLED EYES. There are "the eyes of Hashem, they rove (masc.) to and fro through the whole earth" (Zecharyah 4:10), they are male; NAMELY OF ZEIR ANPIN, since it is the place of the male. It is written elsewhere, "For the eyes of Hashem run (fem.) to and fro" (II Divrei Hayamim 16:9), they are part of the adornments of the Shechinah below, the place of the female. The seven supernal eyes, EITHER OF THE MALE OR OF THE FEMALE, correspond to the verse, "Yours, O Hashem, is the greatness (Chesed), and the Gvurah, AND THE TIFERET, AND THE NETZACH, AND THE HOD: FOR ALL THAT IS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH (YESOD) IS YOURS; YOURS IS THE KINGDOM (MALCHUT), O HASHEM" (I Divrei Hayamim 29:11). This place, MALCHUT, completes each end OF THE SIX EXTREMITIES CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD.

662. We have to look at the hairs OF THE MALE AND THE FEMALE, as it is written: "Who can utter the mighty acts (Heb. Gvurot) of Hashem?" (Tehilim 106:2). FOR THE HAIRS ARE

CONSIDERED TO BE GVUROT. IT ALSO SAYS, "They are more than the hairs of my head" (Tehilim 40:13), and "Hashem's Chassadim have not ceased" (Eichah 3:22), SINCE THE HAIRS ARE GVUROT YET INNUMERABLE CHASSADIM ARE DRAWN THROUGH THEM, OF WHICH IT SAYS, THE "HASHEM'S CHASSADIM HAVE NOT CEASED." These adornments rise to another place, TO MOCHIN WITHOUT reckoning, though this place, THE MOCHIN OF RECKONING, THE SECRET OF THE SEVEN EYES OF HASHEM, is spoken of more, and put on a scale, NAMELY UPON THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH BALANCES THE TWO SIDES OF THE SCALES, THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT, the upper, BINAH and the lower, MALCHUT. King Solomon expounded THE TWO NUKVAS, IN "SHIR HASHIRIM," and they need explaining UNLIKE THE MOCHIN OF THE HAIRS WHICH NEEDS NO EXPLAINING. Happier is the portion of the righteous who know the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He. And in here, IN THE MOCHIN OF RECKONING, all is made known to the knowledgeable in judgment and law.

67. "Zvulun shall dwell at the shore of the seas"

Rabbi Yehuda discourses on the title verse, explaining that the merchant Zvulun made an agreement with Yisachar, promising to support him while Yisachar studied the Torah. Zvulun was a merchant of the sea and he therefore dwelled among seamen for purposes of commerce. His border, we're told, reached Tzidon, a place of commerce. Although he did not occupy himself with the Torah, Zvulun is always placed before Yisachar during the blessings, because he took bread from his own mouth and gave to Yisachar. He who supports scholars of the Torah receives blessings from above and below, meriting wealth in this world and a portion in the world to come. Rabbi Aba then quotes the verse, "Nor shall you suffer the salt of the Covenant." We learn that salt is important because it washes away and perfumes bitterness to give it taste. Without salt, the world would be unable to endure the bitterness of judgment, and it is through judgment that the world learns righteousness. Salt signifies Yesod, the Covenant that supports the world. Therefore, a meal lacking salt symbolically separates Yesod and the Female Principle, a division that brings death. Rabbi Aba and Rabbi Yosi conclude with a discussion of the verse, "And that you will save alive my father and my mother" Their interpretation reveals that Rachav asked for a token of life, which, she said, rests upon the letter of truth. She was given a cord of scarlet thread, a token of Yehoshua, because the time had come for the moon to rule. She thus received a token of the moon, signifying Malchut.

The Relevance of this Passage

A profound spiritual truth emerges from this text concerning the ultimate purpose of Torah and the dangers of blind religiosity. The purpose of Torah study is not in any way related to academic, religious, or scholarly pursuits. Rather, the Torah is a tool for spiritual development with the sole intention of leading one to the ultimate objective of "loving thy neighbor as thyself." Remarkably, many "devout" and religious men will behave with intolerance towards others in the name of God and for the sake of their own religious objectives. This is completely contrary to the underlying purpose of the Torah. The Zohar stresses this point by explaining that the biblical character of Zvulun, who was not a student of the Torah, is always placed before Yisachar during the blessings because he took bread from his own mouth and gave to a man named Yisachar. Additionally, this passage helps sweeten the judgments that must appear in our lives, demonstrating that the Torah and the Light of the Zohar offer mankind a path to spiritual perfection that is most merciful and meaningful.

663. Rabbi Yehuda said: Zvulun and Yisachar made an agreement between them that one will sit and study the Torah, YISACHAR, and the other will be a merchant, ZVULUN, and support Yisachar, as it is written: "And happy are those who hold (also: 'support') her" (Mishlei 3:18). He used to traverse the seas with merchandise. It fell in his portion since his inheritance was by the sea.

664. He is therefore called "leg (Heb. yerech)," AS IT SAYS, "AND HIS BORDER (HEB. YARCHATO) SHALL BE AT TZIDON," for it is the function of the leg to go to and fro. Hence it is written, "Rejoice, Zvulun, in your going out; and Yisachar in your tents" (Devarim 33:18). "Zvulun shall dwell at the shore of the seas" among the seamen for the purposes of commerce. "The shore of the seas," though his inheritance was by one sea, THE GREAT SEA, YET "SEAS" IS IN THE PLURAL, since it dwelt between two seas, THE GREAT SEA AND THE SEA OF GALILEE, THOUGH ITS INHERITANCE DID NOT REACH THE SEA OF GALILEE.

665. Rabbi Yosi said: All the merchants of the other seas were interested in the merchandise of his own sea. HENCE IT SAYS "THE SHORE OF THE SEAS" IN THE PLURAL. "And he shall be a haven for ships," NAMELY, where all ships would assemble to trade. "And his border": THIS IS DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN, FOR THE BORDER OF TZIDON IS FAR FROM ZVULUN. Rabbi Chizkiyah said to him: His leg reaches the border of Tzidon, A THIN STRIP OF LAND, RESEMBLING A LEG, STRETCHED FROM ZVULUN TO TZIDON. THROUGH THIS MEANS, Zvulun's border reached THE BORDER OF TZIDON, WHICH WAS a place of commerce, where all the tradesmen would come and go there with their merchandise.

666. Rabbi Acha said: It is written, "Nor shall you suffer the salt of the covenant of your Elohim to be lacking from your meal offering: with all your offerings you shall offer salt" (Vayikra 2:13). Why is salt SO IMPORTANT? Because it washes away and perfumes the bitterness to give it taste. Without salt, THE CENTRAL COLUMN WOULD NOT BE DRAWN and the world would not endure the bitterness. Hence it says, "For when your Judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness" (Yeshayah 26:9). It is also written, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne" (Tehilim 89:15), FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS PERFECTED BY JUSTICE, THE SECRET OF SALT.

667. Salt is the covenant, YESOD; NAMELY THE CENTRAL COLUMN FROM THE CHEST DOWN, which supports the world, THE NUKVA, as it is written: "Thus says Hashem; If my covenant be not day and night, it were as if I had not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Yirmeyah 33:25). Hence, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, YESOD, COMES ABOVE IT, SALT is called the covenant of your Elohim, YESOD BEING CALLED COVENANT, and the Salt Sea. The sea, WHICH IS THE NUKVA is called after THE SALT WHICH SWEETENS IT.

668. Rabbi Chiya said: It is written, "For Hashem is righteous, He loves righteousness" (Tehilim 11:7). This is the salt, YESOD, of the sea, MALCHUT, RIGHTEOUS BEING YESOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS BEING MALCHUT. Whoever divides between them brings death upon himself. Therefore, it is written: "Nor shall you suffer the salt...TO BE LACKING FROM YOUR MEAL OFFERING" THUS SEPARATING YESOD, WHICH IS SALT, FROM THE MEAL OFFERING, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. They are inseparable.

669. Rabbi Acha said: The sea is one, but is called 'seas', IN THE VERSE, "ZVULUN SHALL DWELL AT THE SHORE OF THE SEAS," as the water is clear in some places, in some places water is sweet, in another it is bitter. Hence, SINCE THERE ARE DIFFERENT PLACES, it is called seas. Thus it says, "At the shore of the seas." Rabbi Aba said: Each tribe corresponds to one of the joints in the body, THE NUKVA. SINCE THERE ARE DIFFERENT PLACES WITHIN THE NUKVA CALLED SEA, ACCORDING TO THE PARTICULAR TRIBE, SHE IS THEREFORE CALLED SEAS IN THE PLURAL.

670. Rabbi Aba rose one night to study the Torah. While he was sitting, Rabbi Yosi knocked on the door. He said: In the prince's chest there are jewels, TO WIT, HE WANTED TO HEAR PEARLS OF WISDOM OF THE TORAH FROM HIM.

671. They sat, occupied with the Torah. The son of the innkeeper rose and sat before them. He asked, What is the meaning of the verse, "And that you will save alive my father, and my mother" (Yehoshua 2:13) and before that "and give me a true token" (Ibid. 12). What did she ask of them? Rabbi Aba said: You have asked a good question, but tell me son, if you have heard something. He said: I HAVE another question: They did not give her what she asked for, but "you shall bind this cord of scarlet thread in the window" (Ibid. 18), WHICH ALLUDES TO MALCHUT, THE SECRET OF THE VERSE, "YOUR LIPS ARE LIKE A THREAD OF SCARLET" (SHIR HASHIRIM 4:3), WHEN SHE ASKED FOR A TOKEN OF TRUTH, WHICH ALLUDES TO TIFERET, AS WAS SAID BEFORE.

672. HE ANSWERS: I have learned that she asked for a token of life, as it is written: "And that you will save alive my father, and my mother." She also said that the token of life rests only upon the letter of Truth, which is Vav OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, TIFERET, where there is life, BEING THE TREE OF LIFE. I have learned that she asked for the token of Moshe, THE SECRET OF TIFERET. Why did they give her the cord of scarlet thread, WHICH IS A TOKEN OF YEHOSHUA, THE SECRET OF MALCHUT?

673. They told her that Moshe passed away from the world, since the sun has set, WHICH IS TIFERET AND THE ASPECT OF MOSHE. The time has come for the moon to rule. Therefore we give you the token of the moon, MALCHUT. What is it? The cord of scarlet thread, as it is

written: "Your lips are like a thread of scarlet." You shall have the token of Yehoshua, THE SECRET OF MALCHUT, because now is the rule of the moon. Rabbi Aba and Rabbi Yosi rose and kissed him. They said: Surely you shall be a head of a Yeshivah, or a great man in Yisrael. Who is he? Rabbi Bon.

674. He asked further: All of Ya'akov's sons, the twelve tribes, were arranged below according to the order above, THE TWELVE KNOTS OF CHESED AND GVURAH, NETZACH AND HOD OF THE NUKVA. Why is Zvulun always placed before Yisachar during the blessings, although Yisachar was occupied with the Torah, which is universally put first? In the blessings, why was Zvulun placed before both by his father and Moshe?

675. HE ANSWERS: Zvulun was honored BY BEING PLACED BEFORE YISACHAR, since he took bread out of his own mouth and gave to Yisachar. He is therefore placed before YISACHAR in the blessings. From this, we learn that whoever supports a student of the Torah, receives blessings from above and below. He also merits two tables, which no other man is granted. He deserves to be blessed with wealth in this world, and a portion in the World to Come. Hence it says "at the shore of the sea; and he shall be a haven for ships." Since it says "Zvulun shall dwell the shore of the sea," why add "a haven for ships"? The "shore of the sea" is in this world and the "haven for ships" is in the World to Come, as it is written: "There go the ships" (Tehilim 104:26), WHICH WAS SAID OF "THIS GREAT AND WIDE SEA" (IBID. 25), WHICH IS BINAH, THE SECRET OF THE WORLD TO COME, for there abides the abundance of the World to Come.

68. "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem"

One explanation of the title verse tells us that the daughters of Jerusalem are the souls of the righteous, whom are always close to the King, informing Him daily of the welfare of Malchut. When a soul descends into this world, Malchut makes it swear to tell God of her love for Him so that He will be pleased with her. Man does this by proclaiming the union of the Holy Name with his mouth, heart, and soul. Another explanation of this verse interprets the daughters of Jerusalem as signifying the twelve tribes. Malchut stands upon twelve mountains and includes seven sides. The daughters of Jerusalem testify before God, declaring Yisrael love for Him. In this way, Malchut's love for Zeir Anpin is affirmed.

The Relevance of this Passage

Drawing upon the spiritual power of the righteous souls who have walked this earth throughout history, and the devout who dwell in our midst today, we unite our body and soul and our physical world with the Upper World realm called Zeir Anpin. This union produces bountiful beams of Light that brighten the lives of all mankind. The reference to the twelve Tribes is an indication to the twelve signs and the Zohar's assistance in helping us transcend the influences the stars and planets. Thus, control over our fate and fortunes is awarded to us through the spiritual power associated with this passage.

676. He opened the discussion saying: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him, that I am sick with love" (Shir Hashirim 5:8). HE ASKS: Who is closer to the King than the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA? Why then does she charge them, "If you find my beloved, that you tell him." HE REPLIES: The daughters of Jerusalem are the souls of the righteous who are always near the King, and inform Him daily of the welfare of the Matron, THE NUKVA.

677. For so we have learnt that when a soul descends into the world, the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, makes it swear to tell the king and inform Him of her love for Him, so He shall be pleased with her.

678. By which means DO THE SOULS INFORM THE KING OF THE LOVE OF THE NUKVA FOR HIM? A man should proclaim the unison of the Holy Name, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, by mouth, heart and soul, and attach himself wholly TO ZEIR AND THE NUKVA, like a flame to a burning coal, by the union which causes the King to be well disposed towards the Queen, and to proclaim before the King her love for Him.

679. Another explanation: The daughters of Jerusalem are the twelve tribes; NAMELY THE TWELVE KNOTS OF CHESED AND GVURAH, NETZACH AND HOD UPON WHICH STANDS THE BODY OF THE NUKVA. For we have learned that Jerusalem, THE NUKVA, is established upon

twelve mountains. Those who say that she stands upon only seven are not wholly correct, though all is one, for she includes seven SIDES; NAMELY CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT, and has the four ASPECTS CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT and twelve ASPECTS, WHICH ARE THE TWELVE KNOTS WE MENTIONED. All is one, ONLY THAT THESE ARE GRADES WITHIN HER, BUT TWELVE IS PERFECTION.

680. Surely she is established upon twelve mountains, three to each side, THREE KNOTS TO THE SIDE OF CHESED, THREE TO GVURAH, THREE TO NETZACH AND THREE TO HOD, AND THE BODY OF THE NUKVA ABOVE THEM. They are then called living creature, as it is written: "This is the living creature that I saw under the Elohim of Yisrael" (Yechezkel 10:20). They are called the daughters of Jerusalem, since JERUSALEM, THE NUKVA, stands above them. They testify before the King OF THE LOVE of the Congregation of Yisrael, WHO CHARGES THEM, "IF YOU FIND MY BELOVED, THAT YOU TELL HIM, THAT I AM SICK WITH LOVE." Hence it says, "There the tribes used to go up, the tribes of Yah as a testimony unto Yisrael, to give thanks unto the name of Hashem" (Tehilim 122:4), TO TESTIFY BEFORE YISRAEL, ZEIR ANPIN, OF THE LOVE OF THE NUKVA. Rabbi Yehuda said: Happy is the portion of Yisrael, who know the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He. Of them it is written, "For you are a holy people to Hashem your Elohim, and Hashem has chosen you..." (Devarim 14:2).

69. "Yisachar is a strong ass"

Yisachar is compared to a ass because just as a ass will lie anywhere and accepts its burden without kicking its master, so Yisachar accepted the burden of the Torah and cared nothing for his own honor, only that of his Master. Another explanation of the title verse tells us that when night falls, dogs and ass roam, and fiends have permission to wreak havoc in the world. He who rises at night to study the Torah relegates the evil demons to the holes of the great abyss and subdues the Klipah of the ass, bringing it down into the holes underneath the ground. Through his study of the Torah, Yisachar subdued the Klipah of the mule, forcing it to descend and thereby preventing it from harming the world. Indeed, Yisachar studied the Torah constantly and cleaved so strongly to God that he weakened himself through his devotion. While walking, Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Yosi, and Rabbi Chiya continue this discussion. Rabbi Shimon comments that he who studies the Torah receives a supernal reward that no other attains. This reward is alluded to in the name Yisachar. Indeed, we are told that when the truly righteous study the Torah, the power of the other nations will be subdued and the nations of the world will ask Yisrael to be their leaders. However, if the righteous do not study the Torah, the Klipah of the ass will cause Yisrael to go into exile, and they will be ruled by other nations. Rabbi Shimon next begins a discourse on the verse, "As I looked, thrones were placed" This means that when the Temple was destroyed, two thrones fell. The two thrones above are of Ya'akov and David, and the lower thrones signify Jerusalem and the students of the Torah.

The discussion then addresses the meaning of the verse, "The mandrakes give a fragrance." This alludes to Yisachar, who caused new and old studies of the Torah to be in the synagogues and colleges. We learn that all new expositions of the Torah ascend to the Garden of Eden where God sees them and rejoices. These words are then recorded in the supernal book. The section concludes by explaining that Yehuda, Yisachar, and Zvulun are all included in the same portion, each illuminating one of the three Columns.

The Relevance of this Passage

Each negative action that we've committed, large and small, knowingly or unknowingly, creates a negative blockage [Klipah] that dims the Light of our soul and diminishes the Light of The Creator in our lives. Torah study after midnight with a contrite heart summons forth awesome streams of Light that removes these blockages from our lives and the world, as evidenced by the Zohar's story of Yisachar. This mystical Light of the night shines forth in this passage when the eyes of man touch the letters that bespeak this ancient wisdom. Hence, we can remove the blockages [Klipot] that currently darken our daily lives through our connection to Yisachar. Moreover, we are inspired to pursue the secrets of the Torah through continued learning of Zohar, helping to hasten the final redemption. Yisachar embraced his burdens with great dedication, and so when our study of Torah and its spiritual treasures becomes difficult, that is when we draw upon the strength and character of Yisachar to struggle onward. These difficult times of study are when the greatest amount of Light is ready to be revealed.

681. "Yisachar is a strong ass couching down between the sheepfolds." Rabbi Elazar said: Why is Yisachar called an ass? If it is because he studied the Torah, he should be called a horse, a lion or a leopard. Why an ass? Because it is known that an ass would bear any burden without kicking his master like other living creatures. It is not fastidious and would lie anywhere. Yisachar too is occupied with the Torah, accepts the burden of the Torah and does not kick the Holy One, blessed be He. He is not haughty and, like the ass, does not care for his honor, but for the honor of his Master. He is "couching down between the sheepfolds" as we said, that one should lie on the ground, live a life of privation and labor for the Torah.

682. Another explanation for "Yisachar is a strong ass": He opened the discussion saying: "To David. Hashem is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Hashem is the stronghold of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" (Tehilim 27:1). How dear are the words of the Torah, how beloved those who study the Torah before the Holy One, blessed be He. He who studies the Torah need not be afraid of the fiends in the world, for he is protected above and protected below. Moreover, he subdues the demons in the world and pushes them down into the great abyss.

683. Come and see when night falls, the UPPER gates are closed, and dogs and asses dwell and roam about the world. Permission is given to the fiends to destroy, and the inhabitants of the world sleep in their beds. The souls of the righteous ascend to take pleasure above. When the north wind stirs at midnight, there is holy awakening in the world, as has been explained in several places.

684. Happy is the portion of the man who rises from his bed at that time, to study the Torah. When he studies the Torah, he puts all the evil demons into the holes of the great abyss and subdues THE KLIPAH OF the ass and brings it down into the holes underneath the ground, into the filth of the refuse and the dung.

685. Hence Yisachar, who studied the Torah, subdued THE KLIPAH OF the ass, and brought it down. THE ASS, who climbed the stairs (Heb. gerem) in order to harm the world, AS IT IS WRITTEN: "A STRONG (HEB. GAREM) ASS," was NOW brought into its place between the sheepfolds, NAMELY AMONG THE REFUSE, the filth of the holes in the ground. THE VERSE TEACHES US THAT YISACHAR, BY STUDYING THE TORAH, BROUGHT DOWN THE KLIPAH OF THE STRONG ASS AND CAUSED HIM TO COUCH DOWN BETWEEN THE SHEEPFOLDS, BY CASTING HIM DOWN INTO THE HOLES IN THE GROUND, AMONG THE REFUSE.

686. Come and behold: It is written: "And he saw that rest was good and the land that it was pleasant and became a servant to tribute." "And he saw that rest was good" is the Written Law; while "and the land that it was pleasant" is the Oral Law. "And he bowed his shoulder to bear" the yoke of the Torah, and cleave to it days and nights, "and became a servant to tribute" to serve the Holy One, blessed be He, and cling to Him, thus weakening himself for it, BY STUDYING THE TORAH CONSTANTLY.

687. Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Chiya were walking from the upper Galilee to Tiberias. Rabbi Shimon said: Let us discourse upon the Torah as we walk, for whoever can study the Torah but does not do so, risks his life and suffers besides from worldly cares, and evil oppression OF THE KINGDOM, like it is said of Yisachar, "And he bowed his shoulder to bear." What is the meaning of "bowed (also: 'turned aside')"? It means he turned aside, as it says, "But turned aside after unjust gain" (I Shmuel 8:3); NAMELY TURNED ASIDE FROM THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. For whoever turns aside and prefers not to suffer the yoke of the Torah, he forthwith "became a servant to tribute," WHICH MEANS HE SANK UNDER THE BURDEN OF THE LAW AND THE OPPRESSION OF THE KINGDOM.

688. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "That I may cause those who love Me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures" (Mishlei 8:21). Happy are the children of the world who study the Torah, for whoever is occupied with the Torah is beloved above and beloved below. He inherits the World to Come, as it is written: "That I may cause those who love Me to inherit substance." The substance is the World to Come, BINAH, whose water, ITS ABUNDANCE, never stops flowing. FOR HE WHO STUDIES THE TORAH receives supernal reward, which no other man attains. What is it? It is substance (Heb. yesh), BINAH. This is alluded to by the name Yisachar, who studied the Torah, SINCE HIS NAME CONTAINS THE SYLLABLES Yesh sachar (lit. 'there is a reward'), the reward for those who study the Torah; NAMELY THE MENTIONED Yesh.

689. It is written, "As I looked, thrones were placed, and an ancient of days did sit" (Daniel 7:9), WHICH MEANS THAT when the Temple was ruined, two thrones fell, for there are two thrones above and two below. HE EXPLAINS, There are two thrones above, THE THRONE OF YA'AKOV, ZEIR ANPIN, AND THE THRONE OF DAVID, MALCHUT. When the lower throne was removed from the upper throne, the throne of Ya'akov from that of David, the latter fell. Hence it says, "And cast down from heaven (to) earth" (Eichah 2:1). The two thrones below, Jerusalem and the students of the Torah, resemble the thrones above, for the students of the Torah are the throne of Ya'akov, ZEIR ANPIN, and Jerusalem is the throne of David, MALCHUT. HENCE TWO THRONES FELL, THE UPPER THRONE OF DAVID, THE NUKVA, AND THE THRONE OF THE TERRESTRIAL JERUSALEM. It is therefore written: "Thrones were placed" IN THE PLURAL instead of 'throne' IN THE SINGULAR, for more than one throne fell, for the sole reason of the insult to the Torah.

690. Come and see: when the truly righteous study the Torah, all the forces of the other nations and the armies, with all their power and legions, are subdued and no longer rule the world. Yisrael are appointed BY THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD, TO WIT, THEY ARE ASKED BY THEM to be their leaders. THIS IS THE SECRET OF THE NAME YISACHAR, YESH-SACHAR AS EXPLAINED. But if not, THE KLIPAH OF the ass causes Yisrael to go into exile and fall into the hands of the peoples and be ruled by them. And all this is because, "he saw rest that it was good," HE SAW THAT THE TORAH IS GOOD AND ready before him, and he could receive as his reward her benefits and comforts, yet he turned his way so as not to bear the burden of the Torah, and therefore "became a servant to tribute" IN EXILE.

691. It is written, "The mandrakes give a fragrance, and at our gates are all manner of choice fruits, new and old" (Shir Hashirim 7:14). Reuven found those mandrakes in the field, as it is written: "And found mandrakes in the field" (Beresheet 30:14). New expositions of the Torah are discoursed only by him, as it is written: "And of the sons of Yisachar were those who had knowledge of the times" (I Divrei Hayamim 12:32).

692. "And at our gates are all manner of choice fruits": It is THE CHILDREN OF YISACHAR, who caused them to be at our gates; NAMELY the doors to the synagogues and colleges. "All manner of choice fruits, new and old" are studies of the Torah, new and old, which are revealed through them in order to bring near Yisrael to their Father above. Hence it says, "to know what Yisrael ought to do" (I Divrei Hayamim 12:32).

693. "Which I have laid up for you, O my beloved" (Shir Hashirim 7:14): From this we learned that whoever studies the Torah appropriately and knows new, joyous words, these words rise up to the King's throne, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, THE THRONE OF ZEIR ANPIN. And the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, opens the gates before them and conceals them. And when the Holy One, blessed be He, enters the Garden of Eden to take delight in the righteous AT MIDNIGHT, she brings THE NEW EXPOSITIONS ON THE TORAH before Him, and the Holy One, blessed be He, sees them and rejoices. He then crowns himself with supernal crowns and rejoices with the Matron, THE NUKVA. This is the meaning of the words "new and old, which I have laid up for you O my beloved," WHICH SHE UTTERS AT MIDNIGHT, WHEN BRINGING OUT THE NEW EXPOSITIONS ON THE TORAH BEFORE THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE. From that time on, the words OF THE STUDENT, WHO GLADDENS BY HIS WORDS, are written in the SUPERNAL book, as it says "and a book of remembrance was written before Him" (Malachi 3:16).

694. Happy is the portion of him who studies the Torah appropriately, for he is happy in this world and will be happy in the World to Come. So far extends the sway of Yehuda, the arm which includes all THE THREE COLUMNS, through the strength of the sides, SOUTH, NORTH AND EAST, the three joints of the arm. TO WIT, YEHUDA, YISACHAR, AND ZVULUN ARE PLACED TOGETHER IN THIS PORTION, AS IN RELATION TO THE STANDARDS, FOR YEHUDA IS THE ILLUMINATION OF THE RIGHT COLUMN, YISACHAR THE LEFT AND ZVULUN THE CENTRAL COLUMN, so that Yehuda will overcome all THE OTHER SIDE.

70. "Dan shall judge his people"

The Zohar expounds upon the tribe of Dan. When the Jews were trekking through the desert, the tribe of Dan was placed in the rear to watch over the other tribes. The Zohar then speaks of the spiritual routes taken by each of the tribes, and in doing so, reveals that each route was already inscribed a cosmic blueprint designed to arouse spiritual Light in this world.

Ya'akov specifically blessed the tribe of Dan with the words "Dan should be snake on the road." The Zohar then asks what this blessing means. The lower most dimension, in this case the end of the procession, represents the lowest level of Light and therefore represents the beginning and opening for negativity to enter. Dan is the watch guard protecting all the tribes from any intrusions from the negative snake known as the Satan.

The Relevance of this Passage

The cosmic sentinel that is the tribe of Dan, blankets us with a protective armor of Light that keeps negative entities, evil thoughts, and destructive emotions incited by the angel Satan, at bay.

695. "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Yisrael." Rabbi Chiya said: This verse should have been, 'Dan shall judge the tribes of Yisrael' or 'Dan shall judge the tribes of Yisrael as one.' What is the meaning of "Dan shall judge his people" followed by "as one of the tribes of Yisrael"?

696. HE ANSWERS: Dan, whom it says was "rearward of all the camps" (Bemidbar 10:25), is the left thigh, NAMELY HOD, and went last. HE EXPLAINS, Come and see: when Yehuda and Reuven march, the Levites and the ark unfurl their standard and then the standard of Efraim marches to the west. The right thigh marches according to order, BY WHICH THE RIGHT THIGH GOES BEFORE THE LEFT THIGH, DAN. THEREFORE DAN IS THE LAST TO MOVE. You may say that Zvulun is the one who goes in and out, as it says of him, "Rejoice, Zvulun, in your going out" (Devarim 33:18), FOR HE PERTAINS TO THE THIGH, AS EXPRESSLY STATED, "And his border (also: 'thigh') shall be at Tzidon." ZVULUN THEN SHOULD BE THE THIGH AND NOT EFRAIM. HE ANSWERS: Yehuda comprises all of them.

697. HE EXPLAINS THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE FOUR STANDARDS, SAYING: come and behold: the upper Malchut, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, comprised everything, ALL THE TWELVE JOINTS, and Yehuda is the lower Malchut. As the upper Malchut comprises everything, so does the lower Malchut (kingdom), Yehuda, comprise the whole body and the thigh; NAMELY TIFERET AND THE TWELVE JOINTS IN THE ARMS AND LEGS, in order to grow in strength.

698. It is written, "From his right hand went a fiery law for them" (Devarim 33:2), which means that the Torah was given from the side of Gvurah, WHICH IS FIRE. BUT Gvurah was included within the right, CHESED, in its body, TIFERET, and the thigh, NETZACH AND HOD, and all THE SFIROT. The first corps OF THE STANDARDS is Yehuda's, which is Malchut from the side of Gvurah, BUT included within the right in the body and in the thigh, and all THE SFIROT, like Malchut above, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, comprises all THE SFIROT.

699. The second corps of the standards is Reuven's, who was on the south side, which is right, CHESED. But the strength of the right, OF REUVEN, was taken by Yehuda, since the kingship was removed from Reuven, for "unstable as water, you shall not excel." So Yehuda took it and was reinforced with the power of the right, which was Reuven's. It is also said of David, WHO IS COME FROM YEHUDA, "Hashem says to my master, 'Sit at my right hand'" (Tehilim 110:1), because left is included in the right and has become strengthened. And so is written, "The right hand of Hashem does valiantly" (Ibid. 118:16). SINCE YEHUDA TOOK ALL REUVEN'S POWER, HE WAS THE FIRST TO MARCH. Yehuda and Reuven were the two arms, REUVEN THE RIGHT AND YEHUDA THE LEFT ARM.

700. The third corps of the standards is that of Efraim, who is the right thigh, NETZACH, which always goes before the left. Dan, who is the left thigh, HOD, goes last and is therefore "the rearward of all the camps" and marches last.

701. Yehuda had a portion in the two arms, CHESED AND GVURAH, since Reuven, who is the right arm, lost his birthright, priesthood and the kingship. It therefore says of Yehuda, "Let his hands be sufficient for him; and be you a help to him from his enemies" (Devarim 33:7), WHICH REFERS TO THE TWO HANDS, CHESED AND GVURAH.

702. Come and behold: It is written: "The king made a great throne of ivory" (I Melachim 10:18). The throne of Solomon was constructed after the supernal pattern, and all the supernal forms, NAMELY THE LION, THE OX, AND SO ON, were upon it. THUS THE LOWER MALCHUT, SOLOMON, WHO IS A DESCENDANT OF YEHUDA, INCLUDES ALL THE SFIROT

LIKE THE UPPER MALCHUT. Of this says the verse, "Then Solomon sat on the throne of Hashem as king" (I Divrei Hayamim 29:23). The word king without attributes POSSIBLY DOES NOT REFER TO SOLOMON, BUT ALLUDES TO THE SUPERNAL MALCHUT. THE LESSON OF THE VERSE IS THAT "SOLOMON SAT ON THE THRONE OF HASHEM" LIKE A KING, THE SUPERNAL MALCHUT, AND LIKE IT COMPRISED ALL THE SFIROT. "Then Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was firmly established" (I Melachim 2:12). "HIS KINGDOM" REFERS TO THE SUPERNAL MALCHUT, WHICH MEANS THAT THE MOON, THE SUPERNAL KINGDOM, was full. HERE TOO, "AS KING" ALLUDES TO THE SUPERNAL MALCHUT.

703. "Dan shall judge his people" first, and then "the tribes of Yisrael." THE WORD "as one" MEANS like the lone one in the world, TO WIT, HE JUDGED ON HIS OWN LIKE THE ONLY ONE OF THE WORLD. This applies to Shimshon, who singlehandedly executed justice in the world, sentenced and killed by himself and needed no help.

704. "Dan shall judge his people." Rabbi Yitzchak said: Dan is a serpent which lurks in ways and paths. It may be said that this is true for Shimshon alone. NOT SO, but this is also true above. It is the little serpent in "the rearward of all the camps" AT THE END OF THE GRADES OF HOLINESS. It lurks in the ways and paths, and from it issue armies and hosts OF FIENDS, which lurk in wait for people, TO PUNISH THEM for the sins they cast behind their backs, TO WIT, WHICH THEY DID NOT NOTICE, AND THEN SAY THEY DID NOT COMMIT. Rabbi Chiya said: This was the primordial serpent above before it was tempered by the gladdening wine.

705. "A serpent by the way": Come and see: as there is a way above IN BINAH, so there is a way below IN MALCHUT. The sea is divided THROUGH THESE TWO WAYS into several paths on each side, EACH INCLUDED OF BOTH. There is one path, which adds MOCHIN OF THE FIRST THREE SFIROT to the sea, MALCHUT. It breeds all kinds of bad fish, FOR THE KLIPOT APPROACH TO SUCK ABUNDANCE FROM THERE AND THUS GROW. As the water below breed good fish, bad fish and frogs, so bad fish issue FROM THE SUPERNAL SEA.

706. When THE KLIPOT go by way of the sea, THEY SUCK ABUNDANCE FROM IT, they are seen riding on horses, and were it not for the serpent in the rearward of the camps, NAMELY DAN, THE LITTLE SERPENT which lies in the end of the paths and wards them off, they would destroy the world. OF THEM SAYS THE VERSE, "THAT BITES THE HORSE'S HEELS, SO THAT HIS RIDER SHALL FALL BACKWARD." THESE ARE THE DEMONS WHO RIDE HORSES. From the side OF THE KLIPOT, sorcerers come into the world. Come and behold: it is written of Bila'am: "He went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments (lit. 'serpents')" (Bemidbar 24:1), which are made to cast spells with their charms.

707. See the words: "Dan shall be a serpent by the way." HE ASKS: What way is this? HE ANSWERS: Whoever follows the serpent, rejects the household of heaven, CAUSES DIMINUTION IN THE HOLY HOSTS IN THE SUPERNAL WORLD. How so? Because this is a way which begins above, as it is written: "Who makes a way in the sea" (Yeshayah 43:16). Whoever follows the serpent, it is as if he treads this way and lessens it, BY DIMINISHING ITS ABUNDANCE, since from this way the upper worlds are sustained. HE SPOILS THEIR NOURISHMENT AND CAUSES THEM TO BECOME THIN.

708. You may ask why Dan is in this grade, WHICH IS OF THE ASPECT OF THE EVIL KLIPAH. HE ANSWERS: Like "the bright blade of a revolving sword to guard the way to The Tree of Life" (Beresheet 3:24), IT SAYS here "that bites the horse's heels..." for the protection of all the camps. Rabbi Elazar said: This is the fixing of the throne. TO WIT, DAN HOLDING TO THE GRADE OF THE KLIPAH IS THE UPHOLDING OF THE NUKVA, TO KEEP HER FROM THE SUCKING OF THE FIENDS WHICH RIDE HORSES. Come and see: Upon Solomon's throne, there is a serpent dangling from the scepter above the lions THAT ARE ON THE THRONE, WHICH TEACHES US THAT THERE IS A SERPENT IN THE MAKING OF THE THRONE.

709. It is written: "And the spirit of Hashem began to move him in the camp of Dan" (Shoftim 13:25). Come and see: Shimshon was a permanent Nazir and a recluse of great strength. He was a serpent in this world against the heathen nations, for he inherited the portion of blessings of his ancestor Dan, as it is written: "Dan shall be a serpent by the way."

710. Rabbi Chiya said: We understand about the serpent, but what of the adder? He said to him: The secret of making spells is that the serpent is an adder, THOUGH THEY ARE TWO DIFFERENT SPECIES, THEY CAST THE SAME SPELLS AS IF THEY WERE OF THE SAME KIND.

It is written also of the evil Bilaam, who was omniscient, that he "went to a steep place (Heb. shefi)" (Bemidbar 23:3), WHICH ALLUDES TO THE ADDER (HEB. SHEFIFON), THOUGH BEFORE IT IS WRITTEN: "HE WENT NOT, AS AT OTHER TIMES, TO SEEK SERPENTS." He used now the one now the other, NOW THE SERPENT AND NOW THE ADDER, SINCE HE HAD KNOWLEDGE OF BOTH.

711. You may say that it does not pertain to Dan's grade to use THE SERPENT AND THE ADDER. HE REPLIES: Indeed it does not, but he was appointed over this grade TO USE IT FOR THE NEEDS OF HOLINESS, being of the last grade. This is to his honor, for there are chieftains charged by the King over this or that, and it is considered to be an honor to all the appointed TO BE APPOINTED BY THE KING, REGARDLESS AS TO WHAT THEY ARE APPOINTED OVER, for the King's throne is fixed through all the chiefs together, and under them there are paths and grades for the good and for evil, all of them united in the making of the throne, THE NUKVA. Hence Dan is to the north, NAMELY THE LEFT THIGH OF THE NUKVA WHICH IS HOD. In a hole of the great abyss, IN THE END OF THE LEFT THIGH, WHICH IS BINAH OF THE KLIPAH, there are many battalions of evil demons, all in charge of harming the world.

712. For this reason, Ya'akov prayed, saying, "I wait for your salvation, O Hashem." HE ASKS: Why does he not ask for salvation in regard to the other tribes, only to this one. HE REPLIES: This is because he has seen the force and strength of the serpent, when judgment is aroused to overpower holiness. HE THEREFORE PRAYED FOR SALVATION.

713. Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Chizkiyah were going to visit Rabbi Shimon in Cappadocia. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: It is known that a man should first pronounce the praises of his Master and only then to say his prayer. A QUESTION ARISES: What of a man who is in distress or in trouble and wishes to pray, yet cannot pronounce his Master's praises?

714. Rabbi Yosi said to him: He is not fully devoted in heart and desire, yet why should he fail to praise his Master? He should first pronounce his Master's praises, though not with perfect devotion, and then say his prayer. This is the meaning of "A prayer of David. Hear the right, O Hashem, attend to my cry" (Tehilim 17:1). First, "Hear the right, O Hashem," which is the praises for the Master, and only then "attend to my cry give ear to my prayer." Whoever can praise his Master, yet does not do so, of him it is written: "Even when you make many prayers, I will not hear..." (Yeshayah 1:15).

715. It is written, "The one lamb shall you offer in the morning, and the other lamb shall you offer at evening" (Bemidbar 28:4). The prayers were ordained in the place of the daily offering, THE MORNING PRAYER CORRESPONDS TO THE MORNING OFFERING, MINCHAH TO THE EVENING OFFERING. Come and see: by the awakening below CAUSED BY THE SACRIFICE OF THE OFFERING, there is also awakening above. Through the awakening above towards that which is higher still, IT IS AROUSED too, until the awakening reaches the place where the candle is to be lit, and it is lit. Thus IT IS FOUND THAT through the ascent of the smoke WHICH RISES FROM THE OFFERING below, the candle is lit above, WHICH IS THE NUKVA. When this candle is lit, all other candles are lit and all the worlds are blessed through it. Thus the awakening of the offering is the support of the world, and the blessings of all worlds.

716. HE EXPLAINS HIS WORDS: How is this performed? When the smoke from the offering commences to rise, the holy forms appointed over the world OF ASIYAH are prepared to rouse AND RAISE MAYIM NUKVIN (FEMALE WATER.) They are aroused towards the grades above them IN THE WORLD OF YETZIRAH, with great desire, as it says, "The young lions roar after their prey..." (Tehilim 104:21). Those OF THE WORLD OF YETZIRAH are aroused toward the grades above them IN THE WORLD OF BRIYAH, UNTIL THE AWAKENING REACHES THE PLACE WHERE THE CANDLE IS TO BE LIT; NAMELY until the King, ZEIR ANPIN, wishes to join the Matron, THE NUKVA.

717. HE EXPLAINS THE MEANING OF MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATER), saying that through the desire below, the lower waters, NAMELY MAYIN NUKVIN, rise to receive the upper waters FROM THE GRADE ABOVE IT. The lower waters do not flow save through the arousal of the desire of the lower one. Then the desire OF THE LOWER AND THE UPPER cleave together, the lower waters flow to meet the DESCENDING upper waters, AND THE MATING IS CONSUMMATED. The worlds are blessed, all the candles lit, and the upper and lower beings are endowed with blessings.

718. Come and see: the priests FROM THE RIGHT COLUMN and the Levites FROM THE LEFT COLUMN are aroused WHEN THEY SACRIFICE THE OFFERING, so as to join the right with the left. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: This is true, yet I have heard AN EXPLANATION TO THIS. AT THE TIME OF OFFERING, the one stirs the left, NAMELY THE LEVITES, and the other, THE PRIESTS, the right. For the union of the male and the female occurs only through left and right, as it says, "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me" (Shir Hashirim 2:6). AFTER THE EMBRACE OF RIGHT AND LEFT, the male is united to the female with desire, all the worlds are blessed and there is joy high and low.

719. The priests and Levites then stir below THE OFFERING in order to arouse desire and love above, DESIRE BEING THE SECRET OF THE LEFT AND LOVE THE SECRET OF THE RIGHT, since all depends upon right and left. FOR THE CENTRAL COLUMN ONLY BRINGS THEM TOGETHER. It is found that the sacrifice is the foundation of the world, the making of the world, the joy of the upper and lower. Rabbi Yosi said: You have spoken well, and this is so. I, TOO, have heard the same, yet I forgot it. NOW that I hear it from you, it all comes up to one, NAMELY THROUGH THE CENTRAL COLUMN, WHICH BRINGS TOGETHER RIGHT AND LEFT AND COMPLETES THEM.

720. Now that prayer has taken the place of sacrifice, man should first pronounce the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He, fittingly, for if he does not, his prayer is no prayer. Come and see: The perfect praise for the Holy One, blessed be He, is made by him who knows how to properly unite the Holy Name, WHO CAN RAISE MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) TO UNITE MALE AND FEMALE, for through this the upper and lower are awakened and draw blessings upon all the worlds.

721. Rabbi Chizkiyah said: The Holy One, blessed be He, put the children of Yisrael in exile among the nations for the sole purpose that the other nations be blessed through Yisrael, who daily draw blessings from above downward.

722. They went. As they were walking, they saw a snake on the road and turned aside. Another man came and the snake killed him. They turned their heads and saw the man dead. They said: Surely the snake acted by his Master's bidding; TO WIT, THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, ORDERED HIM TO KILL THAT MAN. Blessed be the Merciful One who saved us.

723. Rabbi Yosi opened the discussion with the verse: "Dan shall be a serpent by the way." When was Dan a serpent? In the days of Yerovaam, as it is written: "And the other put he in Dan" (I Melachim 12:29). BECAUSE "A SNAKE" REFERS TO IDOL WORSHIPPING. And why was he put there "by the road"? "By the way," so as to prevent the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Dan was then a snake "by the way" of Yisrael. "By the way" indeed, as it says, "the king took counsel, AND MADE TWO CALVES OF GOLD, AND SAID TO THEM, IT IS TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO GO UP TO JERUSALEM" (IBID. 28). HE THUS MADE THIS SNAKE BY THE WAY TO JERUSALEM TO PREVENT THEIR GOING THERE ON PILGRIMAGE. "An adder in the path" bit Yisrael. They were put "by the way" and in the path to prevent the children of Yisrael from going up to Jerusalem to celebrate their festivals, offer sacrifices and offering and worship there.

724. Come and see: when it was time for Moshe to bless the tribes, he saw that Dan was attached to the serpent, and linked him again to the lion, WHICH IS CHESED. This is the meaning of the verse, "And of Dan he said: 'Dan is a lion's whelp, that leaps from Bashan'" (Devarim 33:22). Wherefore did he do this? So as to connect the first and the last standards: Yehuda's who is king, as it is written: "Yehuda is a lion's whelp," the first of the standards, and Dan's in the rear, as is written, "Dan is a lion's whelp, ..." so as to link the beginning and the end to one place, THE LION WHICH IS CHESED.

725. "I wait (lit. 'waited') for your salvation, O Hashem" (Bereshheet 49:18): Rabbi Chiya said: It is written, "And he shall begin to deliver Yisrael out of the hand of the Plishtim" (Shoftim 13:5). THIS IS THE SALVATION YA'AKOV WAITED FOR. Rabbi Acha said: Why DOES IT SAY, "I waited"? Ya'akov would have been dead these many years by then. Why did he say he was waiting for salvation? The secret of this matter is the verse, "And it came to pass, when Moshe held up his hand, that Yisrael prevailed" (Shemot 17:11). The word Yisrael without attributes IS ZEIR ANPIN; NAMELY THE ASPECT OF YA'AKOV. THUS THE SALVATION THROUGH SHIMSHON CONCERNS YA'AKOV, THOUGH HE HAD ALREADY PASSED

AWAY. Hence he said: "I wait (lit. 'waited') for your salvation, O Hashem." Rabbi Chiya said: Surely this is correct and well. Happy is the portion of the righteous who know how to study the Torah and merit through her life eternal, as it says "for he is your life, and the length of your days: that you may dwell in the land..." (Devarim 30:20).

71. "Gad, raiders shall maraud him"

Rabbi Yisa explains the name Gad indicates that many hosts and legions are dependent on him, and that armies will issue from him and engage in war. The name Gad also signifies the sustenance that the water of the river flowing from the Garden of Eden provides to the poor and the needy. Indeed, if not for his lineage, Gad would have risen higher than all the tribes because of his name. We learn that, similar to Reuven, he was born at a propitious time. However, perfection later departed from him, and also like Reuven, he thus did not receive a portion in the Holy Land, but instead dwelt on the other side of the river Jordan.

The Relevance of this Passage

The spiritual strength and fortitude to wage war on our own Evil Inclination is instilled within us. Additionally, we awaken the spiritual Light that brings forth sustenance into our lives, helping to remove both spiritual and physical poverty from the landscape of human civilization.

726. "Gad, raiders shall maraud him, but he shall overcome at the last." Rabbi Yisa said: From THE NAME Gad, we understand that armies will issue from him and engage in war. This is derived from the spelling of Gad, which is always spelled Gimel and Dalet, YESOD AND MALCHUT, from which UNION armies come forth, as Gimel gives, BEING YESOD, and Dalet receives, BEING MALCHUT. From this we understand how many hosts and legions come from them. HENCE IT SAYS, "GAD, RAIDERS SHALL MARAUD HIM..."

727. Come and see the water of that river which comes out and flows from the Garden of Eden, BINAH, never stops flowing. It supports the poor BY GIVING THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM THROUGH GIMEL WHICH IS YESOD TO MALCHUT, WHICH IS DALET, THAT IS POOR (HEB. DALA) AND NEEDY. Hence, hosts and legions wait here for sustenance FROM BINAH, THE SECRET OF THE SAID RIVER. THIS UNION is therefore CALLED BY THE NAME OF Gad, THE GIMEL taking out FROM BINAH to give and DALET accepting and receiving from it. The house, THE NUKVA, is sustained together with her household men, THE HOSTS AND LEGIONS OF ANGELS THAT EXTEND FROM HER.

728. Rabbi Yitzchak said: Were Gad not of the sons of a handmaids, WHO ARE CONSIDERED HINDER PARTS, he would have succeeded in rising higher than all the tribes, BECAUSE OF THE HIGH AND PERFECT ORIGIN OF THE NAME GAD. It is written "Ba Gad (Eng. 'Fortune comes')" (Bereshheet 30:10), but spelled "Bagad (betrayed)" without Aleph, since the hour of his birth was propitious, but later PERFECTION departed from him. This is the meaning of the words: "My brethren have dealt deceitfully (Heb. bagdu) like a river" (Iyov 6:15), since the flowing river, WHICH IS BINAH CALLED RIVER, turned away at that time, SINCE GAD WAS OF THE HINDER PARTS, UPON WHICH THE RIVER BINAH DOES NOT FLOW, AND GIMEL HAD NOTHING TO POUR UPON DALET. HENCE, it says "bagad" without Aleph, WHICH ALLUDES TO THE LACK OF BINAH'S ABUNDANCE. He therefore did not receive a portion in the Holy Land, BUT DWELT ACROSS THE JORDAN.

729. Rabbi Yehuda said: Whence do we know that the same happened to Reuven, WHO WAS AT FIRST OF A GREATER GRADE, WHICH LATER DEPARTED FROM HIM? From the verse: "Unstable as water, you shall not excel" WHICH MEANS that the water, THE LIGHTS OF BINAH, departed and did not flow. His deficiency was already explained THAT YA'AKOV THOUGHT OF RACHEL, AND THEREFORE HIS BIRTHRIGHT WAS TAKEN FROM HIM AND GIVEN TO YOSEF. Both REUVEN AND GAD did not receive a portion in the Holy Land, BUT ACROSS THE JORDAN, but they sent armies and troops AS THE VANGUARD BEFORE THE CHILDREN OF YISRAEL, to deliver the land to them. Come and behold: the flaw in Gad was made good in Asher, as it is written, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." Now Gimel perfects Dalet.

72. "Set me as a seal upon your heart"

While sheltering themselves from the bright sun in a cave, Rabbi Aba and Rabbi Elazar discuss the title verse. Rabbi Elazar tells of Rabbi Shimon's interpretation of this verse, explaining that only the souls of the righteous can raise the Female Waters of the Female Principle. After the male and female were joined, the Female Principle quoted the title verse, desiring to retain a likeness even in separation. Similarly, Yisrael desired to remain with the Shechinah in some way, even in exile. Yisrael's love for God is so strong that any separation from Him is as difficult to bear as the day when the spirit leaves the body.

The discussion then turns to the verse, "Jealousy is cruel as Sh'ol." We learn that jealousy is a sign of true love. Therefore, a man should be jealous of his wife so that he will be attached to her in complete love and will not look at other women. Another explanation is that when the wicked are brought down to Sh'ol, their sins are announced and the jealous demand reckoning for these sins. We then learn that the "flame of Yah" is the burning flame that comes out of the Shofar, the burning flame of Yisrael's love for God. This love burns so strongly that rather than extinguishing it, the "many waters" of Chesed add to it. Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Yehuda, and Rabbi Yitzchak then join Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Aba to conclude the discussion.

The Relevance of this Passage

Deep love for The Creator burns within us as Light and love emanate from these poetic words. This energy also helps to remove envy and jealousy of others from our hearts, while stirring a positive form of jealousy, passion, and appreciation for our spouses.

730. Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Aba entered a cave in Lod to escape the bright sun upon the road. Rabbi Aba said: Let us encompass this cave with words of the Torah. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion saying: "Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm... its coals are coals of fire, the very flame of Hashem" (Shir Hashirim 8:6). We have already roused this verse; NAMELY EXPLAINED IT. Yet one night, when I was attending to my father, RABBI SHIMON, I heard from him that the Congregation of Yisrael, the NUKVA, had no perfection, desire and passion towards the Holy One, blessed be He, but from the souls of the righteous, who excite the flow of the lower waters OF THE NUKVA toward the supernal waters OF ZEIR ANPIN; TO WIT, THEY RAISE THE MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) OF THE NUKVA. Then is a time of complete desire and passion to become one and produce fruit.

731. Come and see: After THE MALE AND THE FEMALE cleaved to each other, and she was desirous OF ZEIR ANPIN, she said: "Set me as a seal upon your heart." Why a seal? Because a seal, when it is imprinted, even after it is removed, its impress remains there, and is never erased, but its shape and likeness stay. Thus said the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA: Now that I have cleaved to you, even though I shall leave and go into exile, "set me as a seal upon your heart" so that my likeness will remain with you, like the seal which leaves its imprint wherever it is pressed.

732. "For love is strong as death." It is as strong as the spirit taking leave of the body. For we have learned that when time comes for a man to depart from the world and he sees certain sights, the spirit goes to every limb in the body and courses on waves like a passenger UPON A BOAT at sea, without oars, helplessly going up and down. Nothing is more difficult than the day when the spirit takes leave of the body. So the love of the Congregation of Yisrael to the Holy One, blessed be He, is as strong as death is, when the spirit departs from the body.

733. "Jealousy is cruel as Sh'ol..." Whoever loves and is not jealous, his love is not true love. When he is jealous, love is perfected. From this we have learned that a man should be jealous of his wife, so as to be attached to her in complete love. For this way he does not look at other women. What is "cruel (lit. 'hard') as Sh'ol"? As it is hard for the wicked to descend to Sh'ol, so it is hard for the jealous lover to part from his love.

734. Another explanation for "jealousy is cruel as Sh'ol" is that when the wicked are brought down to Sh'ol, their sins are announced to them, for which they are brought down. They find it hard, so he who is jealous demands reckoning for sins, and enumerates all the SUSPICIOUS things SHE DID, and his love grows strong.

735. "Its coals are coals of fire, the very flame of Yah." What is the very flame of Yah? It is the burning flame which comes out of the Shofar, YESOD OF IMA CALLED Yah. Once it is aroused, it burns. What is it? The Left COLUMN OF IMA, as it is written: "His left hand is under my head" (Shir Hashirim 8:3). It burns the flame of Yisrael's love, THE SHECHINAH, for the Holy One, blessed be He.

736. Therefore, "many waters cannot quench love" (Shir Hashirim 8:7), for when the right comes, which is water, CHESED, it adds to the burning of love, instead of extinguishing the flame of the left, as it says "and his right hand embraces me" (Ibid. 3). Hence "many waters cannot quench love." All THE FOLLOWING VERSES are EXPOUNDED UPON in this manner.

737. As they were sitting, they heard Rabbi Shimon, who was coming this way together with Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yitzchak. RABBI SHIMON approached the cave, and Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Aba came out. Rabbi Shimon said: From the walls of the cave I see that the Shechinah is here. They sat. Rabbi Shimon asked, What are you studying? Rabbi Aba said: The Congregation of Yisrael's love for the Holy One, blessed be He. Rabbi Elazar explained the verse, "Set me as a seal upon your heart" as referring to the Congregation of Yisrael. Rabbi Shimon said: Elazar, you have looked upon sublime love and the bond of amity.

738. Rabbi Shimon was silent for a while, then said: Silence is good everywhere, except in relation to the Torah. I have a hidden secret, which I do not wish to be lost from you. It is a supernal matter, which I found in the book of Rav Hamnuna Saba (the elder).

739. Come and see: the male always chases after the female and arouses her love. Yet here I found that she arouses his love and courts him, AS SAID IN THE VERSE: "SET ME AS A SEAL UPON YOUR HEART..." According to custom, it is not proper that the female runs after the male. But OF NECESSITY this is a deep matter, a supernal matter HIDDEN among the King's treasures.

73. Three souls

A discussion of the three souls reveals that there are actually four. The first is the supernal soul of all souls, which is hidden and never revealed. The second is the Nukva. The third and fourth are the souls of the righteous below, which come from the soul of the female and the male, Zeir Anpin. Through the analogy of a king who sends his son away to be raised in a village until he is ready to learn the ways of the palace, we learn why the soul descends to this world only to leave at a later time. The soul never leaves this world until the Matron comes for it and delivers it to the King's palace, where it remains. The discourse then returns to the subject of the previous section, Yisrael love for God. We are told that the souls of the righteous, who are male, incite the female love and desire for Zeir Anpin. The rabbis conclude by explaining that the verse, "The righteous is the foundation of the world," alludes to both Yesod of Zeir Anpin and the souls of the righteous.

The Relevance of this Passage

The wisdom woven throughout this passage awakens a deep desire within us to know our true purpose in this world. A love for the Light of The Creator and for spiritual truths is kindled in our hearts and soul, which, in turn, help unite the Lower and Upper Worlds.

Spiritual work requires both an intellectual and emotional understanding in order to provide us with the impetus to continue onward. Here, an emotional awakening concerning our source and origin is born within us as we realize that spiritual growth brings us nearer to our supernal Father.

740. Come and see: There are three souls which pertain to certain supernal grades. The three are really four. The first is a supernal soul, which cannot be perceived by the higher treasurer, much less by the lower one. It is the soul of all the souls, hidden and never revealed to be known. All stem from it.

741. It is wrapped in a garment made of the splendor of the Carmel, which drips pearls, all linked as one like the limbs of the body. The supernal soul enters them, and displays through them its works, AS THE BODY REVEALS THE WORKS OF THE SOUL. It and they are one with nothing to divide them. This is the supernal soul, the most hidden.

742. Another soul is the Nukva, which hides among her armies, it She is their soul and receives a body from them. SHE IS CLOTHED IN THEM AS A SOUL WITHIN A BODY, so as to display through them her handiwork to all the world, just as the body is a vessel which executes its works through the soul. They are ATTACHED AND UNITED TO EACH OTHER, like the hidden ones above are attached.

743. Another soul is the souls of the righteous below. The souls of the righteous come from the supernal souls, the soul of the female and the soul of the male, ZEIR ANPIN. For this reason, the souls of the righteous are higher than all the armies and legions of angels above, SINCE ANGELS COME FROM THE OUTER PART OF THE NUKVA, BUT THE SOULS COME FROM THE INNER PART OF THE NUKVA AND ZEIR ANPIN, NAMELY FROM THEIR SOULS.

744. HE ASKS: You may say that if the souls are elevated on two sides, OF ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA, AND COME FROM THEIR INWARDNESS, why then do they descend into this world, and why leave it? HE ANSWERS: THIS IS LIKE a king who begot a son. He sent him to be raised in a village until it was time for him to be taught the ways of the palace. When the king heard his son is grown up, out of love for him, he sent the Matron his mother to fetch him. She brought him to the palace, where he rejoiced with HIS SON every day.

745. The Holy One, blessed be He, also begot a son by the Matron. Who is he? The Supernal Holy Soul, THE DESCENDANTS OF ZEIR AND NUKVA. He sent him to the village, NAMELY to this world, to be raised and be brought up in the ways of the King's palace. When the King saw that his son was grown up in this village, and that it was time to bring him to the palace, what did he do? Out of love for his son, he sent the Matron, who fetched him to his palace. The soul never leaves this world until the Matron comes for it, and brings it to the King's palace where it remains forever.

746. Yet it is the way of the world that the inhabitants of the village weep when the King's son parts from them. There was a wise man there, who said: Wherefore are you crying, is he not a king's son? It is not meet that he shall dwell among you any longer, but in his father's palace. Moshe too, who was wise, saw the inhabitants of the village crying, and said to them, "You are the children of Hashem your Elohim: you shall not gash yourselves" (Devarim 14:1).

747. Come and see: if all the righteous knew that they would be glad when the day comes for them to depart from this world. For is it not a high honor that the Matron comes for them to escort them into the King's palace, and that the King will daily rejoice in them? For the Holy One, blessed be He, amuses Himself only with the souls of the righteous.

748. Come and see: the love of the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, for the Holy One, blessed be He, ZEIR ANPIN, is stirred by the souls of the righteous below. Since they come from the side of the King, ZEIR ANPIN, the side of the male, the female is aroused from the side of the male, and love is stirred. Thus the male incites affection and love within the female and she is united in love with the male. THIS SETTLES THE QUESTION, THAT IT IS NOT PROPER FOR THE FEMALE TO COURT THE MALE. NOW IT IS EXPLAINED, THAT THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, WHO ARE MALE, INCITE IN HER THIS LOVE TO ZEIR ANPIN.

749. In the same manner, the desire of the female to pour forth lower waters towards the upper waters is aroused solely by the souls of the righteous. Happy are the righteous in this world and in the World to Come, for they support the upper and lower. Therefore it just says, "The righteous is the foundation of the world" (Mishlei 10:25), WHICH MAY MEAN EITHER THE SUPERNAL RIGHTEOUS, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, OR THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS. BOTH MEANINGS ARE TRUE.

750. The secret thereof is that the righteous is Yesod above, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, and Yesod below OF THE NUKVA AND THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS. The Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, comprises the upper and lower righteous. The righteous on this side, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, and the righteous on that side, THE SOUL OF THE RIGHTEOUS BELOW, inherit THE NUKVA. Hence it says, "The righteous shall inherit the earth" (Tehilim 38:29), and assuredly they will inherit THE NUKVA CALLED earth. Come and see: The righteous, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, inherits the earth, THE NUKVA, pours blessings upon it every day and furnishes it with delights and dainties which he draws FROM BINAH upon it. We have already explained this.

74. "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat"

A discussion of the title verse interprets it as signifying Binah, which gives "royal dainties" to Yesod, which in turn then gives to Malchut, our dimension of physical matter. There are two types of bread: the bread of poverty, which is the bread of Malchut, and millet bread, the bread of Zeir Anpin. The bread mentioned in the title verse is that of Zeir Anpin. Zeir Anpin nourishes Malchut through the righteous, and Malchut distributes the "royal dainties" among the grades beneath her.

Following a description of the double bread of Shabbat, there ensues a discussion of the verse, "For the bread is spent." We are told that the upper bread of Zeir Anpin is referred to as masculine and includes all types of food, while the lower bread of the Nukva is feminine and refers only to bread. Finally, the discourse informs us Moshe revealed that Asher is mentioned above in Binah. We also learn that Asher is mentioned below, in relation to Malchut and is included in the support of Malchut, below the twelve tribes.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here, the righteous sages of antiquity, and the pious who walk among us in the present, assist us in connecting our souls and the entire world [Malchut] to the level of Zeir Anpin, the fountainhead of spiritual energy, including financial sustenance for our physical reality.

751. This is the secret of the verse, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties," WHICH MEANS THAT ASHER IS THE SAID RIGHTEOUS, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, THAT POURS DAINITIES UPON THE NUKVA. Yet he is not YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "The daughters saw her, and called her happy" (Shir Hashirim 6:9), WHICH IS AN ASPECT OF THE NUKVA AND NOT YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. Leah therefore said "for the daughters will call me happy (Heb. oshri)" (Bereshheet 30:13). This is correct. Come and see: From the World to Come, BINAH, issues a flow upon the righteous, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, to pour delicacies and dainties upon the earth, which has been bread of poverty turned millet bread. This is the meaning of, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." We have already explained this. ASHER IS BINAH, WHICH GIVES ROYAL DAINITIES TO YESOD, AND YESOD TO THE NUKVA.

752. Come and see: "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat." This is the place which everyone calls happy. What is it? It is the World to Come, BINAH, which the upper and lower call happy and yearn for. "His bread shall be fat": HE ASKS: Whose BREAD? It does not specify the place OF BREAD. HE REPLIES: There is bread and bread, and in the same way there is a tree and tree. There is The Tree of Life, ZEIR ANPIN, and the tree upon which death depends, THE NUKVA. SO there is bread which is called bread of poverty, THE NUKVA, and there is bread called millet bread. What is THE MILLET BREAD? It is Vav OF THE NAME YUD-HEI-VAV-HEI, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. This is "his bread (Heb. lachmo)": the bread (Heb. lechem) of Vav, NAMELY THE BREAD OF ZEIR ANPIN. Hence it says "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven" (Shemot 16:4), from heaven indeed, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN CALLED HEAVEN.

753. Hence, "out of Asher his bread shall be fat." "His bread" includes the syllables lechem and the letter Vav, TO WIT, THE BREAD OF ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'VAV', since from him-FROM BINAH CALLED 'ASHER'-the tree is nourished, and he, BINAH, adorns it WITH THE FIRST THREE SFIROT, as it says "the crown with which his mother crowned him" (Shir Hashirim 3:11), TO WIT, BINAH CALLED 'MOTHER'. When ZEIR ANPIN receives, he shall surely yield royal dainties (lit. 'of the king'). Who is the king? The Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, which is nourished BY ZEIR ANPIN, who gives to her via the righteous, the holy grade of the sign of the covenant, NAMELY YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, and from THE NUKVA unto the other grades below IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH, which resemble the ones above, TO WIT, THE IMPLEMENTS IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH RESEMBLE THOSE IN ATZILUT.

754. In the book of Rav Hamnuna Saba (the elder), he said the following, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat" refers to the Shabbat bread, which is doubly delightful, as it is written: "They gathered double bread" (Shemot 16:22). There are two kinds of breads, bread from heaven, FROM ZEIR ANPIN, and bread from the earth, FROM THE NUKVA. This is millet bread, BUT THE BREAD FROM THE EARTH DETACHED FROM THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN is the bread of poverty. On Shabbat, the lower bread OF THE NUKVA is included within the upper bread OF ZEIR ANPIN, and the lower is blessed by the upper. This is double bread.

755. RAV HAMNUNA SABA (THE ELDER) also said that the double bread of Shabbat, WHICH IS THE BREAD OF THE NUKVA, receives from the supernal Shabbat, BINAH, which flows and shines upon everything. The bread OF THE NUKVA is united with the bread OF BINAH and becomes double. HE EXPLAINS WHY HE DOES NOT TALK OF THE BREAD OF THE NUKVA AND THE BREAD OF ZEIR ANPIN, BUT THE BREAD OF BINAH. IT IS BECAUSE that uniformly the secret of bread is the Nukva, EITHER THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, OR BINAH, WHICH IS ALSO A FEMALE. BUT THE ABUNDANCE OF ZEIR ANPIN IS NOT CALLED BREAD, SINCE IT IS MALE. Hence it is written: "Shall be fat" with a feminine suffix INSTEAD OF A MASCULINE. It also says "save the bread which he did eat" (Beresheet 39:6), WHICH ALLUDES TO the wife CALLED BREAD. HENCE BREAD IS AN ASPECT OF THE FEMALE.

756. One may ask about the verse: "For the bread is spent in our vessels" (I Shmuel 9:7), THAT THE WORD "SPENT" IS MASCULINE AND not feminine. THE REASON THEREFORE IS THAT other victuals BESIDES BREAD are also called bread. It can be noticed what would be other victuals and what would be bread, for upper bread OF ZEIR ANPIN is uniformly male, AND REFERS TO ALL KINDS OF FOOD. The lower bread OF THE NUKVA is uniformly female, AND REFERS TO BREAD ALONE. We find that it is sometimes written as masculine and sometimes as feminine. All is the same, and the one is like the other, ONLY ONE IS IN ZEIR ANPIN AND THE OTHER IN THE NUKVA, and all is correct.

757. Come and see: Asher is mentioned above IN BINAH and mentioned below in relation to the adornments of the bride, WHO IS THE NUKVA, since the sea, THE NUKVA, rests upon and is supported by all the twelve tribes, THE SECRET OF THE TWELVE OXEN. This is the meaning of: "And the sea was set above upon them" (I Melachim 7:25). ASHER THEN IS PART OF THE SUPPORT OF THE NUKVA. The secret of the matter is that it is established above IN BINAH and below on earth, THE NUKVA, through certain amendments after the pattern of the supernal world BINAH. It is established below through the twelve tribes WHO SUPPORT THE NUKVA, after the supernal pattern OF BINAH WHICH IS ESTABLISHED UPON THE TWELVE SUPPORTS OF ZEIR ANPIN. Hence there is the Shechinah above, BINAH, WHICH RESTS UPON THE TWELVE SUPPORTS OF ZEIR ANPIN, THE THREE COLUMNS, EACH OF THEM FOUR FACED and there is the Shechinah below, the NUKVA, through which Yisrael is included and established by the twelve tribes, and Asher is part of her support like the other tribes.

759. If it were not for Moshe who revealed THAT ASHER IS IN BINAH, it would not be made known. Thus it says, "And let him dip his foot in oil" (Devarim 33:24) to indicate his attachment to his place, which pours the anointing oil from ITS PLACE above IN BINAH. Therefore it says, "Be Asher blessed above sons" (Ibid.).

75. "Naftali is a hind let loose"

An interpretation of this difficult section reveals that while Malchut is considered female, anything that rises above her to Binah is considered male. We learn that a male is considered perfect when he is circumcised, because he possesses the sign of the Covenant. Therefore, the verse, "a male without blemish", alludes to the virile member which must not be castrated. Although Binah is often referred to as female, since she has many feminine aspects, when the "final part," the aspect of maleness, is revealed, all turns into male. The discussion next moves to the question of why God omitted Yosef and put Efraim in his place when He ordered the four standards for the twelve tribes in order to adorn the Shechinah. We learn that although Yosef was righteous, he had the imprint of the male. Because the Shechinah's adornments are all female, Yosef was removed and Efraim, who is of the feminine aspect, was put in his place. Finally, the rabbis provide further insight into the title verse through an explanation of the words, "and your mouth (speech) is comely." The voice, which signifies Zeir Anpin, guides the speech, which signifies Malchut. Just as there is no voice without speech and vice versa, Malchut and Zeir Anpin cannot illuminate without each other. Thus, the whole depends on the part, and the part depends on the whole.

The Relevance of this Passage

The realization of the interconnectedness and perfect harmony of all reality begins to take hold within our consciousness. We receive purification of our negative sexual deeds and thoughts through the Light that is set aflame during circumcision. Our efforts of meditating

upon these verses help to couple Malchut and Zeir Anpin bringing Light to the planet and balance to the male and female energies that permeate all worlds.

759. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion with: "Naftali is a hind let loose: he gives goodly words" (Beresheet 49:21). THIS VERSE IS CONSIDERED DIFFICULT, FOR SINCE IT SAYS "A HIND LET LOOSE," IT SHOULD END WITH 'SHE GIVES GOODLY WORDS', INSTEAD OF "HE." We have learned that the supernal world, BINAH, is the world of the male. Once something rises from the Congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS FEMALE, it becomes male. Whence do we know that? From the burnt offering (Heb. olah). Why is it called olah (lit. 'goes up, fem.')? Because it rises up from the Nukva. Therefore, "let him offer a male without blemish" (Vayikra 1:3), AS ABOVE THE NUKVA IT IS MALE. FOR THIS REASON THE SUPERNAL WORLD, BINAH, IS CONSIDERED THE WORLD OF THE MALE.

760. HE ASKS: Why DOES SCRIPTURE say "A MALE without blemish"? Was there any intention of bringing it in pieces, that it admonishes "without blemish (lit. 'perfect')"? HE ANSWERS: What is perfect? It is expressed by the words: "Walk before me, and be perfect" (Beresheet 17:1). When was he perfect? At the time he was circumcised, since a male exists and is recognized only by the place called perfect, the sign of the covenant, which indicates the difference between male and female. Hence it says, "Noach was a righteous perfect man" (Beresheet 6:9), RIGHTEOUS BEING YESOD WHICH IS CALLED PERFECT. Therefore, the words "a male without blemish" allude to the virile member which must not be castrated.

761. HE ASKS: Yet it also says "a female without blemish." HE ANSWERS: Assuredly, as YESOD is called "righteous perfect," so does the Nukva, since she receives everything from him AND IS THEREFORE CALLED PERFECT LIKE HIM. BUT THE ATTRIBUTE "PERFECT" MAINLY REFERS TO THE MALE. Hence, the burnt offering which rises from the female unto the male IS MALE, since from that place, THE NUKVA, upwards, all is male. From the Nukva downward all is female, as has already been explained.

762. HE ASKS: But there is also a female above, BINAH. HE REPLIES: The final part of the body shows that the whole body is male. The head and body OF BINAH--BEING CHOCHMAH, BINAH, AND DA'AT, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, are feminine until the final part, TO NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD, CLOTHED IN THE HEAD OF ZEIR ANPIN TO ASSUME THE ASPECT OF THE MALE LIKE HIM, and when the final part shows THE ASPECT OF MALENESS all turns into male, EVEN ITS CHOCHMAH, BINAH, DA'AT, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, WHICH ARE NOT CLOTHED WITH ZEIR ANPIN, ARE ALSO CONSIDERED TO BE MALE. But here IN THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, the head and end are considered feminine, for her whole body is female, WITHOUT A TRACE OF MALE IN HER NETZACH HOD YESOD.

763. Come and see: There is a supernal secret in this, for we notice that Ya'akov blessed Yosef together with his brothers. But when the Holy One, blessed be He, ordered the four standards of the Shechinah for the twelve tribes, through which to adorn the Shechinah, he omitted Yosef and put Ephraim in his place. Why did he omit Yosef? If you say that it was for his sins, this is not so, for he was righteous.

764. HE ANSWERS: The secret meaning of this is that Yosef was the imprint of the male, as it is written: "Yosef is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well," WHICH IS THE ASPECT OF YESOD CALLED A FRUITFUL BOUGH, and "from thence he fed the stone of Yisrael." The stone is the Congregation of Yisrael, NAMELY THE NUKVA, of which David said: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner" (Tehilim 118:21). Since Yosef was the imprint of the male, he is called Yosef the righteous, for indeed he was righteous, YESOD. "From thence he fed the stone of Yisrael" WHICH GIVES TO THE NUKVA.

765. Since all the adornments of the Shechinah are female, FOR FROM THE NUKVA DOWNWARD ALL IS FEMALE, Yosef was removed from them and Ephraim was assigned in his place to the TWELVE adornments, for he is of the aspect of the female. He was then stationed on the west side, the dwelling of the female, THE SHECHINAH BEING ON THE WEST, and the impress of the male, NAMELY YOSEF, was removed from the adornments, which are all of the world of the female and not of the world of the male. All adornments need to bear the aspect of the female.

766. Hence Yosef the righteous, YESOD WHICH IS MALE, was removed from the adornments and Ephraim was put in his stead. Therefore all the twelve tribes WHO ARE CONSIDERED FEMALE, are the adornments of the Shechinah, and must bear the likeness of above; TO

WIT, TO BE FEMALES LIKE THE SHECHINAH, except the grade of righteous OF THE TRIBES, WHICH IS YESOD, which turn all the members of the body into male and should not be counted among the twelve implements so that there will be no need to deduct him.

767. "Naftali is a hind let loose: he gives goodly words" as it says "and your mouth (speech) is comely" (Shir Hashirim 4:3), for the voice, ZEIR ANPIN, guides the speech, THE NUKVA. There is no voice without speech. The voice is sent from a deep place above, BINAH, to guide the speech, since there is no voice without speech nor speech without voice. This is the whole needing the part, and the part in need the whole. The voice comes forth from the south, WHICH IS THE RIGHT COLUMN, THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM and leads the west, THE NUKVA, which inherits the two sides, THE LIGHT OF CHASSADIM FROM THE SOUTH AND THE LIGHT OF CHOCHMAH FROM THE WEST. Hence it is written, "And of Naftali he said... possess you the west and the south" (Devarim 33:23). Therefore it is said that "Naftali is a hind let loose," NAMELY THE NUKVA below. In the same manner, the male above SHINES TOGETHER WITH HER, FOR THEY DO NOT SHINE THE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER. Hence, "he gives goodly words" is written in the masculine, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, instead of the feminine.

76. Thought, voice, speech

Thought, we are told, is the beginning of all. In the beginning, there was no separation between thought, voice, and speech, as signified by the verse, "The Creator shall be one, and His Name One." Thought then expanded and was named Binah (Understanding) when it came to the place where the spirit dwelt. The spirit expands and utters a voice, which includes all forces and guides the speech.

The Relevance of this Passage

The energy flowing from this passage transports our souls back to the moment before creation where all was one. This all-embracing unity radiates Light that returns our entire being back to an embryonic state when we were free of any negativity and defilement. This process has a refining and purifying effect on us, removing blockages and darkness from the recesses of our souls. The Light of rejuvenation ignites within us, giving us renewed strength and power to continue our spiritual transformation.

768. Come and see: Thought is the beginning of all. Thought is hidden inside and inscrutable. When thought further expanded, it came to where the spirit dwelt, and was there named Binah (understanding). Now it is not concealed as before, and though it is somewhat hidden, the spirit expands and utters a voice, which is composed of fire, water and wind, THE THREE COLUMNS north, south and east. This voice includes all forces, and guides the speech. It gives word its fixing, since it was sent from the place of the spirit and came to guide the word and utter correct words.

769. When you look at these grades, you shall find that thought, Binah, voice and speech are all one. This is the thought in the beginning of all. There was no separation but all was one and united. That very thought was attached to naught, KETER, never to separate. This is meant by: "Hashem shall be one, and His name One" (Zecharyah 14:9), and "he gives goodly words" refers to the body.

77. "Yosef is a fruitful bough"

The Zohar offers a complex discourse concerning the exact makeup of the great spiritual channel Yosef.

The Relevance of this Passage

Yosef is considered to be the foundation of our physical world. Within the structure of the Ten Sfirot, Yosef corresponds to the dimension of Yesod, the doorway through which all the energy of the Upper Worlds enters our material realm. Yosef also corresponds to sustenance. Hence, in this passage, we draw the power of good fortune and we strengthen our soul's connection to the true foundation of all spirituality.

770. The ending of the body, YESOD, is referred to in the verse: "Yosef is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well." HE ASKS: Why does it say twice "A FRUITFUL BOUGH"? HE ANSWERS: There is a fruitful bough above and a fruitful bough below. Why is there no

fruitful bough below among the implements of the Matron, NAMELY AMONG THE TWELVE TRIBES, THE SECRET OF THE TWELVE OXEN, WHICH SUPPORT THE MATRON ABOVE? HE REPLIES: "The daughters advanced upon the wall," WHICH MEANS THAT females are used as her implements, FEMALE ASPECTS, WHICH ARE THE SECRET OF THE TWELVE TRIBES, and not sons. AND YOSEF IS YESOD, WHICH IS A SON, NAMELY MALE. Hence it says, "Many daughters have done virtuously" (Mishlei 31:29). "Many daughters have done virtuously" are the twelve tribes, WHO ARE MADE A THRONE FOR THE NUKVA. THUS, THE VERSE ENDS WITH "BUT YOU EXCEL (LIT. 'RISES ABOVE') THEM ALL" (IBID.).

771. Come and see: the holy Malchut does not attain perfection as holy Malchut, until it is united with the patriarchs, WHO ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET FROM THE CHEST AND ABOVE OF ZEIR ANPIN. When it joins them, the kingdom was turned into a complete building by the upper world, which is the world of the male, NAMELY BINAH, SINCE THEN CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN RECEIVE FROM ITS RIGHT SIDE, AND MALCHUT FROM BINAH'S LEFT SIDE. The supernal world is called seven years since it includes all seven years, AS BINAH INCLUDES WITHIN HER ALL THE SEVEN SFIROT CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT CALLED SEVEN YEARS.

772. This is indicated by: "And he built it seven years" (I Melachim 6:38). This is the upper world BINAH, WHICH INCLUDES SEVEN YEARS. It therefore does not say 'in seven years', BUT SEVEN, as in: "For six days Hashem made heaven and earth" (Shemot 31:17), instead of 'in six days.' THIS MEANS THAT THE SIX DAYS CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH; HERE ALSO IT MEANS THAT THE SEVEN YEARS, BINAH, BUILT IT. It is written: "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created (Heb. be'hibar'am)," the letters of "be'avraham (Eng. 'in Avraham')," for Avraham, WHO IS CHESED, is called seven days, and by him the upper world, BINAH, was built. They are called the 'World of the Male'.

773. Likewise there are seven years below, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, YESOD, AND MALCHUT DIVIDED AMONG THE TWELVE TRIBES, the secret of the lower world, THE NUKVA. This is the secret meaning of the words: "Seven days and seven days, fourteen days" (I Melachim, 8:66). HE ASKS: From "seven days and seven days," do I not know they amount to fourteen, WHY ADD "FOURTEEN DAYS"? HE ANSWERS: THEIR PURPOSE IS to indicate the upper and lower worlds, which are seven days and seven days, ALLUDED TO BY THE FOURTEEN DAYS. Those OF THE UPPER WORLD are males and those OF THE LOWER WORLD are females. This world, THE NUKVA, is above the females, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD DIVIDED AMONG THE SAID TWELVE, as it is written: "Many daughters have done virtuously." This refers to the twelve tribes, that "have done virtuously," as "all that were numbered in the camp of Yehuda..." (Bemidbar 2:9) and the others MULTIPLIED EXCEEDINGLY. THUS THE VERSE ENDS WITH "BUT YOU RISE ABOVE THEM ALL," SINCE THE NUKVA IS OVER THEM.

774. HE ASKS: You may say that the verse says "many" yet they are but twelve, excepting their virtuous deeds, FOR EACH MULTIPLIED, AS HINTED BY THE WORDS "HAVE DONE VIRTUOUSLY." Why does it say "many (Heb. rabot) daughters"? HE REPLIES: Like in the verse: "Because the cry of S'dom and Amarah is great (Heb. rabah)" (Beresheet 18:20), "many" means that they are great, above all and greater than all. These are the great living creatures. They "have done virtuously" AS EACH TRIBE MULTIPLIED EXCEEDINGLY. "AND THOSE THAT ENCOMP BY HIM" (BEMIDBAR 2), YISACHAR AND ZVULUN BY THE STANDARD OF YEHUDA, AND SO ON, are called 'small living creatures', which join as one the great living creatures, YEHUDA, REUVEN, EFRAIM AND DAN, so that the Matron, THE NUKVA, will be established by them. The upper and lower will rejoice in them. Hence it says, "There is the Livyatan, whom you have made to play therein" (Tehilim 104:26). THE LIVYATAN IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SMALL AND GREAT LIVING CREATURES. Therefore "many daughters have done virtuously..."

775. Hence "the daughters advanced upon the wall." HE ASKS: IT SAYS "daughters advanced (sing.)" INSTEAD OF IN THE PLURAL. HE ANSWERS: This is the reflection of that which is written above "A FRUITFUL BOUGH BY A WELL." What is this WELL? It is the well of justice, THE NUKVA, WHICH RECEIVES JUSTICE, TIFERET. YOSEF gives to the well, THE NUKVA, which advances to take daughters for its adornment. "The daughters advanced": THE NUKVA ADVANCED WITH DAUGHTERS but not with sons, for daughters are worthy to establish her, but sons are not. "They fiercely attacked him" by looking lovingly at him, as it is written: "Turn away your eyes from me, for they have overcome me" (Shir Hashirim 6:5),

FOR THEY BURN ME WITH YOUR LOVE'S FLAME. HERE TOO HE COULD NOT SUFFER THE NUKVA'S ARROWS OF LOVE. THIS IS THE MEANING OF "THEY FIERCELY ATTACKED HIM" and "the archers hated him," THAT HE COULD NOT TOLERATE IT.

776. "But his bow abode in strength." The bow IS THE NUKVA. HE ASKS: Why say "his bow" WHEN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN 'BUT BOW ABODE...'? HE ANSWERS: It is YOSEF'S spouse, AND THEREFORE IT SAYS "HIS BOW." "In strength" means that she clothed him in strength and might, and so his strength will not be enfeebled FOR HIS UNION WITH HER. For she knew that Yosef would not turn aside within his grade; TO WIT, HE WOULD NOT TURN, DUE TO MATING, TO THE LEFT GRADE, THE PLACE OF JUDGMENTS, since his sign of the covenant turns both right and left IN ONE.

777. What do the words "were made supple (Heb. vayafozu)" mean? HE ANSWERS: As it says, "More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold (Heb. paz)" (Tehilim 19:11) and "nor shall it be valued with pure gold (Heb. paz)" (Iyov 28: 18). HERE TOO, VAYAFOZU IS DERIVED FROM PAZ, FINE GOLD AND PRECARIOUSNESS, as his hands were precious with the sublime pearl, THE SUPERNAL NUKVA ABOVE THE CHEST, THAT RECEIVED ABUNDANCE FROM BEING UNITED. SHE RECEIVED "by the hand of the mighty One of Ya'akov" from the two sides, RIGHT AND LEFT, by which Ya'akov was strengthened. "From thence he fed the stone of Yisrael," from thence that precious stone, THE NUKVA, was fed, like we said. We should further explain that the precious stone was fed by the twelve sides, north and south, WHICH ARE THE HANDS OF YA'AKOV, FOR THERE ARE CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD TO THE NORTH, AND CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD TO THE SOUTH, ALTOGETHER TWELVE. THE NUKVA is put in their midst to be blessed by them, fed by them via YOSEF the righteous.

778. Come and see: Yosef was bestowed yet another blessing "by the El of your father, and He shall help you; AND BY (ET) SHADAI, AND HE SHALL BLESS YOU." This verse is hard to understand, since it says "by the El of your father," when it should have been 'the El shall of your father help you.' It says "Et Shadai" instead of the particle 'el' as in "and El Shadai give you Mercy before the man" (Beresheet 43:14). "And He shall bless you" should have been 'He shall bless you.'

779. HE REPLIES: He inherited both above IN ZEIR ANPIN and below IN THE NUKVA. He inherited above, as it says "by the El of your father," which is the supernal inheritance, a place called heaven, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH CHARIOT YA'AKOV WAS. "And He shall help you": He shall not exchange it for another place, and His help shall be from this place and no other.

780. "And (et) Shadai": What is the meaning of this phrase, SHOULD IT NOT HAVE BEEN 'EL SHADAI', AS ASKED ABOVE? But this is another lower grade, as we have learned that uniformly "Et (the) Hashem" is the Shechinah, as in "I saw (et) Hashem" (Yechezkel 6:1), Et includes THE SHECHINAH. "And the (Heb. et)" ALLUDES TO ZEIR ANPIN, thus comprising day, ZEIR ANPIN in night, and night in day, as it is written: "and (et) Shadai" WITH VAV (=AND), since from thence blessings issue into the world.

781. We should explain further, Why it does not say 'And El Shadai', seeing that it has the same meaning as we said THAT IT TOO ALLUDES TO THE NUKVA, ALSO CALLED "EL SHADAI," as it is written: "and El Shadai give you mercy." All is the same SINCE "AND EL SHADAI" REFERS TO THE NUKVA LIKE "AND (ET) SHADAI." Why then omit the Lamed and replace IT with Tav? It is a mystery, that when these paths come from above, TO WIT, THE 22 LETTERS, FROM WHICH EVERY PERFECTION IS SUPPLIED, the whole of the Torah, THE ABUNDANCE OF ZEIR ANPIN, is inherited by heaven, ZEIR ANPIN, as it is written: "the (et) heaven" (Beresheet 1:1), ET (ALEPH TAV) including all the 22 letters FROM ALEPH TO TAV. From here, they depart to the Oral Law, called earth, NAMELY THE NUKVA, as it says "and the (et) earth" (Ibid.), ALEPH TAV including the 22 letters RECEIVED BY THE NUKVA. AT FIRST, heaven, ZEIR ANPIN, includes them all as one, and then the moon, THE NUKVA, is adorned by them all; TO WIT, SHE RECEIVES THEM FROM ZEIR ANPIN and dwells in perfection. Blessings are then drawn from there, and thus it says "and (et) Shadai," WHICH INDICATES THE GREAT PERFECTION OF THE INCLUSION OF THE 22 LETTERS OF THE NUKVA, WHENCE THERE ARE BLESSINGS.

782. "And (Vav) he shall bless you" IS SPELLED WITH VAV, for further lasting prevalence TO THE BLESSINGS. For wherever there is Vav, it is an indication of an increase and

maintenance. Up to this point, it was said in general. Now he gives details, as is written: "blessings of heaven..."

783. "The blessings of your father are potent above the blessings of my progenitors" The blessings of your father YA'AKOV, THE CENTRAL COLUMN, are surely more potent THAN THE BLESSINGS OF AVRAHAM AND YITZCHAK, since Ya'akov inherited more praises than the patriarchs, he being perfect in all. He gave it all to Yosef. Why? Because this is fit, for the righteous, YESOD, NAMELY YOSEF, takes and inherits all together; TO WIT, HE RECEIVES FROM ALL THE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN TOGETHER; and all blessings dwell in him. He draws them from the head above, THE FIRST THREE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN, and all the members of the body, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, NETZACH, HOD, AND YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, prepare to pass the blessings TO YESOD, and then YESOD turns into a river which flows from Eden.

784. HE ASKS OF THE MEANING OF "from Eden (lit. 'delight')." HE SAYS, When all the limbs are linked together in delight and desire from the abundance in the head above and from below, they all pour UPON YESOD their delight and desire, and it becomes a river which flows and comes out from Eden. WE SHOULD further EXPLAIN THAT the word "from Eden" MEANS that from supernal Chochmah called Eden, all flows and turns into a river, which pours down until it reaches the grade OF YESOD, and then all THE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN are blessed, and all is one.

785. "To the utmost bound (also: 'desires') of the everlasting (lit. 'world') hills" is the passion for the two everlasting hills. What are they? The two females, one above, BINAH, and one below, THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, each called 'world'. The desire of all the members of the body, ALL THE SFIROT OF ZEIR ANPIN, is for these two mothers. They desire to suck from the upper mother, BINAH, and desire to be attached to the lower mother, THE NUKVA. These desires of them all is the same, and therefore "they shall be on the head of Yosef," WHO IS YESOD, who will receive them all as befits.

786. Happy are those who are called righteous, for only those who keep the grade of the sign of the holy covenant are so called. They are happy in this world and in the World to Come. They came out of the cave. Rabbi Shimon said: Let each of us discourse as we walk.

78. "Binyamin is a ravenous wolf"

The first explanation for why Binyamin is called a wolf tells us that this was engraved upon the throne. The second explanation interprets it as a reference to the altar upon which he offered the flesh of sacrifice daily. The third explanation indicates that through sacrifices, Binyamin appeased the accusers, called "wolf," in order that they would accuse Yisrael. The discussion then reveals the meaning of the verse, "In the morning he shall devour the prey." We are told that in the morning, the offering causes pleasure. At this time only, Ad, of the supernal throne of Binah, consumes the sacrifice. We next learn that the smoke of the sacrifice rises and unites Zeir Anpin and the Female Principle. Wine is also poured below, thereby bringing joy to the wine above. The awakening below should be performed with fine flour in oil in order to effect the union. The first sacrifices of the day are offered entirely to God, Whom then confers blessings on the supernal armies. This unites Zeir Anpin and Malchut and connects the Upper and the Lower Worlds. Indeed, we're told, it is forbidden for a man to greet anyone in the morning before blessing God.

The Relevance of this Passage

The underlying meaning behind any sacrifice to The Creator concerns the sacrifice of our own immoral qualities that dwell deep within our nature. By meditating to uproot our negative traits, and acknowledging our jealousies, ego, and selfishness, the Light issuing through the words of these verses burns away our Evil Inclination, thus facilitating our spiritual evolution.

787. Rabbi Elazar opened the discussion with the following verse, "Binyamin is a ravenous wolf." HE ASKS: Why is Binyamin called a wolf? HE ANSWERS: Because it was so engraved upon the throne, THE NUKVA, IN THE SHAPE OF A WOLF. For all the great and small living creatures are imprinted UPON THE THRONE, as it is written "both small and great beasts" (Tehilim 104:25). The throne made by Solomon was also engraved in the same manner, after the pattern of the THRONE above.

788. Another explanation for "a ravenous wolf" is that the altar was in Binyamin's portion, and the altar is a wolf. If you say that Binyamin is a wolf, it is not so, the altar on his territory was the wolf, since it consumed flesh every day; NAMELY THE SACRIFICES OFFERED UPON IT. Binyamin used to feed it WITH SACRIFICES, because it was in his territory. It was as if he nourished and fed that wolf. "RAVENOUS" MEANS FEEDING, THE VERSE MAY READ 'BINYAMIN SHALL FEED THE WOLF,' THE ALTAR. Another explanation for "a ravenous wolf" is that 'he shall feed the wolf'. Who is the wolf? ANGELS sworn to enmity who are ready to accuse Yisrael from above. They are all appeased by the sacrifices, aroused with the arousal above. THUS BINYAMIN, IN WHOSE TERRITORY THE ALTAR LIES, FEEDS THE ACCUSERS CALLED WOLF, SO THAT THEY WILL NOT BRING ACCUSATION UPON YISRAEL.

789. "In the morning he shall devour the prey (Heb. ad), and at night he shall divide the spoil" HE ASKS: What is the meaning of: "In the morning he shall devour the prey"? HE REPLIES: In the morning, when Avraham, CHESED, stirs in the world, and it is time of goodwill, the offering causes stirring and pleasure. It rises to 'ad', the place of which it says "and you shall return to (Heb. ad) Hashem your Elohim" (Devarim 30:2), WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN, FROM THE CHEST UPWARD.

790. "In the morning" refers to Avraham like we said: WHO IS CHESED, as it is written: "And Avraham rose up early in the morning" (Beresheet 22:3) when it is time of grace and no one else eats the sacrifice. Who would eat it? The place called Ad would. It is the supernal throne, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET FROM THE CHEST OF ZEIR ANPIN UPWARD, THE THRONE OF BINAH, 'adey ad (forever)', FOR EATING IS UNITING AS WAS SAID BEFORE.

791. Ad eats in the morning, NAMELY WHEN CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN HAS THE ASCENDANCY. Ad is above THE CHEST OF ZEIR ANPIN, A PLACE WHICH IS ALL CHASSADIM, as it is written: "Trust in Hashem for ever (Heb. adey-ad)" (Yeshayah 26:4). FROM THIS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT AD IS A VERY HIGH PLACE. In the morning, WHEN CHESED OF ZEIR ANPIN REIGNS, there is a sacrifice unto Hashem, WHEN THE NUKVA CALLED SACRIFICE IS UNITED WITH HASHEM; THEREFORE "he shall devour ad (or: ad shall devour)," THAT IS ZEIR ANPIN AND RIGHT, WHICH IS CHESED, SHALL, and no other GRADE.

792. HE EXPLAINS THE UNION WHICH IS BROUGHT ABOUT THROUGH THE SACRIFICE, SAYING the smoke OF THE SACRIFICE rises, THE AWAKENING FROM BELOW, love is aroused above and connects BETWEEN ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA, and they stand facing each other. The candle, THE NUKVA, is kindled and shines from the awakening below, TO WIT, IT RECEIVES ABUNDANCE FROM ZEIR ANPIN. The priest is stirred and the Levites praise with joy. The wine, OF THE LEFT SIDE AND GVURAH, is mingled with water, WHICH IS RIGHT AND CHESED. The wine illumines and brings joy, FOR WHEN GVUROT ARE CLOTHED IN CHASSADIM, THEY ARE CALLED 'GLADDENING WINE'. Therefore good wine should be poured from below, so as to gladden the other wine above. All then are aroused to connect the left with the right.

793. The bread of fine flour, which is Malchut, THE NUKVA, was roused by the stirring BELOW. THE NUKVA IS CALLED 'BREAD', ACCORDING TO THE SECRET MEANING OF THE VERSE: "SAVE THE BREAD WHICH HE DID EAT" (BERESHEET 39:6). She is taken by left and right, and attached to the body, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN CALLED BODY. Then supernal oil is poured FROM ZEIR ANPIN and she receives it through the righteous, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN. Therefore, awakening below should be performed with fine flour in oil. All is attached together, and there is delight and pleasure in the unison, and the crowns, THE SFIROT OF THE NUKVA, receive that delight and pleasure of the unison. ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA are attached to each other; the moon, THE NUKVA, shines and joins the sun, and all settled delightedly.

794. This is the sacrifice unto Hashem, WHEN THE NUKVA IS BROUGHT UNTO HASHEM and to no one else. Therefore "in the morning he shall devour the prey (Heb. ad)," AD SHALL EAT IN THE MORNING, WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN CALLED 'AD', and none other. THE VERSE TEACHES US that first Ad, ZEIR ANPIN, shall eat and be delighted in his union in the morning, WHEN CHASSADIM RULE, for the holy name should be the first to be blessed. Then will the others be blessed, AS IT SAYS, "AND AT NIGHT HE SHALL DIVIDE THE SPOIL," AS WILL BE EXPLAINED.

795. This is why it is forbidden for a man to greet his neighbor in the morning before blessing the Holy One, blessed be He, who should be blessed first, as "in the morning he shall devour ad" (or: as shall devour) , WHICH IS ZEIR ANPIN. The others shall be blessed later; NAMELY "at night he shall divide the spoil" for the first sacrifices are offered entirely to the Holy One, blessed be He, and the stirring BELOW rises thither. Once he is blessed, he links by knots all the other supernal armies and confers blessings, each according to his worth. The worlds are sweetened and the upper and lower are blessed.

796. This is the secret of the verse, "I have drunk my wine with my milk" first. Then, dividing amongst them all, he says, "Eat, O dear ones, and drink; drink deep, O loving companions" (Shir Hashirim 5:1), thus conferring blessings upon them all and allotting each with his fitting share. Therefore, "at night he shall divide the spoil" for the holy name is blessed first and then imparts blessings amongst all the worlds. Do not say that the sacrifice is offered them nor to any other force, but all is offered to the Holy One, blessed be He, who bestows blessings and divides them to all the worlds. Therefore it is a sacrifice to Hashem, and to no other GRADE.

797. Rabbi Shimon said: You have spoken well, my son. There is another awakening brought about by the sacrifice, that draws and incites blessings so that all the worlds shall be blessed. But first there is the sacrifice unto Hashem, TO BRING THE NUKVA TO THE GRADE OF ZEIR ANPIN, and to no other. Now THAT THE UNISON WITH ZEIR ANPIN IS PERFORMED, "shall you bring your offering" (Vayikra 1:2), NAMELY so that the worlds will be connected together and the upper and lower shall be blessed.

79. "And this is what their father spoke to them"

Rabbi Aba inquires why a passage of Scripture refers to the twelve tribes as "All these," as opposed to "These are the twelve tribes." The word "All," we learn, signifies the mechanism by which the twelve tribes are connected to the source of all blessings, the world of Malchut.

Moreover, it indicates the Lower World's connection to the Upper World.

We are then told that the upper realm, called Zeir Anpin [Male], correlates to "voice," whereas the physical dimension of Malchut [Female] equates to speech. Thus, male and female [Upper and Lower Worlds] are unified--just as voice and speech are unified when words are spoken, through the sacred text. "That which (he) spoke." Next, we learn that all blessing issues from both the Male and Female principles, or the union of Zeir Anpin and Malchut.

The Relevance of this Passage

Here, the Upper and Lower Worlds are enjoined so that we may be the recipients of many blessings. This Light of blessing can flow freely if we do not allow negativity from the twelve signs to influence us. This effect is illustrated within this passage through the mystical power of the twelve tribes, which help us ascend over the twelve signs.

798. Rabbi Aba opened the discussion with the following verse: "All these are the twelve tribes of Yisrael..." HE ASKS: Why say "All these?" Should it not have been, 'These are the twelve tribes.' What means "All"? HE ANSWERS: It attaches the tribes to the place whence all blessings issue from, NAMELY THE NUKVA. IT THEREFORE SAYS, "ALL THESE." Indeed there are "twelve" knots in the implements of the Matron, THE NUKVA, and she herself is attached to them, ACCORDING TO THE SECRET OF THE VERSE "AND THE SEA WAS SET ABOVE UPON THEM" (I MELACHIM 7:25). Hence it says, "Twelve...and this is that which their father spoke to them, and blessed them," SINCE THE NUKVA CALLED THIS JOINED THE TWELVE TRIBES. For in this place speech dwells, AS ZEIR ANPIN IS CALLED VOICE AND THE NUKVA SPEECH.

799. We should explain the words: "That which (he) spoke." There is a link here which connects the lower to the upper and the upper to the lower. HE EXPLAINS, The lower TO THE UPPER via the twelve tribes, ACCORDING TO THE VERSE, "ALL THESE ARE THE TWELVE TRIBES OF YISRAEL" AND THE UPPER TO THE LOWER BY this, THE NUKVA, which was attached to them FROM ABOVE. "That which he spoke" indicates the union between male and female, FOR THERE IS NO SPEECH WITHOUT VOICE, ZEIR ANPIN. It is attached to two sides from below, THE SECRET OF TWELVE, and from above, THE SECRET OF THIS. Finally, he

connected them to the supreme place, male and female FROM THE CHEST UPWARD, WHERE THEY ARE TOGETHER, AND THE FEMALE IS INCLUDED WITHIN THE ZEIR ANPIN IN THE SECRET OF THE CHASSADIM IN HIM. Hence it says "every one according to his blessing..." HE ASKS: What is "his blessing"? HE ANSWERS: "His blessing" is his spouse, NAMELY THE NUKVA CALLED SPOUSE. "Every one according to his blessing" means they are both as one, AS ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA ARE INCLUDED TOGETHER.

800. He opened the discussion saying: "Hashem shall bless you out of Tzion: and you shall see the good of Jerusalem" (Tehilim 128:5). "Hashem shall bless you out of Tzion," for from it all blessings come forth to water the garden, and it includes all blessings and passes to her. Then "you shall see the good of Jerusalem," to show that all blessings issue from male and female. Similarly, "Hashem bless you, and keep you" (Bemidbar 6:24). "Hashem bless you" by the male, "and keep you" by the female, FOR KEEPING IS DRAWN FROM THE NUKVA. All this is one, for blessings issue from both into the world. Therefore "every one according to his blessing he blessed them."

80. "And Ya'akov made an end of commanding his sons"

Rabbi Yehuda explains that Ya'akov "commanded" his sons to be attached to the Shechinah, referencing the cave where Adam is buried, a place near the Garden of Eden. We're told that four couples are buried there: the three patriarchs, their wives, and Adam and Chavah. The Zohar explains that four are required to make up a Holy Chariot. The Creator, however, linked King David to the three patriarchs to form the chariot. So why, Rabbi Yehuda asks, does Adam rest in the cave with the three patriarchs while King David is buried elsewhere?

We are then told that Adam was allotted 1000 years of life, but 70 of his years were transferred to King David to allow for his physical existence.

Therefore, both King David and Adam signify Malchut, which represents Female. The three patriarchs embody Zeir Anpin, which is Male. Thus, Adam could be the fourth aspect, "substituting" for David, allowing the Upper Worlds [the patriarchs] and the Lower World [David or Adam] to be united. It is then explained that the cave where King David is buried corresponds to the male energy of the Upper World, whereas King David embodies the female energy of Malchut. Hence, spiritual balance between the supernal and mundane worlds is achieved through this burial arrangement.

The Relevance of this Passage

The symmetry and perfection of the world and its inhabitants, which were brought into existence by The Creator, exist in all of us. This force of balance and union, ignited by our reading, allows the Light of the Shechinah and holy blessings to filter into our world. Our bond to the great patriarchs, King David and root of our soul, Adam, is strengthened and enriched.

801. Rabbi Yehuda opened the discussion with the verse: "And Ya'akov made an end of commanding his sons." HE ASKS: It says "commanding," but wouldn't one expect 'blessing?' HE REPLIES: He commanded them to be attached to the Shechinah, and commanded them concerning the cave, which is close to the Garden of Eden, where Adam is buried.

802. Come and see: this place is called Kiryat Arba (lit. 'city of four') because four couples were buried there: Adam and Chavah, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivkah, and Ya'akov and Leah. There is a difficulty here. We learned that the patriarchs are a Holy Chariot, yet a Chariot consists of no less than four. We also learned that the Holy One, blessed be He, joined King David with THE PATRIARCHS, and they formed a complete Chariot OF FOUR. The meaning of: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner" (Tehilim 118:21) is that King David joined them and formed with them a complete Chariot. David was then supposed to be buried with the patriarchs in Kiryat Arba. Why was he not buried with them?

803. HE REPLIES: A place was prepared for King David, Tzion, YESOD OF ZEIR ANPIN, with which to be united as one; and Adam was buried with the patriarchs. They were buried with him, since he was the first king, from whom kingdom was removed and transferred to King David. King David lived with Adam's days, for it was decreed that Adam should live a thousand years, but seventy were removed from him to form King David's life and he gave

them to him. ADAM WAS THEREFORE CONSIDERED TO PERTAIN TO MALCHUT, AND HE COMPLEMENTED THE CHARIOT OF THE FATHERS TO A FOURSOME. OTHERWISE, how could the patriarchs rise TO HAVE A COMPLETE CHARIOT before the time of King David? OF NECESSITY DID ADAM COMPLEMENT THEM. DAVID WAS NOT BURIED WITH THEM, but merited a place worthy of him, WHICH IS TZION. Hence, he was not buried with the fathers.

804. Moreover, the patriarchs dwell in a male place, TO WIT, THEY ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET OF ZEIR ANPIN, WHICH ARE MALES. David, WHO IS A CHARIOT TO MALCHUT, is in a female place. Hence the fathers were buried with their wives, and David was buried and attached to a male place, TZION, each as befits him.

81. "And he expired and he was gathered unto his people"

Among the many mysteries expounded upon in this passage, we learn that Ya'akov never died, but rather "expired," just as the sun expires every evening, leaving the moon to reflect its light. The intimate connection concerning the events that take place in Scripture, the characters that populate the Biblical stories, and the structure of the Upper World, are explored in detail by the Zohar. The underlying objective of this complex passage is to demonstrate how the male and female principles, Zeir Anpin and Malchut [the Nukva], are enjoined for the purpose filling all reality with the blessed Light of The Creator. The Zohar stresses the spiritual perfection of Ya'akov, whose existence positively influences all generations and unites the Lower and Upper Worlds.

The Relevance of this Passage

We are connected to the intricate structure of the supernal worlds and the processes by which the Lower and Upper worlds [Male and Female] are interlocked. This connection allows the Light of The Creator and the perfection of Ya'akov to freely flow into our lives, bringing blessing and removing the force of death from our midst.

805. "He gathered up his feet into the bed" because he dwelt in the place of the living, BEING A CHARIOT TO ZEIR ANPIN, THE TREE OF LIFE. Therefore, when he wanted to depart from the world he put his feet down upon the bed, THE SECRET OF THE NUKVA, and was gathered and gone from the world. TO WIT, HE WENT UP TO MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE UNION OF MALE AND FEMALE. Hence it says that he "expired and was gathered to his people," BUT NOT THAT HE DIED, FOR HE ASCENDED TO BE PART OF THE SUPERNAL LIFE.

806. He opened the discussion saying: "My soul longs, indeed, it faints for the courts of Hashem" (Tehilim 84:2). A DIFFICULTY IS RAISED WHY HE DOES NOT LONG FOR THE HOUSE OF HASHEM, BUT TO HIS COURTS. HE SAYS, This has already been explained by the friends, yet come and behold: there are lower stories IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH, AND ASIYAH and upper stories IN ATZILUT. There are no SOULS in the upper ones, FOR SOULS DWELL ONLY IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH. The stories are the inner houses IN ATZILUT and outer houses IN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH. The outer houses are called the courts of Hashem, because they are filled with love and desire for the female. DAVID SAID: "MY SOUL LONGS... FOR THE COURTS OF HASHEM" BECAUSE SOULS HAVE NO HOLD HIGHER THAN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH, CALLED THE COURTS OF HASHEM. BUT WHEN BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH RISE UP TO ATZILUT, THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS ASCEND WITH THEM. Come and behold: when the soul rises, all stirs, ALL THE HOSTS OF BRIYAH, YETZIRAH AND ASIYAH, AND THEY RISE to the Nukva, WHO IS united THROUGH THEIR RISING TO HER with a complete desire WITH ZEIR ANPIN, and is attached to him.

807. Ya'akov did not die and therefore it does not say so, only that he "expired, and was gathered to his people." Look at the words "he gathered up his feet into the bed," WHICH IS THE NUKVA. IT MEANS that the sun, YA'AKOV, was gathered to the moon, THE NUKVA. The sun does not die. It is merely gathered from the world and goes to the moon.

808. Come and see: When Ya'akov was gathered, the moon shone, and the desire of the Supernal Sun, ZEIR ANPIN, was awakened for her. For when the sun, YA'AKOV, arises, another sun is awakened, ZEIR ANPIN, and they cleave to each other, ZEIR ANPIN CLINGS TO THE NUKVA, and the moon, THE NUKVA, shines FROM ZEIR ANPIN.

809. Rabbi Shimon said: You have spoken well. We also learned that the upper beings, the world of the male, NAMELY BINAH, is linked to the lower, the world of the female, NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN, and the lower is linked to the upper. So they all resemble each other.

810. We have learned that there are two worlds, as it is written: "from the world to the world" (I Divrei Hayamim 16:36)-BINAH AND THE NUKVA. And though both are females, SINCE BINAH TOO IS A FEMALE, yet BINAH is established by the male, FOR IN GREATNESS SHE IS CONSIDERED A MALE, and THE NUKVA OF ZEIR ANPIN is established by a female. BINAH is called seven and THE NUKVA daughter of seven (Bat-Sheva). Both are mothers, BINAH is "mother of children" and THE NUKVA is the mother of Solomon, as it is written: "Go forth, O daughters of Tzion, and behold King Solomon with the crown with which his mother crowned him" (Shir Hashirim 2:11). King Solomon is the king that the peace (Heb. shalom) is his, NAMELY ZEIR ANPIN, WHOSE MOTHER, BINAH IS THE MOTHER OF CHILDREN. The mother of Solomon, as it is written: "Bat-Sheva the mother of Solomon" (I Melachim 1:11) IS THE NUKVA, FOR HERE IT DOES NOT SAY "THE KING SOLOMON."

811. It is written: "And Solomon's Wisdom excelled" (I Melachim 5:10). Solomon's Wisdom is Solomon's mother, NAMELY THE NUKVA, in accordance with the verse: "The words of King Lemu'el, the prophecy, that his mother taught him" (Mishlei 31:1). "The words of King Lemu'el": This verse is not clear, FOR WE DO NOT KNOW WHO KING LEMU'EL IS. But "the words of King Lemu'el" means the words which were spoken to El, who is king. Who is he? The one of whom it says "and El who has indignation every day" (Tehilim 7:11) and "and El Shadai" NAMELY THE NUKVA, as has been explained.

812. Lemu'el, as in the verse "to my mouth (Heb. lemo fi)" (Iyov 40:4) MEANS HERE "TO (LIT. 'EL') EL. King Lemu'el is Bat-Sheva, THE NUKVA; "the prophecy, that his mother taught him," when he appeared before him in Givon in the vision of the night, IS "AND IF YOU WILL WALK BEFORE ME, AS DAVID YOUR FATHER WALKED" (I MELACHIM 9:4).

813. Come and see: Ya'akov was gathered to the moon, THE NUKVA, BY RAISING MAYIN NUKVIN (FEMALE WATERS) TO ZEIR AND NUKVA WHEN HE PASSED AWAY, thus producing fruits by her, BY BRINGING UNION BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE IN GREATNESS, WHICH PRODUCES SOULS CALLED THE FRUITS OF MALE AND FEMALE. There is no generation in the world without Ya'akov's fruit, THE SOULS WHICH ARE BORN OF THE MATING OF MALE AND FEMALE IN GREATNESS, WHICH YA'AKOV BROUGHT BY RAISING MAYIN NUKVIN. For he caused stirring above, A UNION BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE as it says, "he gathered his feet into the bed," the bed of Ya'akov BEING THE NUKVA.

814. Happy is the portion of Ya'akov who was made perfect above and below, as it is written: "Fear you not, O Ya'akov My servant, says Hashem: for I am with you" (Yirmeyah 46:28), not 'you are with me' but "I am with you." FOR HE WAS MADE PERFECT BELOW TOO THROUGH THE SHECHINAH.

82. "The mourning of Egypt"

Rabbi Yitzchak sheds light on the term, "the mourning of Egypt." We are told that when Ya'akov resided in Egypt, "the land was blessed, waters flowed and famine ceased." For this reason, scripture reads, "the mourning of Egypt" and not "the mourning of Yisrael [Ya'akov]."

Next, the significance of the word "utter" is examined in a particular verse of Torah. Yemalel, the Hebrew word for "utter," denotes the concept of severance and cutting. In the context of verse quoted by the Zohar, the word "utter" signifies the annulment and cancellation of judgments that emanate from the Sfirah of Gvurah, the Left Column force of Judgment.

Thereafter, we discover that the Egyptians were adept in the black arts and sorcery. However, while Ya'akov lived in this physical world, no nation, no matter how well versed in magic, could rule over Yisrael. Moreover, upon Ya'akov's passing from this physical plane, the Egyptians realized that Judgment would still rain down upon them; hence the term, "the mourning of Egypt."

Rabbi Shimon then reveals that upon his merit, he can protect those who are destined for death as a result of their wicked deeds, specifically, two Roman informers. He chooses not to.

The Relevance of this Passage

Our connection to Ya'akov helps ensure that Light flows into our lives even during times of great Judgment and negativity. The additional spiritual influences arising herein, help annul Judgments that are handed down against us in the supernal courts. Finally, the exalted Light of the author of the Zohar, Rabbi Shimon, protects us from the Angel of Death, even though we might not merit exoneration.

815. Rabbi Yitzchak opened the discussion with the verse: "And they came to the threshing floor of Atad," "And when the inhabitants of the land, the Cna'anite, saw the mourning at the floor of Atad" (Beresheet 50:10-11). We have to examine these verses. Why should it concern us that they came to the threshing floor of Atad, and why was it named "the mourning of Egypt." It should have been named 'the mourning of Yisrael,' so why Egypt?

816. HE ANSWERS: So they said that as long as Ya'akov dwelt in Egypt, the land was blessed for his sake, and the Nile used to rise and water the land. Moreover, the famine ceased due to Ya'akov. Hence the Egyptians mourned, and the mourning was named after them.

817. He opened the discussion saying: "Who can utter the mighty acts (Heb. Gvurot) of Hashem? who can declare all His praise?" (Tehilim 106:2). This verse has been explained, yet why say "utter" instead of the usual "speak." If, you say scripture is wont TO USE SYNONYMS FOR THE BEAUTY OF STYLE, it is not so. But all verses WITH SYNONYMS convey a specific meaning. Here, too, there is a specific meaning in "utter (Heb. yemalel)," as in the verse "pluck the ears (Heb. melilot)" (Devarim. 23:26), WHICH IS DERIVED FROM CUTTING AND SEVERANCE. "The Gvurot of Hashem" are numerous, since all verdicts come from thence, FROM THE GVUROT OF HASHEM, THE LEFT COLUMN. SCRIPTURE therefore SAYS: "WHO CAN UTTER GVUROT OF HASHEM," WHICH MEANS who will be able to cancel and annul one decree of the mighty acts performed by the Holy One, blessed be He.

818. We should also add that 'utter' and 'speak' are the same and that UTTER MEANS speak. How numerous are the mighty acts, the prosecutors, the advocates and the executioners of those who break the Law. Speech cannot enumerate them, HENCE THE VERSE SAYS, "WHO CAN UTTER THE MIGHTY ACTS OF HASHEM."

819. THE MIGHTY ACTS OF HASHEM are made known through recital, which contains the secret of wisdom, AND THROUGH WISDOM THEY CAN BE KNOWN. For through utterance and speech, there is no uttering and knowing them, only through recital, as it is written: "One generation shall praise your works to another, and shall declare (recite) your mighty acts" (Tehilim 145:4), through which secret they are made known; NAMELY BY RECITAL, THE SECRET OF WISDOM. But of your Gvurah, the lower Gvurah WITHIN THE NUKVA, they shall talk, FOR IT CAN BE SPOKEN OF, as it is written: "and talk of your Gvurah" (Ibid. 11).

820. "Who can declare all His praise?" For many judgments are seen by it and are united in praise, and several hosts join in praise, as it is written: "Is there any number to His armies" (Iyov 25:3). Hence "who can declare all His praise?"

821. Come and see: All the Egyptians were wise, on the side of Gvurah, NAMELY THE LEFT COLUMN, whence legions and hosts come forth and grades that reach the lower grades. The Egyptians, who were sorcerers, had knowledge of them, and knew of the undisclosed secrets in the world. They saw that as long as Ya'akov lived in this world, no nation could rule over his children, yet they knew that they would enslave Yisrael for a long period.

822. When Ya'akov died they rejoiced THAT NOW THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO ENSLAVE YISRAEL. They looked to see what would become of it and saw the threshing floor of Atad, the prevailing punishment, as 'Atad' has the same numerical value as 'hand', mentioned in the verse: "And Yisrael saw that great work (lit. 'hand') which Hashem did upon Egypt" (Shemot 14:31). When they came to this place, they saw the mighty acts coming from Atad UPON THEM, NAMELY THE TEN PLAGUES OF EGYPT AND THE PARTING OF THE RED SEA. Why is it called Atad (thorn-bush)? As the thorns grow on both sides of the thorn-bush, so do the fingers of the hand, each containing numerous Gvurot, punishments and decrees. Hence "they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation...so that the name of it was

called the mourning of the Egyptians." This was truly a grievous mourning for the Egyptians, and no one else.

823. When Rabbi Shimon explained the verses, they went out of the cave WHERE THEY SAT. He said: I see that today a house in town will collapse, and two Roman informers will die there. If I will be in town, the house will not fall, FOR MY MERIT WILL PROTECT THEM. They returned to the cave, FOR HE DID NOT WISH TO RETURN TO HIS TOWN, AND THAT HIS MERIT WILL PROTECT THEM. SO THE HOUSE SHOULD FALL, AND THE INFORMERS BE KILLED. They sat down.

83. "Lift up your voice, O daughter of Galim"

Rabbi Shimon discusses the importance of "praising The Creator" [uttering holy words that ignite awesome spiritual forces] with a pleasant voice. We learn that the "daughter of Galim (lit. 'waves')" refers to Malchut, our physical world, the fourth and completing aspect to the three patriarchs who represent the Upper World dimension called Zeir Anpin. We then discover that the term "daughter of the waves" signifies the abundance of Light that flows from Binah into Malchut. This energy embodies the Light of the blissful world to come. It is explained that Malchut was born from the side of judgment, and thus, has the power to break and triumph over the dark side. Malchut is called "poor," for like the moon, for she has no Light of her own. However, when our prayers and the singing from worlds above unite Male and Female, Malchut [the moon] shines with abundance and wholeness. Finally, the Zohar reveals that King David's spiritual endeavors elevated the world [moon] from spiritual poverty into wealth. Thus, when David left this world, Solomon assumed spiritual command over a world that was now spiritually whole.

The Relevance of this Passage

The spiritual Light that shines through these sacred verses sweetens our prayers with pleasantness and song so that they will be heard and well received above. The Light that awaits us in the world to come is ignited and its warm rays illuminate the here and now. Our connection to King David helps unite our body and soul and the cosmic male and female principles, bringing wholeness and radiance to our existence.

824. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "Lift up your voice, O daughter of galim (lit. 'waves')..." (Yeshayah 10:30). "Lift up your voice" was addressed to the Congregation of Yisrael, which praises the Holy One, blessed be He, with a singing voice. Hence IT WAS SAID TO HER, "Lift up your voice." From this, we learn that whoever wishes to praise the Holy One, blessed be He, aloud, should have a pleasant voice, which would be agreeable to the listeners. Otherwise, he should not raise his voice.

825. Come and see: It is written of the Levites, who come of the side OF SINGING AND PRAISING: "And from the age of fifty years they shall go out of the ranks of the service" (Bemidbar 8:25). What is the reason thereof? IN OLD AGE, the voice fails, and is not agreeable to the ear, as THE VOICE OF his companions. He therefore retires from the high ranks of service, whose service is to play and to glorify the holy name as befits.

826. There are legions above and legions below, which praise the holy name and sing to it. Since THE SINGERS BELOW ARE THE LIKENESS OF THE SINGERS ABOVE, "they shall go out of the ranks of the service." Since the Congregation of Yisrael praises the Holy One, blessed be He, scripture says "Lift up your voice, O daughter of galim," NAMELY the daughter of the patriarchs, FOR THE NUKVA IS A FOURTH TO THE FATHERS, WHO ARE CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET. SHE IS THEN THE DAUGHTER OF THE FATHERS.

827. "Daughter of the waves" is also the World to Come, BINAH, which is called waves, since everything is found in it in heaps, LIKE THE WAVES IN THE OCEAN whence they come forth unto all FACES AND WORLDS. We can also interpret "daughter of the waves" as in the words "a fountain (Heb. gal) sealed" (Shir Hashirim 4:12), THE NUKVA'S MOCHIN BEING CALLED GAL, DERIVED FROM 'REVEAL (HEB. GILUY)'. All the waves and springs come out from the World to Come, BINAH, and the Congregation of Yisrael, WHICH IS THE NUKVA, THE RECIPIENT OF BINAH, is called the daughter of the waves (Heb. galim).

828. Come and see: this verse is difficult. First it says, "Lift up your voice," and then "hearken." Why should she then lift up her voice, when she is asked to listen, AS THERE IS

NO NEED TO RAISE THE VOICE WHILE LISTENING? HE ANSWERS: It says, "Lift up your voice" to sing and praise; TO WIT, RAISING THE VOICE IS FOR THE SAKE OF THE BEAUTY OF SONG, NOT TO SPEAK. Come and see: when the children of Yisrael start to sing and praise the Holy One, blessed be He, it says "hearken." Why? Because they praise the Holy One, blessed be He, for her sake, FOR THE SAKE OF THE NUKVA. Therefore it is written: "Lift up your voice" and "hearken." THE FORMER ALLUDES TO YISRAEL AND THE LATTER TO THE NUKVA, FOR WHICH SAKE THEY SING AND PRAISE.

829. "Layshah (lit. 'lioness')": HE ASKS ABOUT THE MEANING OF "HEARKEN LAYSHAH" (SHIR HASHIRIM 4:12) AND SAYS, Since THE NUKVA comes from the side of Gvurah, SHE IS CALLED A LIONESSE. As "a lion which is strongest among beasts" (Mishlei 30:30), so is the lioness strong and breaks the power and strength OF THE OTHER SIDE. "O poor Anatot" (Yeshayah 10:30), WHY IS THE NUKVA SO CALLED? Because she is the mirror which does not shine, and is indeed poor, for the moon, THE NUKVA, has no light except what is given her by the sun.

830. Anatot (poverty) is a village, where poor priests beg from door to door. But no one cares since all its inhabitants are scorned by the people, and their houses are more empty than THE HOUSE OF the people, except for what they are given, being the poorest of the poor. The moon is called Anatot too, for she has no light of her own, and shines only when the sun joins her.

831. Come and see: It is written, "And to Evyatar the priest the king said: 'Get you to Anatot, to your own fields; for you are worthy of death'" (I Melachim 2:26). HE ASKS: Was he worthy of death because Adoniyahu summoned him TO HIS FEAST? HE ANSWERS: Because he came from a poor place, and the moon was attached to him, the poor Anatot.

832. You may say, SINCE IT IS WRITTEN, "Because you have been afflicted in all my father's afflictions" (Ibid.), it was due TO HIS POVERTY then that he did not kill him, WHY THEN IS HE CALLED "WORTHY OF DEATH"? HE REPLIES: Since Evyatar was poor, David took recognition of him before he became king, when Shaul pursued him, for he acted like a poor man, and Evyatar too. ALSO WHEN HE BECAME KING, THE KINGDOM WAS NOT YET WHOLE. But when Solomon reigned, the moon, THE NUKVA, attained perfection. He rejoiced since all was his. Evyatar therefore could not join him.

833. Assuredly, the field of Anatot contains this secret OF THE NUKVA UNDER THE REIGN OF THE LEFT. Yirmeyah bought THE FIELD OF ANATOT to attain the supernal secret. Come and see: when the moon, THE NUKVA, reigns, NAMELY IN FULL ILLUMINATION, she is called 'an apple field.' When she is poor, she is called 'the field of Anatot.' For this reason, the singing above brings her abundance and wholeness, BY BRINGING ABOUT THE UNION BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE.

834. David strove all his days to perfect her by players who sang and praised her, FOR THROUGH THIS THE NUKVA ATTAINS PERFECTION. When David departed from the world, he left her whole and Solomon received her plentiful and whole. For the moon came out of poverty into wealth, through which he reigned over all the kings of the land.

84. "Silver was not accounted for anything in the days of Solomon"

Here, the Zohar reveals the mighty power of the sun, Zeir Anpin, and its ability to transmute the dust of the world into gleaming gold. Moreover, we're told that the merciful Light of Zeir Anpin removes judgment from Malchut, thereby increasing gold. Such was the spiritual landscape during the reign of King Solomon. Because David had already perfected Malchut, Solomon's mystical power was directed at arousing wealth, love, and Light. However, we learn that Solomon miscalculates the spiritual processes taking place in the Upper Worlds and rejects the Right Column energy of mercy [silver]. This action darkens the moon, allowing judgment to impact our world, hence the phrase, "Silver was not accounted for anything"

Moreover, because sacrifices are no longer offered in the temple, Judgment occurs each day of our lives. The Zohar then explains that the prayers of man can perfect the Upper and Lower World and remove the Left Column force of judgment.

The Relevance of this Passage

When we extend mercy to our friends and enemies, the Light of Zeir Anpin illuminates our own lives with mercy, transmuting judgments set against us into praise. When mercy is not part of our consciousness, Judgment is allowed to befall us every day. Hence, this passage awakens mercy within us, so that we may bestow it upon others. Our connection to these words helps perfect the Upper and Lower Worlds, whose union also removes judgment from our own lives.

835. For this reason, "silver was not accounted for anything in the days of Solomon" (I Melachim 10:21), but all was made of gold, and gold increased. At that time, it says, "And he had dust of gold" (Iyov 28:6), since the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, looked upon the upper dust, THE NUKVA, and through its strength, it turned the dust into gold.

836. Come and see: where the dust of the earth turns into gold on the mountains, where the sunlight is strong everything turns into gold. And were it not for the wild living creatures which roamed there, people would not have been poor, because the power of the sun increases gold.

837. Hence in the days of Solomon, "silver was not accounted for anything," for the strength of the sun was upon the dust and turned it into gold. Also, the dust is of the side of judgment, WHICH IS LEFT WITHOUT RIGHT, NOT ILLUMINATING, and when the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, looked upon it, NAMELY Poured Chassadim upon it, it removed the strength OF JUDGMENT FROM IT, and gold increased. When Solomon saw this, he praised it by saying: "All was of the dust" (Kohelet 3:20).

838. Hence Solomon had no need of playing like David, SINCE THE NUKVA WAS ALREADY MADE PERFECT, but he sang Shir Hashirim, which is love and wealth, light and love, for all the songs of the world were in SOLOMON'S SONG, who recited the song of the Matron, the NUKVA, when she sat upon her throne facing the King.

839. It is written: "And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem like stones" (I Melachim 10:27). Because all was made of gold and the dust, THE NUKVA, was linked to the left on the side of love, NAMELY LOVER'S LOVE, THE LOVE OF THE LEFT, as it is written: "His left hand is under my head" (Shir Hashirim 2:6). The sun, ZEIR ANPIN, cleaved to her, and did not part.

840. Solomon made a mistake when he saw the moon attached to the sun, the right OF ZEIR ANPIN embracing her WITH CHASSADIM and the left OF ZEIR ANPIN under her head WITH THE ILLUMINATION OF CHOCHMAH. THE LEFT BECAME HER HEAD. As RIGHT AND LEFT were attached to each other, AND CHOCHMAH ON THE LEFT WAS ALREADY CLOTHED WITH THE RIGHT, he said: Now that they are linked together, what need is there for the right seeing that the function of the right, CHASSADIM, was to draw near ZEIR ANPIN AND THE NUKVA, SO THAT CHOCHMAH WITHIN THE NUKVA SHALL BE CLOTHED IN CHASSADIM OF ZEIR ANPIN? Now that they are together, there is no more need OF THE RIGHT, CHASSADIM. Straightaway "silver was not accounted for anything," FOR HE REJECTED THE SILVER, WHICH IS RIGHT, AS EXPLAINED.

841. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: You have rejected the right, WHICH IS CHESED. Upon your life, you shall yet need kindness (Chesed) from people, but you shall not be offered any. Immediately the sun, ZEIR ANPIN, declined from opposite the moon, THE NUKVA, and she began to darken. Solomon went begging, saying 'I am Kohelet,' but none did any kindness by him. Why? Because he rejected the right, CHESED, and did not consider it, as it says, "Silver was not accounted for anything in the days of Solomon."

842. Hence, the more one praises the Holy One, blessed be He, THE RIGHT, peace abounds above. SCRIPTURE therefore SAYS, "Hearken Laysha," WHICH IS THE NUKVA WHEN SEPARATED FROM THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, THE RIGHT. It is written: "The old lion (Heb. layish) perishes for lack of prey" (Iyov 4:11). Laysha is the feminine of layish, as chok (law) and chukat (ordinance).

THEY HAVE THE SAME MEANING, AS DO LAYISH AND LAYSHA. "Perishes (Heb. oved)": As in "who were lost (Heb. ovdim)" (Yeshayah 27:13), MEANS THAT IT IS LOST. "For lack of

prey," since THE NUKVA demands FROM ZEIR ANPIN to give her, as it says, "She rises also while it is yet night, and gives food (prey) to her household" (Mishlei 31:15).

843. "And the lion's whelps are scattered abroad" (Iyov 4:11), for all the armies, NAMELY THE ANGELS WHO ISSUE FROM HER, come together as one when she gives them prey and feed together. But when she has no prey, on account of the exile, "the lion's whelps are scattered abroad" and her armies go different ways and roads to find a place to execute judgments. So, when sacrifices are offered, everybody is in order, and they come together like we said. Now, IN TIME OF EXILE, when sacrifice is not offered, surely "the lion's whelps are scattered abroad." Therefore, not a day passes without judgment, since the upper and lower are not aroused by supreme perfection.

844. Come and see: now in the time of exile man's prayer causes perfection above and below, and the upper and lower are blessed by the blessing of the Holy One, blessed be He. Hence, Yisrael's prayer causes the worlds to be blessed. Whoever blesses the Holy One, blessed be He, shall be blessed, and whoever does not bless the Holy One, blessed be He, is not blessed, as it is written: "For them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed" (I Shmuel 2:30).

85. The cup of blessing

Rav Hamnuna Saba expounds upon the significance of a wine cup, the table, and the blessings made over the wine. The sage equates the cup to the receptive nature of Malchut and the wine to the supernal blessings that light our world. It is explained that both hands are used to receive the cup, signifying the Right and Left Columns which are required to create a circuit of spiritual energy. We're told that one should also bless the table to ensure sustenance, signified by the bread and wine that sit upon it.

The Relevance of this Passage

The tremendous Light that is awakened and drawn to this world through the blessing of wine is summoned forth, bringing us Light, balance, and sustenance.

845. Rav Hamnuna Saba (the elder) gave his cup of blessing to no one, but hastened to receive it with both hands and say the blessing. We have said that it should be received by both right and left, and though others have explained it differently, we agree with it. But the secret thereof is that for a cup of blessing we need a cup, as it is written "I will raise the cup of salvation" (Tehilim 116:13), NAMELY THE CUP CALLED THE NUKVA. By means of this cup blessings are drawn from the salvations above, AND THE CUP, THE NUKVA, receives and gathers them to it. There the supernal wine is preserved, THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM BINAH, and gathered in the cup, hence we need to bless it with both right and left; and the wine which is gathered in the cup will be blessed together, THAT IS, THE WINE WHICH IS THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT FROM BINAH, TOGETHER WITH THE CUP, BEING THE NUKVA. We should also bless the table, THE NUKVA, that it will not be without both bread and wine.

846. Come and see: the Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, is called a cup of blessing. Since it is a cup of blessing, we need both the right and left hands to receive it, for the cup is given by the right and left hands, CHASSADIM AND CHOCHMAH, AS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED. It should be filled with wine, because of the wine of the Torah, THE SECRET OF THE ILLUMINATION OF THE LEFT, which comes from the World to Come, BINAH.

847. Come and see supernal things have been revealed here concerning the cup of blessing, while we stayed in the cave; here was revealed the secret of the Holy Chariot, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT. For the cup of blessing should be received with both right and left, which are north and south, CHESED AND GVURAH, and the cup of blessings receives its blessing from them. What is this cup of blessing? It is "his litter, that of Solomon" (Shir Hashirim 3: 7), NAMELY MALCHUT, which should be placed between north and south, CHESED AND GVURAH, but CLOSER to the right. The body OF HE WHO BLESSES, TIFERET, should be prepared with them, and one should fix his eyes upon the cup and bless it with four blessings, since it says, "The eyes of Hashem your Elohim are always upon it" (Devarim 11:12). Thus the secret of faith is found within the cup of blessing; NAMELY north and south, east and west, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT. Here is a Holy Chariot worthy of it.

848. There is bread upon the table, so that the lower bread, THE NUKVA, will be blessed, and the bread of poverty, THE NUKVA WHEN WITHOUT CHASSADIM, will be blessed and become millet bread WHEN HER CHOCHMAH IS CLOTHED IN CHASSADIM, AND SHE IS CALLED MILLET BREAD, as has been explained. The Congregation of Yisrael, THE NUKVA, is thus blessed above by the four winds of the world, CHESED, GVURAH, TIFERET, AND MALCHUT, and above and below, NETZACH AND HOD. The cup of blessing brings the union between King David, THE NUKVA ABOVE THE CHEST, with the patriarchs, CHESED, GVURAH, AND TIFERET, WHENCE CHOCHMAH TAKES. And it is blessed below BY NETZACH HOD YESOD, AND THUS HAS CHASSADIM AS WELL, so that man's table be blessed that there will always be bread upon it.

849. They all rose and kissed his hands and said: Blessed be the merciful One who brought us here to hear these words. They came out of the cave and went. When they reached the town, they saw dead men, upon whom a house fell. They sat and saw people who mourned those who died along with the Roman, FOR THE HOUSE COLLAPSED UPON JEWS AND GENTILES ALIKE.

86. "The threshing floor of Atad"

Rabbi Shimon discusses the metaphor concerning the transference of earthly and spiritual power from Egypt to Yisrael. Next, we learn that Ya'akov's soul was the brightest since the Creation of the world. When Ya'akov departs this world from within the land of Egypt, which represents a domain of negativity, it is free from any influences issuing from the Other Side, and directly ascends to its proper place in the heavens.

The Relevance of this Passage

The ability to triumph over our Evil Inclinations [Egypt] and to transfer control and power to the will of our soul [Yisrael], is the great gift bestowed upon readers of this section. This action sets us on a course for greater spiritual growth, ensuring a lofty place in the world to come and increased fulfillment in the here and now.

850. Rabbi Shimon opened the discussion saying: "And they came to the threshing floor of Atad" (Bereshheet 50:10). HE ASKS: What is the threshing floor of Atad? HE ANSWERS: It is an allusion to the dominion of Egypt, which is removed. The threshing floor of Atad is the dominion of Egypt which passes to give way to the dominion of Yisrael. For they saw a threshing floor, WHICH ALLUDES TO THE REIGN OF YISRAEL, like in "having put on their robes, in a threshing floor" (I Melachim 22:10). Therefore "they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation."

851. "So that the name of it was called the mourning of the Egyptians": Assuredly the Egyptians MOURNED FOR THEIR DOMINION WHICH PASSED, but here also the weeping was not for Jews, though there were Jews among the dead. Had they been good Jews, they would not have been killed. But having died, the Holy One, blessed be He, pardons their sins.

852. Rabbi Shimon said, Come and behold: though Ya'akov yielded his soul in Egypt, it did not depart under the dominion of the other, NAMELY THE OTHER SIDE. Why? Because, as we learned, there has not been a bed more whole than Ya'akov's bed since the Creation of the world, FOR ALL HIS SONS WERE PROPER. As soon as he departed from the world, his soul joined its place, as has already been explained.

87. The embalming of Ya'akov

The Zohar reveals the luminous power and influence of Ya'akov by recounting how the scents of the Garden of Eden and candlelight radiate in a cave during his presence. Next, we learn that the souls of the righteous pass through the cave of the patriarchs to behold the spiritual deeds and Light they left behind. The process for embalming Kings is then expounded upon by Rabbi Aba and we learn that Ya'akov was embalmed to preserve both his body and soul so that he can join the Supernal Ark [Malchut]. Finally, it is revealed that Yosef is the chariot for Zeir Anpin, bridging Malchut with the Upper World. Hence, his keeping the covenant is deemed to have been accomplished in both worlds. This secret is alluded to by the two yuds ?? in the word Vayisem (Eng: 'and he was put'). When Yosef left this world from the land of

Egypt, it is said that he was put into two arks, or coffins. This means that he avoided the clutches of the Other Side and connected directly to the Shechinah [the upper Ark].

The Relevance of this Passage

If we read this passage with a contrite heart and soul, we can ignite the righteousness and spiritual power of Ya'akov and Yosef to help us rise above negativity in life [Egypt]. We are inspired to recognize the value of keeping the covenant, which ensures a connection to the Light of the Shechinah in this world and in the world to come.

853. Come and behold: When Ya'akov entered the cave, all the perfumes of the Garden of Eden filled it. The cave was alight, for a candle burned THERE. When the patriarchs came to Ya'akov in Egypt to be with him, the candlelight was gone FROM THE CAVE. When Ya'akov came in to the cave, the candle returned. The cave was then perfected in all its needs.

854. Never has the cave received any other man, and never will it. The souls of the righteous pass AFTER THEIR DEMISE before THE FATHERS inside the cave, so that they will awake and behold the seed they left in the world, and rejoice before the Holy One, blessed be He.

855. Rabbi Aba said: What was the embalming of Ya'akov like? He said to him: Go and ask a physician. Come and see: it is written: "And Yosef commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Yisrael." Could you possibly think that he was embalmed like other people? If you say that it was done due to the voyage, FOR THEY HAD TO PRESERVE HIM, it says, "So Yosef died... and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt" (Beresheet 50:26). He was not taken away, but buried there, yet "they embalmed him."

856. It is the custom to embalm kings, in order to preserve the body FROM ROTTING. They are embalmed with anointing oil, superior to any other oil, mixed with spices. The good oil is absorbed in the body day after day for forty days, as it is written: "And forty days were fulfilled for him: for so are fulfilled the days of those who are embalmed." After this procedure, the body is preserved for many days.

857. For the land of Cna'an and the land of Egypt consume and corrupt the body in a shorter time than other countries, and this is done in order to preserve the body. The embalming is both for the internal part of the body and the exterior. The oil is put on the navel, and it penetrates the inner part of the body, absorbed in the entrails and preserves it for a long time.

858. Ya'akov had need of the body and so it is appropriate: for he is the body of the fathers, AS HIS FATHERS, CHESED AND GVURAH, ARE THE TWO ARMS AND HE IS TIFERET, THE BODY. Both his body and soul endured. Yosef, too, resembles the body, FOR HE IS THE COVENANT, AND THE COVENANT AND THE BODY ARE CONSIDERED THE SAME. He was preserved in both body and soul: his body, as it is written: "And they embalmed him" and his soul, as it is written: "And he was put in a coffin (ark) in Egypt," WHICH MEANS THAT HIS SOUL JOINED THE SUPERNAL ARK, WHICH IS THE NUKVA.

859. We have learned why "VAYISEM (ENG. 'AND HE WAS PUT')" is spelt with two letters Yud. Yosef kept the covenant below and he kept the covenant above, BEING A CHARIOT TO ZEIR ANPIN. Therefore, when he passed away from the world, he was put in two arks (coffins), the ark above and the ark below. What is the 'ark above'? It is described by the words, "Behold, the ark of the covenant of (is) the master of all the earth" (Yehoshua 2:11). For the upper ark, THE SHECHINAH, is called 'the ark of the covenant'. It will be inherited only by him who keeps the covenant. Since Yosef kept the covenant, he was put in two arks.

88. "And he was put in a coffin in Egypt"

The Zohar expands upon the wisdom concealed inside the verse "And he was put in a coffin (also: 'ark') in Egypt." Egypt, we're told, is the land of the Other Side, and though one may leave the world from this negative, foreign soil, the soul will merge with the Shechinah, as Yosef did, if it is righteous.

The Relevance of this Passage

The strength to rise above of the negativity and influence of our Evil Inclination [Egypt] is ignited, so that we may connect to the protective and nurturing Light of the Shechinah now, and in the world to come.

860. "And he was put in a coffin (also: 'ark') in Egypt." From this verse, we learn yet another secret. Though his soul departed in a foreign soil OF THE OTHER SIDE, it joined the Shechinah and "he was put in an ark," IN THE ARK above and IN THE ARK below. For he was righteous, and every righteous man inherits the Holy, Supernal Land, THE SHECHINAH, as it says, "Your people also shall be righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever; they shall be the branch of my planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified" (Yeshayah 60:21).

Blessed be Hashem for ever and ever, Amen and Amen.

The end of the book of Beresheet