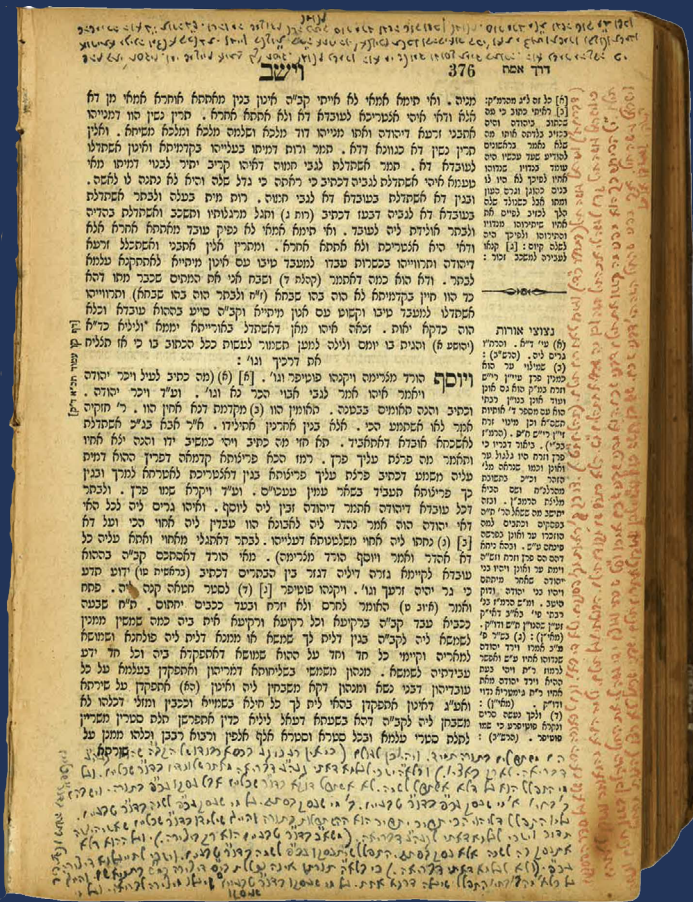


GEMS FROM EXILE

The Glosses of R' Levi Yitzchok Schneerson זצ"ל —IN ENGLISH—



IN HONOR OF CHOF AV, 5781
— THE 77TH HILULA —

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R' Levi Yitzchok Schneerson זצ"ל
–IN ENGLISH–

IN HONOR OF CHOF AV, 5781
– THE 77TH HILULA –

MEMENTO
FOR THE CHARTER FLIGHT TO ALMATY, KZ



DAILY TORAH STUDY. DELIVERED.

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Harav HaGaon HaChasid HaMekubal, R' Levi Yitzchak Schneerson זצ"ל
18 Nissan, 5638 (1878) - 20 Menachem Av, 5704 (1944)

**Cover photo: A page of Zohar with commentary from
R' Levi Yitzchok, which he had with him in exile.**

Note the various colors of the ink, due to the variety of
flowers used by Rebbetzin Chana to make ink.

*Courtesy: Chabad Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad,
770 Eastern Parkway and Kehot Publication Society.*

Boruch Hashem

“With gratitude to Hashem, I have merited a great and wondrous Zechus, in that some of my father’s writings and Seforim have reached me”, wrote the Rebbe, in the introduction to Likutei Levi Yitzchok, the published writings of his father, of righteous memory.

This rare expression gives us a glimpse of insight into how precious and dear these teachings are to our Rebbe.

We echo the sentiment of what a “great and wonderful Zechus” we have to publish a sampling of R’ Levi Yitzchok Schneerson’s teachings, in English, making them accessible to an audience for whom they have thus far been a closed book.

These are taken from the weekly CHAYUS publication, over the past year (see pg. 109)

We have included 20 teachings, for the 20th of Av, the 77th Hilula-Yahrzeit.

With Hashem’s help we will produce the remainder in the right time.

May we merit that the Zechus of the Ba’al Hahilula, R’ Levi Yitzchok Schneerson ב"ו shines upon us and that studying his teachings brings him and his son, our Rebbe, great nachas.

20 Av, 5781

CHAYENU

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FOREWORD

Gratitude

At the outset, we ought to thank all those who made this publication possible.

First and foremost, we owe a debt of gratitude to Rebbetzin Chana, who with tremendous sacrifice toiled to provide the “ink” for her husband to be able to jot down his novel Torah insights. The Rebbe always credited her with the fact that we have his teachings today.

As you can read in her journal (pg. 101), it was also a lifelong wish of hers that these ultimately get published. Unfortunately, she didn’t merit to see them printed in her lifetime, but she too has Nachas that this booklet is in your hands.

Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al HaTorah

While there are a number of books out there deciphering the deeply coded in-depth Kabbalistic teachings of R’ Levy Yitzchok ך״ו (see pg. for Resources), without doubt the most extensive and elaborate treatment on his teachings is the series known as “Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al HaTorah” which is authored by **Rabbi Dovid Dubov** of Chabad in Princeton, New Jersey. In these volumes

he unpacks the deeply subtle and elusive, nuanced language of Likkutei Levi Yitzchok & Toras Levi Yitzchok, while also bringing an abundance of footnotes with sources in Chasidus and Nigleh to aid the reader in understanding the profundity in R' Levi Yitzchok's words. Rabbi Dubov has worked closely with our team at Chayenu each week as we endeavored to make sure we were adapting the concept into English correctly.

He also records a weekly video on the very same teaching, which can be found online (see pg. 110).

Rabbi Yaakov K. Chaiton, of Chabad at Robbinsville, New Jersey has tirelessly drafted the English text each week, laying the groundwork for its publication, aiming to deliver both the context of the idea and its novelty.

Rabbi Itzick Yarmush, Editor of Chayenu, meticulously reviews the text, offering critical feedback.

Rabbi Michoel Goldman, Editor-in-Chief at Chayenu reviews the draft, checks its accuracy with the original Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, often adds actual quotes of the original Hebrew text and prepares it for press.

Rabbi Mendy Angyalfi, Chayenu in-house typesetter and graphic artist puts his aesthetic touch on the final product, delivering a polished, neat end product.

Rabbi Yossi Pels, Executive Director of Chayenu and the driving force behind all its offerings and projects — whose idea the weekly Chayus PDF was - ensures its timely distribution to Jews worldwide, for Shabbos each week.

We are grateful to the patrons of the weekly CHAYUS publication, **Mr. David & Eda Schottenstein**, whose valuable and staunch support of our work gives us, and the world “Chayus”, vitality each Shabbos.

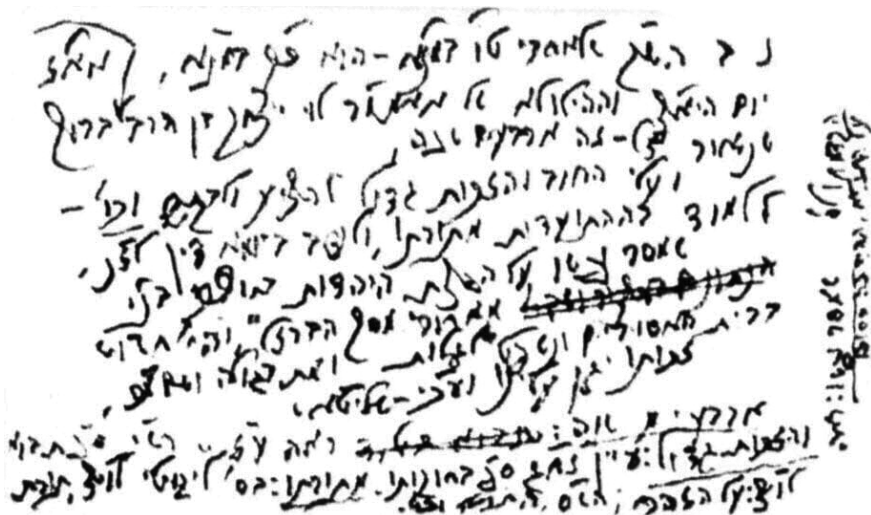
We very much thank **Yaakov & Leah Feldman** For their ongoing generous support for the English translation of Yalkut Levi Yitzchok al HaTorah.

Special thanks to **Rabbi Friedman of Kehot Publication Society** for granting us permission to include the original text of Likkutei / Toras Levi Yitzchok each week, and in this publication, and for permission to reprint the photo of the Rebbe's father, R' Levi Yitzchok Schneerson זצ"ל. Thank you too, to **Rabbi Chaim Shaul Bruk of Lahak Publications** for his efforts in obtaining and remastering the original photo.

Finally, our gratitude to **Mr. Ezzy Rappaport** of Surfside, Florida for partnering with us in making this publication possible. May he and his beautiful family be blessed abundantly in the merit of bringing the Rebbe's father's teachings to the English-speaking world, in honor of the 77th Hilula-Yahrtzeit.

Studying the Teachings of R' Levi Yitzchok

The following note was penned by the Rebbe on Motzei Tisha B'av 5744 to his secretariat for it to be included in answers that would come from the Rebbe during those few days.



נ.ב. הש"ק שלאחרי ט"ו מנ"א - הוא כ"ף מנ"א, יום היא"צ וההילולא של אאמו"ר לוי יצחק בן הרב אא"ז ברוך שניאור ז"ל - זה ארבעים שנה.

ועלי החוב והזכות גדול להציע ולבקש וכו' - ללמוד בהתוועדות מתורתו, ולנדב ביומא דין לז"נ, שמסר נפשו על הפצת היהדות בתוככי בני"י "מאחורי מסך הברזל", ועי"ז הי' חבוש בבית האסורים ונשפט לגלות ומת בגולה ושם מ"כ, זכותו יגן עלינו ועכ"י שליט"א.

(Translation)

P.S. The Shabbos following 15 Av, Chof Av, is the fortieth Yahrtzeit of my father Horav Levi Yitzchok son of my grandfather Horav Boruch Shneur, of blessed memory.

It is my great obligation and merit to suggest and request etc. — a communal study of his Torah, as well as donating to tzedakah on this day in his memory. [My father] devoted his life to the spreading of Yiddishkeit amongst the Jews "behind the iron curtain," which resulted in his arrest and his being sentenced to exile, where he passed away and was laid to rest.

May his merit shield us and all Jews, may they live and be well.

וישלה

VAYISHLACH

It's More Than A Numbers Game

וְהוּא עָבַר לְפָנֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
אֶרְצָה שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים עַד גִּנְשָׁתוֹ עַד
אֶחָיו. וַיֵּרָץ יַעֲקֹב לְקִרְאתוֹ וַיַּחְבְּקֵהוּ
וַיִּפֹּל עַל צַוְאָרְיוֹ וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ וַיִּבְכוּ.

AND HE (*Ya'akov*) WENT AHEAD OF THEM AND PROSTRATED HIMSELF TO THE GROUND SEVEN TIMES, UNTIL HE CAME CLOSE TO HIS BROTHER. AND EISAV RAN TOWARD HIM AND EMBRACED HIM, AND HE FELL ON HIS NECK AND KISSED HIM, AND THEY WEPT. (*Vayishlach 33:3-4*)

Driving Questions:

1. Why did Ya'akov bow to Eisav seven times?¹
2. What is the significance of the hug they gave each other?

Later on in history the descendants of Yaakov and Eisav meet up.

The Talmud² relates how during the era of the second Beis Hamikdash, the Romans³ were in constant battle with the Greeks, and were unsuccessful at subduing them. So they approached the Jewish People to form a partnership and together they were successful.

The peace between the Romans and the Jews lasted for 26 years, after which there was some political upheaval and eventually the Romans became the persecutors of the Jewish people and destroyed the Beis Hamikdash.

What is the deeper reason as to why the peace lasted for exactly 26 years?

Gematria of The Name

The sages teach,⁴ that the name of a person gives insight and clues as to the underlying nature of their soul-type and their unique path of divine service.

Therefore, in order to properly understand the mystical interpretation of the peace agreement, we will first analyze the names of Yitzchak, Yaakov and Eisav. Let's look at the Gematria:

-
- 1 The Ba'al HaTurim explains that the seven prostrations of Ya'akov (שבע יפל צדיק) were in order to counter (subdue or elevate) 7 negative character traits from Eisav's heart (ז' תועבות קלבו). See Mishlei 26:25. However, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak explains it in more detail with the Remez (Gematria) and Sod behind it.
 - 2 Avoda Zara 8b.
 - 3 The Roman Empire (Edom אֶדוֹם) stems from Eisav (אֶדְמוֹנִי).
 - 4 See Talmud Yoma 83b (Rabbi Meir's practice); See also Tanya, Sha'ar Hayichud VeHaEmunah chapter 1.

ה-ו-ה-י = 26	⁵ ה - ⁶ ו - ⁵ ה - ¹⁰ י	26
יצחק = 208	¹⁰⁰ ק ⁸ ח ⁹⁰ צ ¹⁰ י	8 x 26
יעקב = 182	² ב ¹⁰⁰ ק ⁷⁰ ע ¹⁰ י	7 x 26
עשו = 376	⁶ ש ³⁰⁰ ו ⁷⁰ ע	350 ⁵ + 26

The name of Hashem (ה-ו-ה-י), referred to as *Havaya*, has the Gematria of 26.

Yitzchak’s name is 8 x 26 (*Shem Havaya*); Ya’akov’s name is 7 x 26.

The number seven is built into the fabric of the natural world order. There are seven days of the week, seven years in a Sab- batical cycle and seven emotional faculties. The number 8, thus represents transcending the natural order.⁶

From this we can learn that Yitzchak’s path in serving Hash- em was in a manner that was beyond nature. This is seen in the way he lived his life: largely secluded from the world around him, and he never left the holy land of Eretz Yisroel.

The Divine service of Yaakov, on the other hand, was one that related to the natural order, channeling G-dliness into world- ly affairs. This is seen from the Torah’s narrative of his life, his struggles with Eisav & Lavan, and how he built his family in Charan, an unholy environment.

Eisav is the antithesis of Ya’akov. While Ya’akov was focused on channeling G-dliness and holiness into the world, Eisav was manifesting impurity.

This is alluded to in the numerical value (Gematria) of his

⁵ טמא = 50 (ט=9, מ=40, א=1). 7x50 = 350

⁶ Hence, a Bris being on the 8th day, representing our covenant with Hashem being beyond the nature of this world; The Miracle of Chanukah being 8 days, etc.

name. Eisav = 376. **טִמְאָה** Tamei (impurity) = 50. $7 \times 50 = 350$, with a remaining 26. The remaining 26 correspond to *Shem Havaya* that he received from his father Yitzchak, but which was buried, concealed and dominated by the impurity that he brought upon himself. This (hidden) element of G-dliness is the one thing the brothers have in common from their father.

When Ya'akov and Eisav finally meet up, Ya'akov bows to Eisav seven times and then they hug each other. Each one of these actions are of extreme significance.

Every time Ya'akov bowed, he was activating a power of *Shem Havaya* (G-dliness) inside of himself to counter one level of *Tamei* (impurity) inside of Eisav, in an attempt to purge his brother of the impure spirit. He does this seven times, ultimately transforming the seven levels of *Tamei* within Eisav.

When he had finished the cleansing process, the only element which remained was the 26 - the name of Hashem inside of Eisav (the hidden G-dliness) and so they hugged and became one. Together there was now a total of *Shem Havaya* 8 times; one in Eisav and seven in Ya'akov. This demonstrated that now they were finally truly the sons of Yitzchak, who embodied *Shem Havaya* 8 times.

Now we can return to the pact the Jewish people made with the Roman Empire years later.

We have a principal regarding the forefathers: “Ma’asei Avos Siman L’bonim” —

Whatever occurred to the forefathers during their lifetime was a ‘signal’ of what will occur to their progeny, the Jewish people, throughout their history.

The treaty between the parties lasted exactly 26 years corresponding to the one time *Shem Havaya* that had become re-

vealed in Eisav. At the conclusion of those years, they returned to being enemies.

Ya'akov hinted at this when he told Eisav to go on his way and that they will meet up at a later point.⁷ He was indicating that the brotherly peace that was demonstrated was only a temporary one, lasting a total of 26 years.

It is only with the coming of Moshiach that Eisav and all he represents will be truly elevated.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

כ"ו שָׁנִים קָמוּ בְּהִימָנוּתֵיהֶן, כ"ו דְּוָקָא. בִּי הִנֵּה יִצְחָק מִסְפָּרוֹ ח' פְּעָמִים הָיִי, וְנִמְשָׁךְ מִמֶּנּוּ יַעֲקֹב וְעָשׂוּ. בִּיעֲקֹב נִמְשָׁךְ ז' פְּעָמִים הָיִי מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי יַעֲקֹב מִסְפָּרוֹ ז' פְּעָמִים הָיִי, וְהָיִי אַחַת נִמְשָׁךְ בְּעָשׂוּ, שְׂמֻצָד זֶה הוּא אָח וּמְחוּבָר לְיַעֲקֹב. וְהַמּוֹתֵר בְּעָשׂוֹ עַל הָיִי הוּא ז' פְּעָמִים טָמֵא, מֻצָד הוּא פְּעָמִים טָמֵא שָׁבוּ הוּא הַלְעוּמֵת דִּיעֲקֹב שֶׁהוּא ז' פְּעָמִים הָיִי, וְלִכֵּן הִיָּה עָשׂוּ שׁוֹנֵא לְיַעֲקֹב מְאֹד, מֻצָד הוּא פְּעָמִים טָמֵא שָׁבוּ.

וְעַל יְדֵי מַה נִּתְחַבֵּר עָשׂוּ לְקִרְאֵת יַעֲקֹב שְׂנַעֲשָׂה לוֹ כְּאֵת, וְרַק* לְקִרְאֵתוֹ, וְחִבְּקוֹ וְנִשְׁקוֹ (שְׂרֻשָׁב"י סִבִּירָא לִי שְׁבַכְלָ לְבוֹ נִשְׁקוֹ אֲזַי) הוּא עַל יְדֵי שֶׁהִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה יַעֲקֹב ז' פְּעָמִים אַרְצָה, שְׂעַל יְדֵי זֶה הִסִּיר מִמֶּנּוּ הוּא פְּעָמִים טָמֵא שָׁבוּ, וְנִשְׁאָר בּוֹ רַק הָיִי, שְׂמֻצָד זֶה הוּא אֶחָיו, וְהוּא "עַד גִּשְׁתּוֹ עַד אֶחָיו" ... הִנֵּה אֲזַי נִתְחַבֵּר לוֹ וְנִשְׁקוֹ בְּכָל לְבוֹ. וְהוּא שְׂכ"ו שָׁנִין, כ"ו דְּוָקָא קָמוּ בְּהִימָנוּתֵיהֶן, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִתָּם בְּעָשׂוֹ מֻצָד שֵׁם הָיִי שָׁבוּ אַחֵר שֶׁהוֹסֵר מִמֶּנּוּ הוּא פְּעָמִים טָמֵא, נִשְׁקוֹ בְּכָל לְבוֹ...

* כֵּן הוּא בְּכֵתֵב יְד קָדְשׁוֹ, אֲבָל כְּרֵאָה שְׂצִיךְ לְהִיּוֹת: וְרַץ

*Toras Levi Yitzchak — Chiddushim uBiurim B'Shas pg. 214
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 2, ch. 66-68)
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 5, ch. 33)*

7 Vayishlach 33:12. The Talmud in Avoda Zara 8b actually brings this verse in the context of this story.

מקץ

MIKEITZ

From Slavery To Seventy

וּשְׁם אֶתְנֹו נֶעַר עִבְרִי עֶבֶד לְשַׂר הַטְּבָחִים...
וַיִּקְרָא פֶּרְעָה שֵׁם יוֹסֵף צְפֹנָת פִּעֲנָח וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ
אֶת אֲסֵנַת בֵּת פּוֹטִי פֶּרַע כִּיֵּהן אֵן לְאִשָּׁה

AND THERE WITH US WAS A HEBREW LAD, A SLAVE
OF THE CHIEF SLAUGHTERER... (*Mikeitz 41:12*)

AND PAR'OI (*Pharaoh*) NAMED YOSEF TZAFNAS PA'NE'ACH,
AND HE GAVE HIM ASNAS THE DAUGHTER OF POTI PHERA,
THE GOVERNOR OF ON, FOR A WIFE. (*Mikeitz 41:45*)

Introduction: After Yosef had successfully interpreted Par'oi's dreams, Par'oi wanted to promote him to become viceroy of Egypt. His ministers, however, protested against it.

The Talmud¹ relates: **They** (the ministers) **said to him** (Par'oi): **He** (Yosef) **should know** the **seventy languages** that all

¹ Sotah, 36b.

kings' children learn. The angel **Gavriel** then **came and taught him** (Yosef) the **seventy languages**, but **he could not learn** all of them. Gavriel then **added one letter**, the letter *hei*, to Yosef's name **from the name of the Holy One, Blessed be He**, and then **he** was able to **learn** the languages, **as it is stated:**²

עדות ביהוסף שמו בצאתו על ארץ מצרים שפת לא ידעתי אשמע

“He appointed it in YHosef for a testimony, when he went forth against the land of Egypt, I heard a language that I knew not”.

Driving Questions:

1. Where in the Torah is there a hint to Yosef being gifted with the knowledge of the 70 languages?³
2. Why was the letter *Hei* specifically added to his name?
3. Why was the letter *Hei* added specifically between the *Yud* and *Vav*?

In Egypt, Yosef is referred to as a Hebrew slave⁴ (עֶבְרִי עֶבֶד) as it says, “And there with us was a Hebrew lad, a slave.”

Thus, Yosef had the status of a Jewish slave, an *Eved Ivri* (עֶבֶד עֶבְרִי). One of the requirements that a master has towards his slave is to shower him with gifts upon his release from slavery. This Biblical Mitzvah is called *Ha'anokah* — הַעֲנֹקָה.⁵

² Tehillim 81:6.

³ This follows the Talmud's rhetorical question, “Is there anything that is written in the Writings that is not alluded to in the Torah?!” (Ta'anit 9a).

⁴ Mikeitz, 41:12.

⁵ “You shall surely provide him from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your vat, you shall give him from what the Lord, your God, has blessed you” (Parshas Re'eh, 42:14).

As such, Yosef was owed *Ha'anokah* from those who enslaved him - Potifar, Par'oi and Hashem.⁶ They all participated in his imprisonment and thus each of them rewarded him, upon his release, in a different way.

Par'oi gifted him with clothing⁷ and appointed him as vice-roy. Potifar gave Asnas, his daughter, to Yosef in marriage.

What did Hashem give him?

He was given the gift of knowing all 70 languages. This is hinted at in the very same Posuk, where we are told about his gift from Potifar.

It says,⁸ “and he (Par'oi) gave him (Yosef) Asenas the daughter of Poti phera (פּוֹטִי פֶּרַע), the governor of On, for a wife...”

Strangely, the usual spelling of his name Potifar (פּוֹטִיפָר), is changed in this Passuk to read Potifera — פּוֹטִי פֶּרַע, with an added *Ayin*.

Why did the Torah add the letter *Ayin* to Potifar?

It is in this letter where the gift of the 70 languages is hinted. The numerical value of *Ayin* is 70. Hashem is providing His *Ha'anoka* to Yosef with this 70.⁹

⁶ See footnote 8.

⁷ Mikeitz 41:42. Fascinatingly, Rashi translates the רֶבֶד הַזָּהָב (gold chain) which Par'oi gave Yosef as “עֲנָק” which is the root of the word הַעֲנָקָה, and furthermore, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak points out that רֶבֶד זָהָב is the Gematria (numerical equivalent) of עֲנָק — 220.

⁸ Mikeitz, 41:45.

⁹ The Rebbe analyzed this teaching many times (see fn. 14). The Rebbe asks compelling questions not addressed by his father: 1) Why did Hashem owe Yosef Ha'anoka? 2) Why was it added to Potifar's name specifically? 3) Why was the letter *Ayin* added at the **end** of Potifar's name?

Briefly, the idea is that the הַעֲנָקָה from Hashem, like the punishment of slavery, followed Potifhar's. Just like his extended two years in prison (for not having

This gift of knowing the 70 languages is also connected to the letter *Hei* and its placement between the *Yud* and *Vav*:

G-d is referred to by various names. The primary name, the Tetragrammaton, is spelled ה-ו-ה-י (*Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei*).

Kabbalah¹⁰ teaches (and Chasidus elaborates¹¹) that the first *Hei* (ה) refers to the level of *Bina*. Since the soul is a part of G-d and evolves from G-d, it has a microcosm of the same structure. The Ten Divine *Sefirot* are mirrored in the human soul. In a person, *Bina* is the ability to absorb an idea, broaden it and reach a comprehensive understanding of it.

Thus, a *Hei* positioned between the *Yud* and *Vav* of Yosef parallels the order in the name of Hashem, indicating that Yosef was gifted with *Bina*. He now had the ability to absorb and retain knowledge of all 70 languages and internalize it until it became one with him.¹² As the Talmud concludes,¹³ **“The next day, (when he appeared before Par’oi, in) every language that Par’oi spoke with him, he answered him.”**



enough Bitachon in Hashem but relying on the butler) came on the heels of Potiphar’s sentencing him to prison (without which he would never have been there in the first place!), so too the הַעֲנִיקָה from Hashem “follows” Potiphar’s (even though it’s the primary one) — hence it is (alluded to by) being added to (1) Potiphar’s name (2) at the end of it (Sichos Kodesh 5734, Parshas Re’eh).

10 Tikkunei Zohar, 6b.

11 Tanya, Igeres HaTeshuva ch. 4.

12 Hence the verse in Tehillim (81:6) which mentions Yosef with the extra *Hei*, concludes with him hearing (*Shema* also means understanding) a language he previously didn’t.

13 Sotah, 36b.

In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

וְהִנֵּה יוֹסֵף שֶׁהִי מִתְחַלֵּה עֲבַד עֲבָרֵי כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב "וַיִּשֶׂם אֶתְנֹו נֶעַר עֲבָרֵי עֲבָד",
 הִנֵּה כְּשֵׁי צָא לְחַפְּשֵׁי וּלְחִירוֹת צָרִיךְ לָתֵת לוֹ הֶעֱנָקָה, וְהֶעֱנָקָה שְׁנֵתָן לוֹ, מִלְּבַד זֶה
 מֵה שְׁנֵתָן לוֹ פְּרָעָה הַטְּבַעַת וְרַבֵּד הַזָּהָב (שֶׁהוּא עֵנֶק בְּפִרוּשׁ רַש"י בְּחוּמָשׁ, רַב"ד
 זָהָב גִּימְטְרִיא עֵנֶק) וּבְגָדֵי יֵשׁ וְהִרְכִּיבוּ בְּמַרְכָּבַת הַמִּשְׁנָה וְעוֹד כְּפָתוּב בְּפָרְשַׁת
 מִקֵּץ, הִנֵּה עֵיקֹר הֶעֱנָקָה הוּא מֵה שְׁנֵתָן לוֹ הַקְּדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, וְהוּא מֵה שֶׁ"שְׁלַח
 אֶת גְּבִרְיָאֵל וְלָמְדוּ ע' לְשׁוֹן וְלֹא הָיָה גָמֵר הוֹסִיף לוֹ אוֹת אַחַת מִשְׁמוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוּשׁ
 בְּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר עֲדוֹת בֵּיהוֹסֵף שְׁמוֹ כו" בְּדֹאֵיתָא בְּסוּטָה דָּף ל"ו עֲמוּד ב' עֵינֵי שָׁם.

וְהֵינּוּ עֲדוֹת הוּא מִלְּשׁוֹן עֲדֵי, דְּהֵינּוּ עֵנֶק, וְהוּא הַתְּרִין עֲטָרִין דְּדַעַת, עֲדוֹת
 אוֹתוֹת דַּעוֹת, וְהוּא הָע' לְשׁוֹן שְׁלֵמֵדוּ, כִּי לְשׁוֹן שְׁיִיךְ לְדַעַת כְּפִדּוּעָה...

(וְאֵל תִּקְשֵׁי הֵרִי הֶעֱנָקָה צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת מֵהָאֲדוֹן שֶׁהִי עֲבָד לוֹ, וְאִם כֵּן הִי צָרִיךְ
 לִהְיוֹת הֶעֱנָקָה מִפּוֹטִיפֵר שֶׁהִי אֲדוֹנוּ, יֵשׁ לוֹמֵר מִפּוֹטִיפֵר הִי גַם כֵּן הֶעֱנָקָה, וְהוּא
 מֵה שְׁנֵתָן לוֹ בְּתוֹ אֶסְנֵת כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב "וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ אֶת אֶסְנֵת בֵּת פּוֹטִיפֵרֶע". וְנִתְּוֹסֵף
 ע' רוּמֵז עַל הָע' לְשׁוֹן שְׁלֵמֵד. פּוֹטִיפֵר עִם הַפּוֹלֵל הוּא מִסְפָּר לְשׁוֹן...)

"וְלֹא הָיָה קָא גָמֵר" ... הִנֵּה עַל יְדֵי מֵה קָא גָמֵר הוּא עַל יְדֵי שֶׁהוֹסִיף לוֹ אוֹת ה'
 מִשְׁמוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְהוּא ה' רֵאשׁוֹנָה שְׁבִישָׁם, בְּחִינַת בִּינָה. הִנֵּה בִּינָה
 וְדַעַת שֵׁיכִים זֶה לָזֶה כְּמֵאֲמָר "אִם אֵין דַּעַת אֵין בִּינָה, אִם אֵין בִּינָה אֵין דַּעַת"....
 וְרַק כְּשֶׁנִּתְּוֹסֵף לוֹ ה' דְּבִינָה... אִזְ גָּמֵר...

*Toras Levi Yitzchak — Chiddushim uBiurim L'Shas pg. 120¹⁴
 (Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 3, ch. 60)*

14 See Likkutei Sichos, vol. 24, page 87 and on, where the Rebbe devotes an entire Sich'a to this teaching, in more depth.

וַיְחִי

VAYECHI

Learn Like A Donkey

יִשָּׂשכָר חֹמֶר גָּרָם רֵבִיץ בֵּין הַמְּשָׁפְתִים
וַיֵּרָא מְנוּחָה כִּי טוֹב וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ כִּי נְעִמָּה
וַיֵּט שִׁכְמוֹ לְסֹבֵל וַיְהִי לְמַס עֶבֶד

YISSACHAR IS A STRONG-BONED DONKEY THAT
CROUCHES (*only*) BETWEEN THE BOUNDARIES.

HE SAW A RESTING PLACE, THAT IT WAS GOOD, AND
THE LAND, THAT IT WAS PLEASANT, AND HE BENT HIS
SHOULDER TO BEAR [BURDENS], AND HE BECAME
AN INDENTURED LABORER. (*Vayechi, 49:14,15*)

The Talmud¹ points out that the verse² “*Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between he who serves G-d and he who does not serve Him*” is seemingly repetitive.³

1 Chagiga 9b.

2 Malachi 3:18.

3 Seemingly the former two types of people are identical with the latter two.

In resolution, the Talmud explains that “*one who serves Him*” and “*one who does not serve Him*” are both referring to completely righteous people. But “one who reviews his studies one hundred times is not comparable to one who reviews his studies one hundred and one times.”⁴

To explain why one extra review of one’s learning is of such great significance, the Talmud illustrates with a scenario:

“Go and learn from the market of donkey drivers. (The cost of a trip is) ten *parsa*⁵ for one *zuz*.⁶ (However, a trip of) eleven *parsa* (goes) for two *zuzim*.”

The Alter Rebbe in Tanya⁷ explains this as follows:

The eleventh *parsa* exceeded the regular and customary practice and therefore warrants an addition of a complete *zuz*.

The same applies to learning and serving G-d. “Therefore, this 101st revision, which is beyond the normal practice to which the student has been accustomed since his youth, is equivalent to all the previous one hundred revisions combined.

In fact, its quality surpasses them in its greater strength and power so that it is only this one extra revision which entitles the student to be called “he who serves G-d.”⁸

Driving Questions:

1. What is the significance behind the numbers 100 and 101 specifically?

⁴ I.e. the former “does not serve” while the latter does.

⁵ A distance equivalent to approximately 4 kilometers or 2.5 miles.

⁶ Currency used in the Talmudic era.

⁷ Chapter 15.

⁸ This follows the translation of Lessons In Tanya.

2. Why is the example from donkeys and not any other animal?
3. Where are all these ideas hinted at in the Torah?

The Arizal⁹ teaches that there is an angel whose purpose and mission is to cause forgetfulness in Torah. The name of this angel is ‘Mas’ – מַס.

With this in mind we can understand why learning something 101 times is the antidote to forgetting one’s studies as brought down in the Talmud. The numerical value of ‘Mas’ – מַס is 100,¹⁰ thus the way to combat him is by reviewing 101 times, essentially going beyond its reach.¹¹

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak connects the dots: In the blessing that Ya’akov gave to his son *Yissachar* he compares him to a hard working donkey carrying a heavy load, and concludes “*he became an indentured laborer* – וַיְהִי לְמַס עֶבֶד.”

Rashi, quoting the Midrash, explains the deeper message of this blessing: He (*Yissachar*) bears the yoke of the Torah, like a strong donkey which is laden with a heavy burden.¹²

What was unique about the way they learned Torah?

⁹ Eitz Chaim Sha’ar 15, ch. 6.

¹⁰ (40) מ + (60) ס = 100.

¹¹ In Ohr HaTorah the Tzemach Tzedek brings a Gematria that also brings out the significance of the numbers 100 vs. 101. The word in Hebrew for ‘remember’ is יָדַר which equals 227. The Hebrew word for ‘forget’ is שכח which equals 328. The difference between them is 101. This follows what the Talmud says that what stands between remembering and forgetting is reviewing 101 times (Ohr HaTorah, Nach, pgs. 533-4). See also Likkutei Torah, Re’eh 22:3 regarding how learning 101 times is סָם חַיִּים.

¹² The Talmud (Avoda Zara 5a) states that a person ought to apply themselves to Torah study with great effort “like a donkey bears its load – כְּחֵמֹר לְמִשְׁאוֹי”.

They toiled in their learning of Torah in the way of ‘Oived’ — beyond the normal practice.

This is hinted at in the verse that discusses their blessing.

‘Mas’ — וַיְהִי לָמַס they didn’t learn only ‘L’mas’ within their natural capabilities (100 times), they exerted themselves like an ‘Oived’ — עָבַד — learning 101 times.

As an outcome of this they didn’t fall prey to the angel of forgetfulness — ‘Mas’.

We now understand why the example which the Talmud employs is from a donkey. It alludes to the method by which we can retain our learning. Copy the model of *Yissachar* who are likened to donkeys and toil in Torah, beyond your natural ability.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

תַּנְיָא פֶּרֶק טו: "לְשָׁנוֹת כָּל פֶּרֶק מֵאָה פְּעָמִים"
 בְּמוֹ שְׁכֵתוֹב בְּיִשְׁשׁוּכְרָ שְׁהִי עוֹסְקִים בַּתּוֹרָה "וַיְהִי לָמַס". מ"ס מִסְפְּרוֹ מֵאָה...
 וְאַחַר כֵּן פְּתִיב "עוֹבֵד" הוּא מָה שְׁהִי שׁוֹנִים ק"א פְּעָמִים בְּמוֹ עוֹבֵד אֱלֹקִים.
 וַיִּשְׁשׁוּכְרָ נִמְשָׁל לְחֵמּוֹר בְּמוֹ שְׁכֵתוֹב "יִשְׁשׁוּכְרָ חֵמּוֹר גָּרַם". (בִּי לִימוּד הַתּוֹרָה צְרִיךְ
 לְהִיּוֹת "בְּחֵמּוֹר לְמִשְׁאוּי") זֶהוּ הַמְשָׁל מְשׁוּק שֶׁל חֲמָרִים...
 זֶהוּ עוֹבֵד אֱלֹקִים, שֵׁם אֱלֹקִים הוּא גְבוּרוֹת. וְעוֹבֵד אֱלֹקִים הוּא שְׂמֵתָקָן וּמְמַתִּיק
 אֶת הַגְּבוּרוֹת.

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Ho'oros on Tanya — Chapter 15, pg. 3.¹³
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 3, ch. 149)

13 It is interesting to note that this explanation of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was written on the margins of his Tanya (in chapter 15 which discusses this idea), while he was in exile in Kazhakstan.

שמות

SHEMOS

The Concealed and The Revealed

וַיֵּלֶד אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֵוִי וַיִּקַּח אֶת בֵּת לֵוִי
וַתֵּהָר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֵּרָא אֹתוֹ כִּי
טוֹב הוּא וַתִּצְפְּנֵהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרְחִים

*A MAN OF THE HOUSE OF LEVI WENT AND
MARRIED A DAUGHTER OF LEVI.*

THE WOMAN CONCEIVED AND BORE A SON, AND
[WHEN] SHE SAW HIM THAT HE WAS GOOD, SHE
HID HIM FOR THREE MONTHS. (*Shemos, 2:-2*)

Driving Questions:

1. The man in this verse is Amram and the woman he married is Yocheved (Moshe's parents). Why does the Torah omit their names?

2. The verse discusses two elements surrounding the birth of Moshe. 1) “she saw him” (revelation) and 2) “she hid him” (concealment). What is the significance of these two elements?

The key to understanding all this, is to identify that there are two aspects in Moshe’s life. One is the open and revealed part and the other is the hidden and concealed part. This is a recurring theme in his birth and childhood, symbolizing a pattern in his life and mission.

Moshe is synonymous with the Torah. His life’s primary purpose was receiving and teaching the Torah to B’nei Yisroel. So much so that the Torah is referred to by his name as evident from the following verse: “זָכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי” (*“Keep in remembrance the teaching (lit. Torah) of Moshe, My servant....¹”*).

[An additional hint can be found² in the numerical value (Gematriya³) of his name and title. Moshe Rabeinu = 613. Thus illustrating the inherent connection and synonymy between Moshe and Torah.]

345	$\begin{matrix} 5 & 300 & 40 \\ \text{ה} & \text{ש} & \text{מ} \end{matrix}$
268	$\begin{matrix} 6 & 50 & 10 & 2 & 200 \\ \text{ו} & \text{נ} & \text{י} & \text{ב} & \text{ך} \end{matrix}$
613	תרי"ג

¹ Malachi 3:22

² Rabbi Levi Yitzchak brings this on page 66 (of this Sefer) albeit in a different context. It is also brought in Megaleh Amukos, Ch. 113.

³ Gematriya (when two words or phrases share an equal numerical value) is merely an indication and “external result” which points at an inherent thematic equivalence and commonality.

Generally speaking, the Torah is divided into two main categories: The revealed part (Nigleh⁴) and the hidden part (Nistar⁵).

Although most of what Moshe taught the Jewish People in his lifetime was the revealed dimension, he undoubtedly received the inner, hidden dimension too. Thus, the two dimensions of his birth and infancy (revealed/concealed), as well as later on in his life, parallel these two aspects of Torah he would receive and transmit.

Thus, for the first three months of his infancy he was in his parents' sheltered, sacred environment and care. Thereafter, he was raised by Basya, Paro's daughter, in the Egyptian palace, a most unholy environment.

This is hinted to by the omission of his parents' names⁶ and simply referring to them as they are connected to the tribe of Levi. The name Levi represents a deeper connection with G-d as alluded to in Leah's words when she named her son Levi, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me"⁷ — "הַפֶּעַם יִלְוֶה אִישִׁי" — "אֵלַי". This refers to our spousal relationship with Hashem too.

This idea of deep divine connection is mainly discussed in *Nistar* — the hidden parts of Torah. Yet Moshe is also referred to

4 Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, Halacha etc.

5 Kabbalah, Agada, Chasidus etc.

6 This teaching of Rabbi Levy Yitzchak is based on a story in the Talmud (Pesachim 62b) where Rabbi Simlai wants to learn the Book of Yuchasin, a Midrashic commentary and Rabbi Yochanan denies him that privilege. R' Levi Yitzchak explains the entire episode according to Kabbalah and how the knowledge of Yuchasin is akin to Nistar, which was beyond Rabbi Simlai's capacity. Kabbalistically, father and mother correspond to Chochma & Bina, our mental capacity, which is concealed. Thus, it represents the concealed parts of Torah and why the names of Moshe's parents here are hidden.

7 Vayetzai 29:34.

as an אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם — An Egyptian man⁸ which represents his engaging with the physical and mundane world. This corresponds to *Nigleh* — the revealed part of Torah.⁹

In Moshe's service of Hashem there were also two elements. On the one hand he remained holy and transcendent of the physical world and on the other hand he descended into the chaos, coarseness and materiality of worldly affairs to elevate it and bring divinity into it.¹⁰

This duality corresponds to the two elements of Torah — The hidden and the revealed.

This is also the *Avodah* of every Yid: to work on both fronts simultaneously. We need to transcend the physical world by working on our inner selves (*Nistar*), yet at the same time we need to engage with the world (*Nigleh*) in order to refine and elevate all of creation.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

...לְהַבִּין מֵה שֶׁכָּתוּב "וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם לְאִישׁ מִבְּמִית לְאִישׁ וַיִּקַּח אֶת בֵּית לְוִי וַתְּהִרָה הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֵּרָא אֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא וַתִּצְפְּנֶהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרְחִים וְלֹא יִכְלָה עוֹד הַצְּפִינוּ כו'". וְהִנֵּה מִשְׁמְעוֹת הַכָּתוּב שֶׁמִּפְנֵי שְׂרָאֲתָה אֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא לָכֵן הַצְּפִינוּ כו'. וְלִכְאוּרָה אֵינּוּ מוֹבֵן הָרִי אֶפְלוֹ אִם הִי כְּשֵׁאֲרֵי כָּל הַיְלָדִים הִיְתָה צְרִיכָה לְהַצִּילוֹ וְלִהַצְּפִינוּ, וְלִמָּה תוֹלָה הַהַצְּפָנָה מִשּׁוּם כִּי טוֹב הוּא...

⁸ Shemos 2:19.

⁹ See Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh #26, where the Alter Rebbe quotes a puzzling Zohar (Raya Mehemna Pashas Naso) which describes the inner Torah as the "Tree of Life", which is pure and holy, and the revealed Torah as the "Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil". He explains at length that while all of Torah is pure and holy, the revealed Torah descends into discussing matters of evil and darkness, realities of our world which require discernment and refinement.

¹⁰ See Toras Menachem, Hisva'aduyos 5786, vol. 3, pg. 647-650.

גַּם צְרִיךְ לְהֵבִין לָמָּה לֹא נֶאֱמַר בַּפֶּסוּק מִי הָיָה הָאִישׁ וְהָאִשָּׁה, שְׁמֵם עֲמָרִם וְיֹזְבֵד, רק בְּסֵתֶם "אִישׁ מִבֵּית לְוִי", ו"בֵּית לְוִי".

אֵךְ הָעִנְיָן הוּא כִּי מֹשֶׁה הוּא בְּחִינַת תּוֹרָה בְּכָלֵל, כִּי הַתּוֹרָה נִתְּנָה עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה, וְנִקְרָאת תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה, כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוּב "זָכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי", וְכֵמוֹ שְׁכָתוּב "תּוֹרָה צִוָּה לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מֹרְשָׁה קְהֵלֶת יַעֲקֹב". וְתּוֹרָה שְׂרָשָׁה מִחֻמָּה וּבִינָה, ב' הַבְּחִינּוֹת שְׁבִתּוֹרָה הַנִּגְלָה וְהַנְּסָתָר שְׂרָשָׁם מִחֻמָּה וּבִינָה... וְזֶהוּ תּוֹרָה צִוָּה כּו' הוּא הַנְּסָתָר דְּתּוֹרָה, מֹרְשָׁה קְהֵלֶת יַעֲקֹב הַנִּגְלָה דְּתּוֹרָה...

וְזֶהוּ שְׁמִשָּׁה נוֹלָד מֵאִישׁ מִבֵּית לְוִי וּבֵת לְוִי. לְוִי רוּמְזוֹ עַל יַחֲוֵד חֻמָּה וּבִינָה כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוּב בְּלִקוּטֵי תּוֹרָה בְּהַבְּאִיר דְּנִשְׂא דְרוּשׁ הָרֵאשׁוֹן עֵינֵי שָׁם. וְלִכֵּן לֹא נֶאֱמַר שְׁמֵם בְּפִירוּשׁ, כִּי חֻמָּה וּבִינָה הֵם בְּחִינַת נְסָתָרוֹת...

וְזֶהוּ שְׁנֵאמַר עַל מֹשֶׁה בְּחִינַת תּוֹרָה, "וְתִרְאֵה אֶת־כִּי טוֹב הוּא", מֵה שְׁמִשָּׁה בְּחִינַת תּוֹרָה נִקְרָא טוֹב, הֵינּוּ הַנְּסָתָר דְּתּוֹרָה, פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה (שְׁבִיחֵינָה זוֹ דְּתּוֹרָה נִקְרָא טוֹב עַץ הַחַיִּים שְׁכָלוֹ טוֹב, מֵה שְׂאִין בֵּן הַנִּגְלָה דְּתּוֹרָה מִתְּלַבֶּשֶׁת בְּעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרַע...)...

הֵינָה בְּחִינָה זוֹ דְּמֹשֶׁה "כִּי טוֹב הוּא", דְּהֵינּוּ פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה... צְפִנְתּוֹ אִמּוֹ... (וְלֹא יִכְלָה הַצְּפִינּוֹ עוֹד כּו' וְנִתְּגַלָּה מֹשֶׁה לְחוּץ, הֵינּוּ הַבְּחִינָה דְּמֹשֶׁה תּוֹרָה, דְּנִגְלָה דְּתּוֹרָה, שְׁנִגְלָה דְּתּוֹרָה מִתְּגַלָּה לְחוּץ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה).

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak,

Likkutim al Tanach uMa'amorei Chazal, page 128 and on.¹¹

(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 4, ch. 13)

11 *In the summer of 5689 (1930), Rabbi Levi Yitzchak wrote a lengthy, complex and deep Reshima (journal of Torah thought), based on Talmud Pesachim 62b, exploring multiple topics. In its printed form it spans 42 pages. He sent a copy to the Rebbe, his son.*

תרומה

TERUMAH

The Hands of G-d

וְעָשִׂיתָ קְעָרֹתָיו וְכַפֹּתָיו וְקִשּׁוֹתָיו וּמְנַקֵּיתָיו
אֲשֶׁר יִסַּף בָּהֶן זָהָב טָהוֹר תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם.

YOU SHALL MAKE ITS BREAD MOLDS, ITS BOWLS, ITS
SUPPORTING FRAMES AND ITS HOLLOW PEGS WITH
WHICH IT (*the bread*) WILL BE COVERED; YOU SHALL
MAKE THEM ALL OF PURE GOLD. (*Teruma 25:29*)

Introduction: One of the vessels in the Mishkan, and later on in the Beis Hamikdash, was the Shulchan, the table for the 12 loaves of *Lechem HaPanim* (showbread) that was present at every moment upon it. This Shulchan had a unique design with supporting frames and hollow pegs, as the verses indicate. It consisted of a golden table and two columns of bread upon it. Six loaves for each column.

The Mishnah (Menachos 11:6) tells us that there were twenty-eight hollow pegs, each of which was shaped like half of a hollow reed. Besides for a support structure, these allowed air-flow

to surround the loaves so they wouldn't become moldy. There were fourteen pegs for each column.

The Talmud (ibid. 97a) describes the structure (of the Shulchan as it relates to the pegs) as follows: Each column contains six breads: The lowest loaf of each column, did not require any pegs, since it rested on the Table itself. The four middle loaves of each column were each placed upon three pegs each. The top level loaf was placed upon only two pegs, as there was not a lot of weight upon it.

In summary: The pegs that separated and supported the breads were $3+3+3+3+2=14$. (See Image).

While the Talmud clearly explains why the top layer of bread needed less pegs than the rest of the layers of bread, we are left with no explanation as to the precise number of pegs that each of the columns consisted of, nor do we have an any insight into the precise break up of the layers of pegs.¹

Driving Questions:

1. What is the significance of the number 14, which was the total amount of pegs on each column
2. Why were the pegs divided by 3, with the top layer containing only 2?

1 See, Rambam, Moreh Nevuchim 3:26, where he explains that there are reasons for the general commandments but not for the details. See, also, Likutei Torah 41c that the reason for the details of the commandments are part of the deepest secrets of the Torah, which will be revealed in the future messianic era. Cf. Tanya, Igeret Hakodesh, Epistle 19.

The Kabbalah of Hands

Kabbalah teaches that there are ten Divine Attributes (Sefirot). There are three intellectual attributes of *Chochmah*, *Binah*, and *Da'as* (conception, comprehension and intimate knowledge), which develop and cause the resulting seven emotional attributes (*Middos*). According to Kabbalah, *Binah* is to be understood as the expansion of a concept from the way it is in *Chochmah*, and therefore has more of an impact on the attributes that follow.



Courtesy of The Showbread Institute
MachonLechemHaPanim.org
Rabbi Eliezer Saidel

The final two attributes of these seven are *Yesod* and *Malchus*. While *Malchus* represents the recipient, *Yesod* is the connection and conduit of energy of the attributes that are above it,² giving it forward into the attribute of *Malchus*.

We know that the human form, in all its intricacies is a parallel metaphor for the Divine structure, albeit anthropomorphically.³

² See Tikkunei Zohar, Pasach Eliyahu, 17a, *Yesod, is the conclusion of the body, the sign of the holy covenant*. CF. Tanya, *ibid.* Epistle 15.

³ See *ibid.* Torah in general and particularly Kabbalah is full of imagery of the Divine, using the human body as the illustration. We find mention of G-d's eyes, as a metaphor for His providence; His hands are the medium of His giving. And so forth.

The Arizal⁴ explains: *Binah* has two “hands”, a right hand and a left hand,⁵ each hand consisting of five fingers. These “hands” become “the secret” component that allow the attribute of *Malchus* to become a vessel and a well⁶ for the feminine waters (*Mayin Nukvin*).⁷

In the words of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak: The hands of the mother (=mother, being a metaphor for *Binah*)⁸ which carve out the foundations of *Malchus*.⁹

The Shulchan’s Hands

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak ties this Kabbalistic concept into the hidden messages of the Shulchan, by explaining that the columns

4 Pri Etz Chaim, Shaar Kriat Shema She’al HaMitah ch. 7

5 See Tikkunei Zohar Ibid. Chesed, kindness, is the right arm, and Gevurah, stringency, is the left arm. See Maamorei Admor Hazaken cited in footnote 6.

6 The Arizal in Shaar Kriat Shema She’al Hamita explains numerous times (cited by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak) that these concepts are hinted to in the verse (Tehillim 31:6) recited as part of the Kriat Shema, *in Your hand I deposit my spirit*. In Hebrew *בְּיָדְךָ אֶפְקֹד רוּחִי*. The word *Yadcha*, hand, is written explicitly once, and a second time if you take the last letter of each of the three words and read it from the last word backwards. And if you take the first letters of these three words, it spells *בְּאֵר*, well, which represents the well of the feminine waters.

7 See Maamorei Admor Hazaken, 5568, vol. 1, p. 56 *ff*; where many of these very concepts are discussed in length. (Albeit, in a different subject matter.) There the Alter Rebbe explains that both Bina, and “hands” which correspond to Chesed and Gevurah, are associated with the contraction of the Divine energy, which allows for the effusion of the Divine energy.

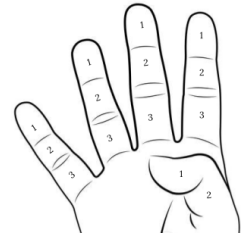
[Interestingly, the Alter Rebbe cites and explains the verse from Shemos (15:17), *the sanctuary, O, G-d, which Your hands founded*, which speaks of the sanctuary, the home of this *Shulchan*.]

8 The Arizal in Shaar Kriat Shema She’al Hamita ch. 7 associates Binah with the letter Hey ה (See also, Tanya, Igeres Hateshuva ch. 4). Further on in ch. 10 the Arizal explains that the Hebrew letter Hey consists of a Yud and Daled, which make up the word *Yad*, hand.

9 See also Etz Chaim Gate 32, ch. 7; Gate 35, ch. 3; Gate 39, Drush 1.

of bread and its pegs represent these Divine “Hands.”

It is for this reason, he explains, that there are two columns, since they represent the two hands of *Binah*. And each column has 14 pegs which is the numerical value of יד “*Yad*” — hand. 10 (Yud) + 4 (Daled) = 14.



Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, employs another connection between the number 14 and a hand, thereby explaining the division of pegs in layers.

Four of a person’s fingers (the pinky, ring, middle and pointer fingers) are divided into three sections (proximal, intermediate and distal phalanges), while the thumb is divided into two sections (there is no intermediate phalange in the thumb) (see image).¹⁰

Thus, we have a correlation between the hand that has 14 sections, with the Shulchan that contained 14 pegs. More precisely, the breakdown of sections in the fingers is such that the four fingers have 3 sections, while the thumb has 2. Precisely the design of the pegs in the Shulchan: 3+3+3+3+2, total: 14.

10 This metaphor of 14 sections in the Divine hand is also employed by the *Shefa Tal* (introduction, 5d ff). The *Shefa Tal* explains that this is the concept of the Priestly Blessings, which is also called *Nesias Kapayim* (the raising of the palms), where the Priest raises his hands, and then his hands parallel the hands of G-d, the Blessor, and the priest receive these blessings and transmits them to the hands of the Jewish people who are receiving these priestly blessings. He explains that this is also the meaning of the 15 word blessing (the three verses of blessings given by the Priest consist of 15 words), the first 14 are blessings that correspond to *Yad*, which is 14, and more specifically, they correspond to the 14 sections of fingers. The final word *Shalom*, peace, he explains, is an overarching blessing over the other 14 blessings, and corresponds to the palm.

This, concludes Rabbi Levi Yitzchok, is the secret of the division of pegs — it is indicative of the Divine “Hands,” which mold the vessel and fountain of feminine Divine energy.¹¹



Toras Levi Yitzchak, p. 241 ff.

11 Zohar 154b writes that the Shulchan and the bread which was placed upon it, was symbolic of and the conduit by which G-d provided sustenance to the word. The Priest would eat this bread each shabbos to demonstrate that sustenance comes from G-d, and through this consumption the bread of every Jew was blessed. (The Zohar continues to discuss the table that man eats upon, and indicates a strong correlation between a table and the Shulchan in the Temple.) Cf. Bava Basra 25b.

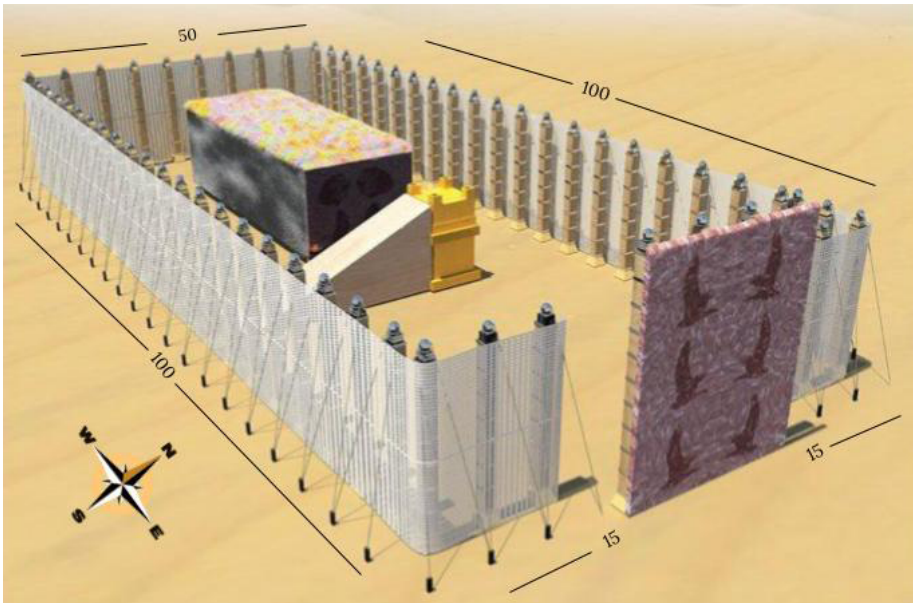
ויקהל

VAYAKHEL

Fenced In

וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־הַחֲצֵר לְפָנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ קַלְעֵי הַחֲצֵר
יָשׁוּשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר מֵאָה בְּאַמָּה ... וְלִפְנֵי הַצִּפּוֹן מֵאָה
בְּאַמָּה ... וְלִפְנֵי הַיָּם קַלְעִים חֲמִשִּׁים בְּאַמָּה ...
וְלִפְנֵי הַיָּם קַלְעִים חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה. קַלְעִים חֲמִשִּׁים
עֶשְׂרֵה אַמָּה אֶל־הַכֶּתֶף ... וְלִכְתֵּף הַשְּׂנִיט מִזֶּה
וּמִזֶּה לְשַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר קַלְעִים חֲמִשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה אַמָּה

HE MADE THE ENCLOSURE: ON THE SOUTH SIDE, A HUNDRED CUBITS OF HANGINGS OF FINE TWISTED LINEN FOR THE ENCLOSURE ... ON THE NORTH SIDE, A HUNDRED CUBITS ... ON THE WEST SIDE, FIFTY CUBITS OF HANGINGS ... AND ON THE FRONT SIDE, TO THE EAST, FIFTY CUBITS. FIFTEEN CUBITS OF HANGINGS ON THE ONE FLANK AND FIFTEEN CUBITS OF HANGINGS ON THE OTHER FLANK—ON EACH SIDE OF THE GATE OF THE ENCLOSURE (Exodus, 38:9-15)



The Torah describes the materials and measurements for the outer perimeter of the Mishkan (Tabernacle). In total there were **280** cubits¹ of netted linen fencing surrounding the structure, supported by poles.

Driving Question:

What is the significance of the number 280 as the measurement of fencing surrounding the Mishkan (Tabernacle)?

Hashem created the world with ten utterances,² using the holy letters of the Alef-Beis.

In the Jewish Alphabet there are a total of 22 regular letters, beginning with Alef and concluding with Saf. In addition

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- 1** See quoted verses. South and North each had 100. The west side had 50. The east side was 50 cubits wide but only 30 cubits of that had linen netting. The remainder was used as a 'gateway' into the Mishkan.
 - 2** Mishna, Avos, Chapter 5:1

to these, there are also 5 final letters that only appear at the end of a word. These are the final Chaf (ך), final Mem (ם), final Nun (ן), final Fei (ף), and final Tzaddik (ץ). They are known with the acronym of ‘*Mantzapach*’ — מנצפ"ך.³

Kabbalah explains that the regular letters are representative of the attribute of Chesed (lit. kindness, but more broadly) expressing the idea of giving, creating and revelation.

These 5 ‘final’ letters are representative of the opposite attribute, namely Gevurah (lit. severity, but more broadly) representative of the idea of containment, withdrawal and concealment. These letters are used exclusively as a full stop to a word, thus symbolizing containment.⁴

The Mishkan was a place in which G-dliness was revealed and experienced openly. The fencing around its courtyard signifies the border and end of that (level of) divinity and the start of the more natural and mundane.

This containment is expressed specifically in the number 280 — the total cubits of fencing — sharing the numerical value of the final letters מנצפ"ך — ‘*Mantzapach*’.

$$280 = (20) \text{ך} + (80) \text{ם} + (90) \text{ץ} + (50) \text{ן} + (40) \text{ף}$$

* * *

3 For an explanation as to why they are known specifically in this order (see Talmud, Megillah, 2b.) and not the way they appear in the order of the Alef-Beis, see Toras Levi Yitzchak, Chidushim U’biurim L’Shas, pg. 134. Additionally, this can also be seen in the Shabbos Musaf liturgy. The paragraph of *Tikanta Shabbos* contains the Alef-Beis in reverse, each word beginning with a subsequent letter going backwards (this reverse order represents Gevurah, i.e. “from the bottom up”, rather than “top down” which is Chesed). Following the 22 words, concluding with the word *Az*, there are five more words starting with the final letters: מַסִּינֵי נִצְטוּוּ צִוּוּי פִּעְלֵיהֶּ כִּרְאוּ. Here we see the order of מנצפ"ך.

4 *Meorei Ohr*, entry *Mantzepach*. See also *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, Zohar (Shemos-Devarim)*, pg. 340.

Another aspect⁵ — in terms of our *Avodas Hashem* (divine service) — represented by the fencing and perimeter of the Mishkan being synonymous with *Gevurah*:

Gevurah also means strength. The Mishnah (Avos 4:1) states, “Who is mighty (גבור)? One who conquers (i.e. overcomes) his evil inclination.” This is also the opening sentence of the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law),⁶ i.e. the very start of one’s service of Hashem.

This means that the very first step required from a Jew before entering into the service of Hashem (which is represented by the courtyard of the Mishkan, where Divine service occurred) is for one to exercise the quality of *Gevurah*, inner strength at overcoming one’s temptation for evil, and creating a border separating oneself from the forces which oppose G-dliness in one’s life. Once you have that quality you may enter the inner sanctuary of G-dliness.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

וְלִדְעֹתַי מְחִיצַת הַקְּלָעִים הַרוֹמְזוֹת עַל גְּבוּרוֹת הוּא שְׁלֵכַל לְרֹאשׁ צְרוּיָךְ לְהֵיטִיב
בְּחִינַת גְּבוּרַת הַכּוֹבֵשׁ אֶת יְצוּרָה, שְׂאֵז יָכוֹל לְהַבְדִּיל מִסְטָרָא דְלְעוֹמֵת זֶה. וְדַבֵּר זֶה
הַהֲתַחֲלָה שְׂבִיבָה מִתְחִיל הַטּוֹר שְׁלֵחֵן עָרוּךְ אֹרַח חַיִּים. וּמְחִיצַת הַקְּלָעִים רוֹמְזוֹת
עַל גְּבוּרוֹת, כִּי כָּל עֲנֵן מְחִיצָה וְהַבְדֵּלָה רוֹמְזוֹת עַל גְּבוּרוֹת.

*Likkutei Levi Yitzchok,
Igros Kodesh, pg. 388*

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- 5 The first interpretation refers to the Mishkan courtyard’s borders from the inside-out i.e. the G-dly expression outward. The second interpretation refers to man’s approaching the divine space, from the outside, heading in.
- 6 *Tur Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, 1:1.* הַיּוֹ... גְּבוּרַת בְּאֵרֵי לְעִשּׂוֹת רְצוֹן אֲבִיד שְׁבַשְׂמִים

צו

TZAV

A Tannery in the Temple?!

וְהַכֹּהֵן הַמִּקְרִיב אֶת עֹלֹת אִישׁ עֹר הָעֹלָה
אֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לִכְפֹּהֵן לוֹ יִהְיֶה

AND THE PRIEST WHO OFFERS A MAN'S BURNT
OFFERING SHALL KEEP THE HIDE OF THE BURNT
OFFERING THAT HE OFFERED. (*Vayikra*, 7:8)

The laws of the various *Karbanos* are complex and nuanced; which parts were burned, which went to the *Kohen*, and what did the owner get to eat.

This verse is teaching us what was done with the hide of a *Korban Olah* (a burnt offering). Although the entire animal was brought on the Mizbeiach (Altar), the hide belonged to the *Kohen* and he was entitled to do with it as he pleased; it was his own personal property.¹ The hide of other *Karbanos* belonged to

¹ Zevachim, 86a, 103b.

the owners for them to do with it as they wished. The *Mishnah* in *Zevachim*² lays down the general rule:

“The hides of offerings of *Kodoshim Kalim* (sacrifices of lesser sanctity) belong to the owners; the hides of *Kodshei Kodshim* (offerings of the most sacred order) belong to the *Kohanim*.”

The *Mishnah* in *Middos*³ teaches another important detail regarding the hide: **“In the *Parvah*⁴ chamber they used to salt the hides of the animal-offerings.”**

Driving Questions:

1. Which *Korbanos* is this *Mishnah* referring to when it says they were salted in the *Beis Hamikdash* courtyard, in the *Parvah* chamber?
2. What was done with the hides that were salted in the *parvah* chamber?

The owners of a *Korban* would take their part, eat it and use it accordance with the laws of the specific *Korban* that they had offered. The *Mishnah* can't be talking about *Kodoshim Kalim* (sacrifices of lesser sanctity) whose animal hides went to the owner because why would they be salted inside the *Azarah*? This was not a place for them to process their private possessions. The *Mishnah* therefore must be referring to *Kodshei Kodshim* (offerings of the most sacred order), and it is therefore the *Kohanim* who are using the *Parvah* chamber for their own animal hides.

² *Zevachim*, 12:3.

³ *Middos* 5:3. See Talmud *Yoma* 19a (for the correct version).

⁴ *Ibid*, “There were six chambers in the courtyard (of the *Beis Hamikdash*), three on the north side and three on the south side. On the south side were the salt chamber, the **parvah chamber** and the washer's chamber.”

As mentioned, these hides were the personal property of the *Kohanim* and there were no limitations on what they could use it for. Accordingly, it would seem inappropriate for them to make shoes, belts and other personal items in such a holy place!⁵

R' Levi Yitzchak offers a novel idea. The hides of the *Kodoshim Kalim* (lesser sanctity) were turned into *Tefillin Shel Yad* (hand Tefillin) and the hides of the *Kodshei Kodshim* (offerings of the most sacred order) which were salted and processed in the *Azarah*, were turned into *Tefillin Shel Rosh* (head Tefillin).⁶

There is a discussion in the *Talmud*⁷ whether *Tefillin* can be worn by a *Kohen* during the *Avodah* in the *Beis Hamikdash*, and it concludes that while the hand Tefillin can't, the head Tefillin can indeed be worn during the *Avodah*.⁸

5 Chiddushei HaGriz (R' Yitzchak Zev Halevi of Brisk) on Menachos asks this question. Also Ezras Kohanim (R' Yehoshua Yosef HaKohen, Warsaw, 1873) on Middos is puzzled by this.

6 R' Levi Yitzchak also draws a connection between Tefillin — which are referred to as פְּאָר (meaning beauty) — and the chamber of פְּרִיָה which shares the same root letters. Many commentaries struggle with the name פְּרִיָה which seems to be linked to some witchcraft and wonder how a holy chamber can carry such a name?! But with the above explanation it all fits beautifully.

7 Zevachim, 19a.

8 The rationale is as follows: Wearing the hand tefillin would constitute a *Chatzitza* (separation) between the priestly garments and the skin of the priest and this was not allowed. The head Tefillin, however, could be placed on the hair that was in front of their hat and would not constitute a *Chatzitza* (Ibid). For a Kohen Gadol (High Priest) there was a space between the hat (*Mitznefes*) and the head-plate (*Tzitz*) where he could wear Tefillin.

The Rambam (Sefer Avodah, Hilchos Klei Hamikdash 10:6) rules that a Kohen *may* wear head Tefillin if he wishes to. It would seem that while for an ordinary Kohen this was optional, for the Kohen Gadol it was standard practice. Either way, this resolves the issue, because the hides were used for a holy purpose, and thus had a place in the Beis HaMikdash.

The *Kohanim*, therefore, would process the hides in the *Az-ara*, for the sake of making *Tefillin-Shel-Rosh* (head-Tefillin) that they could wear during the *Avodah*. Thus, this salting served a holy purpose.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

יש לומר לשבת הפרוה עצמה הוא תפארת (ושם מולחין עורות קדשים, המלח לקרבן הי' בלשבת המלח, והוא בחינת נצח כנ"ל ותפארת הוא הסמוך לנצח, לכן בלשבת הפרוה תפארת היו מולחין עורות הקדשים... והמליחה בלשבת הפרוה הי' לעבוד עורות הקדשים, זה שיך לתפארת. והוא כי עורות הקדשים מובן שהוא עורות דקדשי קדשים, שהם לכהנים, מה שאין בן עורות קדשים קלים הם לבעלים, כדאיתא בובחים פרק י"ב משנה ב' עיין שם.. ואיך שיך שימלחום בעזרה. והנה מבואר אצלי בסייעתא דשמיא באיזה רשימה שמעורות קדשים קלים היו עושים תפילין של יד דמלכות, ומעורות קדשי קדשים תפילין של ראש, והכהנים בעבודתן היו מניחים רק תפילין של ראש כדאיתא ביזמא, ותפילין של ראש נקראים פאר, כמו שכתוב פארך חבוש עליך. והקדוש ברוך הוא תפארת מניחן, זהו שהיו מולחין עורות קדשים לעשות מהם תפילין של ראש בלשבת הפרוה תפארת....

*Toras Levi Yitzchak,
Chidushim U'biurim B'shas, pg. 287⁹*

⁹ For more on this subject, see *Yalkut Levi Yitzchak*, vol. 4, chapter 120.

אַחֲרֵי מוֹת

ACHAREI MOS

Musical Musings

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אַחֲרֵי מוֹת שְׁנֵי בְנֵי
אַהֲרֹן בְּקִרְבָּתָם לִפְנֵי ה' וַיָּמָתוּ

AND THE LORD SPOKE TO MOSHE AFTER THE DEATH
OF AHARON'S TWO SONS, WHEN THEY DREW NEAR
BEFORE THE LORD, AND THEY DIED. (*Vayikra 16:1*)

What exactly was the cause of the sudden, untimely death of Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu?

The Torah mentions some of their sins explicitly¹ and some are merely alluded to.²

1 Such as their bringing a “foreign fire” (an uncalled for incense offering). See Parshas Shemini, 10:1.

2 Ba'al Haturim (ad loc.) lists 6 different offences based on Talmudic, Midrashic sources all hinted to in various verses.

The Midrash³ quotes Rabbi Shimon⁴ citing his opinion on the matter:

They died because they entered the Sanctuary intoxicated by wine. You may know that this is so, because after their death G-d warned those who survived that they should not enter when intoxicated by wine.

Driving Questions:

1. Where is the nature of this sin hinted at in the very Possuk 5 that describes their actions?
2. What is the deeper significance of their actions?

The words⁶ which describe the actions of Aharon's sons and their subsequent punishment, אֲשֶׁר לֹא צִוָּה אֶתֶם (*Asher Lo Tziva Osom*) — “which He had not commanded them”, contain a hidden clue.

On the word לֹא — ‘Lo’ (“not”) the *Trop* or musical cantillation note for reading the Torah is known as the *Mercha*⁷ *Kefula*; essentially this is a double note,⁸ hence the word *Kefula* meaning double. This is a rare and uncommon musical note that appears

³ Vayikra Rabbah, 12:1.

⁴ Rashi on Shemini 10:2 quotes this Midrash in the name of Rabbi Yishmael.

⁵ Shemini, 10:1.

⁶ Shemini, 10:1.

⁷ The *Mercha* cantillation note looks similar to an English comma (,). These musical notes, although superficially are merely to assist the Ba'al Koreh (Torah reader) to sing the Scripture according to its traditional tune, nonetheless also carry deeper, nuanced meaning. This can be grammatical, often changing the meaning, as is the case with punctuation marks, and often, too, shedding light into the mystical layers beneath the simple meaning of the text.

⁸ Thus, often referred to simply as תְּרֵי טַעְמֵי, the double note.

very infrequently⁹ in the Torah. With *Trop* shown on it, the word looks like this: לָא.

Another instance in which this *Trop* appears is in the story of Yitzchak blessing Ya'akov. Ya'akov prepares a meal for his father. The Possuk describes the scene as he served Yitzchak:¹⁰

וַיִּגְשׁ-לוֹ וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּבְרָא לוֹ יַיִן וַיִּשְׁתָּהּ. *So he (Ya'akov) served him and he (Yitzchak) ate, and he (Ya'akov) brought him (Yitzchak) wine and he (Yitzchak) drank.*

The word לוֹ (*him*) in this Possuk also carries the *Mercha Ke-fula*. With *Trop* shown on it, the word looks like this: לוֹ.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak notes that there is a connection between the two events and it is not merely coincidence that they share the same uncommon *Trop*.

The first step is to understand that as seen from the above Midrash, they both included wine.

The power of wine is well known as having the ability to intoxicate the drinker. When a person becomes intoxicated it can cloud their judgement and cause them to act irrationally, and even potentially with irregular zealotry.

The Zohar¹¹ points out that when Ya'akov brought wine for his father Yitzchak, he in fact diluted it with water. This act represents the idea of reining in the power of wine from being independent and mixing it with water which represents *Chochmah* and *Bittul* — nullification¹². This explains the first connection

⁹ It appears only 5 times in the entire Five Books of Torah.

¹⁰ Toldos, 27:25.

¹¹ Balak, 189b.

¹² Water is essential for life, however, it has no taste and there is no pleasure in its consumption as is the case with wine. This is the idea of nullification, in which a person's own perspective and opinion are not part of the equation. This

between the two incidents. In both cases the *Mercha Kefula* is on the word ‘Lo’ but with opposite meanings.

By Yitzchak it is spelled with a ‘Vov’ — וּ. This means it was ‘for him’ and appropriate because it was mixed with water. Ya’akov embodied the trait of ‘*Tiferes*’ which is harmony and balance¹³.

By Aharon’s sons it is written with an ‘Alef’ — א. This means ‘no’ it was not appropriate. Their actions were missing the necessary Bittul — nullification and all that remained was their zealousness which caused them to act against Hashem’s wishes.

This idea is hinted at in the *Trop* on the key words in both instances, the *Mercha Kefula*.

By Ya’akov the double is referring to the mixture of wine and water. By Aharon’s sons it is referring to the two individuals involved — Nadav and Avihu.¹⁴



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indeed is what Chochmah is — the idea as it stands in its absolute truth. Wine, a representation of Bina and Gevurah, is when a person’s own self is involved. It is the way he or she understands it.

- 13** Tiferet (Harmony; Beauty; Compassion): (lit. beauty) the third of the ten sefiros, or Divine attributes, and their corresponding attribute in the human soul; fuses the influence of Chesed and Gevurah and reveals a light that transcends them both; often identified with Mercy. (Chabad.org.)
- 14** According to the teachings of Chassidus, we can learn the need for balance in our service of Hashem. We can’t rely solely on Ahavas Hashem, love. We need to include Yiras Hashem, awe, in our service as well.
- 15** Yalkut Levi Yitzchak Al HaTorah, Vol. 1, p. 234-235

בַּחֲקָתִי

BECHUKOSAI

The Aromatic Hide

וְאִף גַּם זֹאת בְּהִיוֹתָם בְּאֶרֶץ אֲבִיָּהֶם לֹא
מֵאַסְתִּים וְלֹא גָעַלְתִּים לְכַלְתֵּם...

YET, EVEN THEN, WHEN THEY ARE IN THE LAND OF
THEIR ENEMIES, I WILL NOT DESPISE THEM NOR WILL I
REJECT THEM TO ANNIHILATE THEM... (*Vayikra, 26:44*)¹

“**R**’ Chiya was once walking with R’ Yosi and he said: I heard a novel interpretation in the name of R’ Elazar: The verse states “*I will not despise them nor will I reject them to annihilate them* – לְכַלְתֵּם”. The word לְכַלְתֵּם is missing a ‘Vav.’ (The standard spelling of this word is לְכַלּוֹתָם.) What’s the reason for this (change of spelling)? The word without the ‘Vav’ can be seen as an indication to the word לְכַלָּה – for a bride. Meaning I will not “reject them” because they are the love of my soul and I am beloved amongst them.

1 This verse in our Parsha, comes at the end of the תּוֹכַחָה, the rebuke where Hashem cautions His people lest they stray, and the consequences which will befall them. Nonetheless, Hashem promises to never wipe us out.

The parable for this is as follows: A person whose intended bride lived in a foul smelling tannery market. If she had not lived there, the groom, searching for her, would never have entered such a place. Now, however, that she is there, it appears to him like a perfume market, where all the good aromas in the world are.

Here, too, *“and even so while they are in the land of their enemies,”* which is like a tannery market, *“neither are they despised nor rejected,”* because the Jewish People are beloved to me and it is pleasant like all the good aromas in the world.

R’ Yosi said: If I had not come here but to hear this thing — it would have been enough.”

(Zohar, Bechukosai, 115b.)

Driving Questions:

1. Why is the parable specifically about a tannery market?
2. What can be learned from the names R’ Elazar and R’ Yosi?
3. Why was R’ Yosi so excited from this teaching?

R’ Levi Yitzchak explains that this can be understood through analyzing a verse regarding Adam and Chava.

Following their sin of eating from the tree of knowledge, the Torah states:² וַיַּעַשׂ ה' אֱלֹקִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כִּתְנוֹת עוֹר וַיַּלְבִּשֵׁם “And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife shirts of skin, and He dressed them.”

The Hebrew word for skin is עור, with the first letter being an *Ayin* – ע.

² Bereishis, 3:21

The Midrash³ relates that in the Torah⁴ of R' Meir the word עור (skin) is spelled אור with the first letter being an *Alef* – א.

By changing this one letter, one also changes the meaning of the word from 'skin' to 'light', hinting at a deeper transformation that occurs.

Skin refers to a cover and concealment over the essence and only a minuscule amount of light can radiate through it.⁵

In the realm of the divine, skin refers to a concealment of G-dly light, and through the process of refinement, one transforms the *Ayin* – ע into an *Alef* – א; the concealment into revelation – עור to אור.

Thus, at the onset of creation Adam and Chava were body and soul, but the soul was not concealed by the body, it radiated the Divine light. After their sin, their body turned into 'skin' – a natural impediment to the revelation of G-dliness. From that moment onward, it has been the purpose of every individual to break through the concealment of the body and transform it into light, which is the intended natural state of all of creation.

This is also the story of exile in general. Taking the darkness, challenges and strife and transforming it so it can radiate divine revelation.⁶

3 *Bereishis Rabah*, 20:12; *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Remez* 34.

4 This does not necessarily mean a change in the actual writing and accuracy of the Torah scroll as per *Mesorah*, but may be a metaphor for the light radiant in his teachings. See *Or Torah* (R' Dovber of Mezritch), *Bereishis*, *Siman* 14.

5 See *Ma'amarei Admur Hazaken Parshiyos*, vol. 1 page 50.

6 R' Levi Yitzchak references a Ma'amar of the Alter Rebbe. There it explains that the *Ayin* refers to the *Ayin Sarim* (heavenly ministers) which are known as the 70 nations (*Ayin* having the numerical value of 70) under which the Jewish People are exiled. The *Alef* refers to the True Being that is one - G-d. (*Torah Ohr*, *Maamar*, *E'esh Lo Ezer K'negdo*).

This is precisely the purpose of a tannery. The tanning process involves taking a thick, dirty and unusable hide and converting it into shoes and other items of need and usefulness.

These two stages, the apparent concealment and the need to refine it, are hinted at in the names of R' Yosi and R' Elazar.⁷

The name יוסי (Yosi) shares the same numerical value as the word אֱלֹקִים (Elokim), both totalling 86. This name of G-d refers to the way the Divine light is limited and contracted to create nature, which also has the same numerical value as הַטֵּבַע (the nature) = 86 .

Since the name of a person represents their essence⁸, this indicates that at his core, R' Yosi viewed the world through a prism of concealment⁹. Therefore, when he heard the teaching of R' Elazar he was overcome with an excitement as it spoke to his situation and provided hope for illuminating that concealment.

The name Elazar can be broken into two words: א-ל עזר — G-d's salvation, representing G-d's commitment and affection to His bride, the Jewish People, providing salvation even in the darkest of times.

This represents the mission of each individual to bring that G-dliness into the world, thereby transforming the concealment

7 The teachings of R' Levi Yitzchok are replete with this underlying theme of how the names of the sages indicate and lend insight into their perspective on Torah and life. As such, the more we understand the hint in their name the better we can truly understand the secret of their teachings.

8 See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud veHaEmunah, end of ch. 1.

9 Kabbalistically speaking, R' Yosi corresponds to Malchus, the feminine Sefira which is synonymous with the Kallah. And R' Elazar corresponds to Chochma which illuminates it.

into revealed light, the foul-smelling tannery which is the darkness of exile, is, into an aromatic home for G-d and His bride.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

לְכֵן נִתְפָּעַל ר' יוֹסִי מְאֹד מְאֹד, בִּי הָרִי הוּא ר' יוֹסִי הוּא גּוֹפָא בְּחִינַת הַכֶּלֶה
 דְּמַלְכוּת... לְכֵן כְּשִׁשְׁמַע מִגְדֹל וְתוֹקֵף אֶהְבֵּת הַקַּב"ה לְהַכְלִיחַ דְּמַלְכוּת, שְׂהִיא
 בְּחִינַתוֹ דְּר' יוֹסִי... הִי דְבָר זֶה יִקָּר מְאֹד מְאֹד לְפָנֵי ר' יוֹסִי...

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*Ha'aros L'Zohar, Bechukosai, p. 341.*¹⁰

¹⁰ See Toras Menachem — Tiferes Levi Yitzchok, Vol. 3 (Vayikra) ch. 169 for more on this teaching.

נשא

NASO

The Kabbalah of “Hands Up!”

דַּבֵּר אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל בְּנָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה תְבָרְכוּ
אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמֹר לָהֶם...

SPEAK TO AHARON AND HIS SONS, SAYING: THIS
IS HOW YOU SHALL BLESS THE CHILDREN OF
ISRAEL, SAYING TO THEM... (*Bamidbar, 6:23*)

[The kohanim] should raise their hands to shoulder level, for the Priestly Blessing may be recited only with raised hands. They should raise their right hand a little higher than their left hand. (Shulchan Aruch Harav, Orach Chayim, 128:20¹)

1 The detail regarding raising the right hand above the left is attributed to the following Zohar Vol 3, 146a, as referenced in Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Kehot, Revised Edition, 5761).

Regarding the requirement for the Kohanim to spread and raise their hands, the Zohar explains:²

When the Kohanim spread their fingers down here on earth, it arouses the Shechina above to descend and rest on the Jewish People. There are other instances when this applies, and this is the reason for Lulav and Shofar both being done with the fingers. (Zohar, Vol. 3, 145a.)

Driving Questions:

1. Why is the right hand specifically raised over the left hand?
2. Why are the Mitzvos of Lulav and Shofar used as an example?
3. Why does the Zohar switch the order of these Mitzvos as they appear in the calendar from Shofar (Rosh Hashanah) and Lulav (Sukkos) to Lulav and Shofar?

The right hand symbolizes ‘*Chessed*’ – loving kindness, while the left hand symbolizes ‘*Gevurah*’ – restraint and judgment.³

Shir Hashirim states,⁴ “His left hand was under my head, His right arm embraced me.”

The Zohar⁵ comments on this, that the two parts of this verse refer to the festivals in the month of Tishrei. “His left hand was under my head” hints at Rosh Hashanah, when G-d is judging the world, *Gevurah*.

² This is not a direct translation. We have paraphrased for the sake of clarity. See source for full quote.

³ See Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar, “Pasach Eliyahu,” where the various organs of the body are paralleled with the Sefiros and their being conduits and representatives of various energy flows.

⁴ 2:6.

⁵ Zohar, Vol. 3, 214b.

“His right arm embraced me” refers to Sukkos, when there is an outpouring of joy and revealed kindness, *Chesed*.

Being that the purpose of the priestly blessing is to draw forth G-d’s kindness into the world, it follows that the dominant hand be the right one, hence it should be raised above the left.

R’ Levi Yitzchak explains that with this understanding we can see how the two examples brought by the Zohar, Lulav and Shofar, are a continuation of this same idea.

First Lulav is mentioned as this hints at Sukkos, and the Chesed associated with the right hand which is above, followed by Shofar which hints at the Gevurah associated with the left hand.

Both of these Mitzvos are directly connected to the hand and the *shiur* (required Halachic size) of a *Tefach* (handbreadth) and fingers. On a basic level, they are both held in the hand.⁶ Furthermore, the minimum required height of a Lulav is a *Tefach* (handbreadth) above the Hadasim.⁷ Shofar too requires a minimum *Tefach* (handbreadth), “so that it can be grasped in one’s hand and still be showing on either side.”⁸

Additionally, Birchas Kohanim, Lulav and Shofar have a commonality with the number 3.

There are three verses in the priestly blessings, 3 sounds of the Shofar, and the Lulav is waived 3 times in each direction.

⁶ Specifically, Lulav is associated with the right hand, and the five fingers correspond to the 5 elements of *Chesed* ה' תְּקַדִּים, whereas Shofar is associated with the left hand and its five fingers that correspond to Gevurah and its five elements ה' גְּבוּרָה.

⁷ Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Lulav 7:8.

⁸ Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Shofar 1:5.

R' Levi Yitzchak adds that this connection is demonstrated also in the realm of *Remez* — allegory (*Gematria*).

The numerical value of the words Shofar and Lulav together is the same as that of the words כֹּה תְּבָרְכוּ — “*This is how you shall bless,*” hinting at the internal connection between these ideas.

68	$= \overset{(2)}{\text{ב}} + \overset{(30)}{\text{ל}} + \overset{(6)}{\text{ו}} + \overset{(30)}{\text{ל}}$
586	$= \overset{(200)}{\text{ר}} + \overset{(80)}{\text{פ}} + \overset{(6)}{\text{ו}} + \overset{(300)}{\text{ש}}$
653 + 1*	$\overset{(6)}{\text{ו}} + \overset{(20)}{\text{כ}} + \overset{(200)}{\text{ר}} + \overset{(2)}{\text{ב}} + \overset{(400)}{\text{ת}} + \overset{(5)}{\text{ה}} + \overset{(20)}{\text{כ}}$



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

קִתְּפִס אֵלֹהֵי הַשָּׁנִים לֹלֵב וְשׁוֹפָר דּוֹקָא. הוּא כִּי אֵלֹהֵי הַשָּׁנִים הֵם גַּם בֵּן שְׁנַיִכִים לְאַצְבְּעוֹת הַיָּדִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁבְּבִרְכַּת כְּהֵנִים צְרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת נְשִׂאוֹת הַיָּדִים אֲצָבְעוֹת. כִּי הִרִי הַשְּׂעוּר דְּשׁוֹפָר הוּא "כְּדֵי שְׂיִאֲחֻזְנוּ בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּרְאֶה לְכָאן וּלְכָאן". בְּיָדוֹ דּוֹקָא. וּמִצּוֹת לֹלֵב הוּא שְׂיִלְקַחְנוּ בְּיָדוֹ. גַּם שׁוֹפָר שְׂעוּר טַפַּח. וְכֵן לֹלֵב שְׂעוּר טַפַּח, בְּנִדְהָ דָף כ"ו. שֶׁבְּכֹל טַפַּח יֵשׁ הִי אֲצָבְעוֹת הַיָּד. הַטַּפַּח דְּשׁוֹפָר הוּא ה' אֲצָבְעוֹת דִּיד שְׂמַאל, ה' גְּבוּרוֹת... וְהַטַּפַּח דְּלֹלֵב הוּא ה' אֲצָבְעוֹת דִּיד יְמִין. ה' חֲסָדִים... הִרִי שְׂעַל יָדֵי הַלֹּלֵב וְהַשׁוֹפָר יַחְדָּו, הוּא הַמְּשַׁכֵּת הַה' חֲסָדִים וְהַה' גְּבוּרוֹת שְׂהִים ה' אֲצָבְעוֹת דִּיד יְמִין וְה' אֲצָבְעוֹת דִּיד שְׂמַאל יַחְדָּו. וְהוּא כְּמוֹ זְקִיפַת הִי אֲצָבְעוֹת בְּבִרְכַּת כְּהֵנִים...

Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, Haorois LSefer HaZohar, Naso, pg. 368

* This method of Gematria is called *Im HaKollel* (“*Im HaKollel*”, literally “including the collective”). This is not merely a “trick” to get them to add up equally. What it means is, that in this case we must take into account not only the particulars of the word but its wholeness too. Thus we count the individual numerical value of each letter and add one for the total word. (See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaemunah, beginning of chapter 12.)

שְׁלַח

SH'LACH

A Land Of Loyalty

וּטְפֹכֶם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתֶּם לְבוֹ יְהוָה וְהִבִּיאֲתִי אֲתָם
וַיִּדְעוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר מָאַסְתֶּם בָּהּ...
וּבְנֵיכֶם יִהְיוּ רְעִים בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים
שָׁנָה וְנָשְׂאוּ אֶת זְנוּתֵיכֶם

*AS FOR YOUR INFANTS... THEY WILL COME TO
KNOW THE LAND WHICH YOU DESPISED...*

*YOUR CHILDREN SHALL WANDER IN THE DESERT FOR **FORTY**
YEARS AND BEAR YOUR **DEFECTION** (Bamidbar, 14:31,33)*

Driving Questions:

1. Why does it say “And they will come to know the land” and not the regular expression “And they will inherit” etc.?

2. The Jewish People only remained in the desert for 39 years from this incident, yet, G-d tells them it will be for 40 years?
3. In this context, what is the meaning of the words “bear your defecation” — “זְנוּתֵיכֶם” which typically refers to promiscuity?

R' Levi Yitzchak offers a novel explanation:

The Jewish People and the Land of Israel can be seen as a marriage relationship. The people — the husband, and the land — the wife.¹ Through working the land, it bears produce and together we develop a civilization.

With this in mind, when the spies returned with a slanderous report about the land, it is analogous to a husband spreading falsities about his wife. In Jewish law this is known as the **מוציא שם רע** — **The Slandering Husband**.²

This comparison can be seen in all the details surrounding this law:

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- 1 Amos 5:2 refers to the Land of Israel as a בתולה, maiden, stating: “נִפְלְאָה לֹא תוֹסִיף” “The virgin of Israel has fallen and shall not continue to rise; she is spread out on her soil, there is none to raise her up.” Kabbalah often associates the land with the feminine dimension מלכות, thus seeding it produces “offspring”.
 - 2 See Ki Teitzei, 22:13-19. The law when a husband claims his wife violated her fidelity prior to the marriage and, ultimately, it is proven that he lied and she was indeed faithful.

<p>מוציא שם רע</p> <p>THE SLANDERING HUSBAND</p>	<p>עם ישראל</p> <p>JEWISH PEOPLE</p>
<p>Husband makes a false claim</p>	<p>The spies slander, the Jews accept it</p>
<p>Wife</p>	<p>The Land of Israel</p>
<p>Slander: You had an intimate relationship with another man.</p>	<p>Slander:³ “It is a land that consumes its inhabitants.” (It’s in another relationship, not for us.)</p>
<p>40 Lashes. In actuality only 39 are given.⁴</p>	<p>40 years in the desert. In actuality, only 39 years from the time of sin.⁵</p>
<p>Monetary fine of one hundred shekels of silver.</p>	<p>(Beyond the scope of this essay.)⁶</p>
<p>He is forced to keep her as a wife and can never send her away.⁷</p>	<p>We can never sever our relationship with the land, even if at times we are distant from it.</p>

When the spies relayed the slanderous gossip about the land to the Jewish People and they accepted it, it is as if they were questioning the loyalty of the land and accusing it of having a promiscuous relationship with another.⁸ Thus, the verse says that the survivors will “bear your defection” — “וְנִתְּיָכֶם”, specifically adopting this word to signify that it was likened to an act of adultery.

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- 3 Our Parsha (Shelach 14:37) calls the spies “מוציאי דבת הארץ רעה” (those who slandered the land) which is very similar language to the מוציא שם רע.
 - 4 Although the Torah states ארבעים יכנו (You shall lash him forty), our sages derived through the Oral Tradition that in actuality only 39 lashes are administered (See Mishna Makkos 2:10).
 - 5 Since at the time of this event the Jews were already in their 2nd year since the Exodus.
 - 6 R’ Levi Yitzchok launches into a lengthy Kabbalistic exposition of how the מוציא שם רע is paralleled with the מרגלים with regard to the equivalent of the 100 silver shekel penalty which the man was fined.
 - 7 וְלוֹ תִהְיֶה לְאִשָּׁה לֹא יוּכַל לְשַׁלְּחָהּ כָּל יָמֶיהָ; she shall remain his wife; he shall never have the right to divorce her (Devarim 22:19).
 - 8 Other commentaries (See Ibn Ezra on this verse) learn that since the Jewish

This also explains why G-d tells the future generation that you will “know” the land. The Hebrew word for ‘know’ is יָדַע. In an intellectual context, this word connotes a connection between the subject matter and the person who understands it. Furthermore, the word יָדַע is also employed to connote an intimate relationship between husband and wife, as the verse says,⁹ “וְהָאָדָם יָדַע” — “And Adam knew his wife Chavah.”

After the generation who slandered the land passed away, the new generation would experience a true and intimate relationship with the land. Ultimately this remains strong even when we are in exile and distanced from it. Our bond with Eretz Yisroel is eternal. That is only a temporary separation and we will once again dwell there like in the past. Thus, even in times of Golus, it is called “The Land of Yisroel”, belonging to her “husband”, the Jewish People.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

מְצִינוּ שֶׁ“לֹא נִחַתְתֶּם גְּזֵר דִּין עַל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִדְבַּר אֶלָּא עַל לְשׁוֹן הָרַע כּוּ”, וְהוּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁ“הוֹצִיאָוּ דְבָרָה עַל הָאָרֶץ”, שֶׁהָאָרֶץ הוּא מַלְכוּת, “בְּתוֹלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל”, כִּי אִשָּׁה נִמְשְׁלָה לְאָרֶץ קְרִקַּע, כְּמֵאִמֹר “אֶסְתֵּר קְרִקַּע עוֹלָם הֵיְתֵה”.

אִם בֶּן זֶהוּ הוֹצֵאת “שֵׁם רַע עַל בְּתוֹלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל”. וְכִמוּ שֶׁבְּמוֹצֵיא שֵׁם רַע מִיִּסְרָיִם אוֹתוֹ שְׁלוֹקָה מַלְקוֹת וְעִנְשׁוּ ק' כֶּסֶף, כְּמוֹ בֶן הַתֵּם, הִלְכוּ מ' שָׁנָה בְּמִדְבַּר, כְּמוֹ מ' מַלְקוֹת (וּלְפִי הַדִּין שֶׁמַּלְקוֹת הֵם ל"ט, כְּמוֹ בֶן הַתֵּם הֵי עִנְשָׁם ל"ט שָׁנָה, כִּי חֲטָא הַמְרַגְלִים הֵי בְּשָׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית לְצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם, אִם בֶּן חֲטָאִים זֶה גָרַם עִנְשׁ ל"ט

People are likened to Hashem’s bride/wife, it was the זָנוּת (adulterous behavior) of the “wife” (the Jews) not being loyal to their “husband” (Hashem). The novelty of R’ Levi Yitzchok’s approach is in redefining us as the husband vis-a-vis the land, and in this context it was a false claim of infidelity that the spies were claiming regarding our potential “spouse”, the land.

⁹ Bereishis, 4:1.

שָׁנָה) וְהוּא מַה שְּׁבִינֵיהֶם הָיוּ מ' שָׁנָה בַּמַּדְבָּר שֶׁנֶּשְׂאוֹ אֶת זְנוּתֵיהֶם כְּמוֹ שְׂכָתוֹב
 "וּבְנֵיכֶם יִהְיוּ כו' בַּמַּדְבָּר אַרְבַּעַיִם שָׁנָה, וְנֶשְׂאוֹ אֶת זְנוּתֵיכֶם" שְׂתַרְגְּמוֹ "יִקְבְּלוּן
 יֵת חוֹבֵיכֹון" וְכַפִּירוֹשׁ רַשִׁי שָׁם, וְהֵינּוּ כְּמוֹ מ' מַלְקוֹת...

וְכַתִּיב בְּמוֹצֵיא שֵׁם רַע "וְלוֹ תִהְיֶה לְאִשָּׁה כו'" הוּא מַה שְּׂכָתוֹב "וְטַפְכֶם אֲשֶׁר
 אָמַרְתֶּם לְבוֹ יִהְיֶה וְהִבֵּאתִי אֹתָם וַיִּדְעוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ", וַיִּדְעוּ דְּוָקָא שֶׁהוּא מְלִשׁוֹן
 זִיווּג כְּמוֹ "וְהָאָדָם יִדַע כו'", וְהֵינּוּ כְּמוֹ "וְלוֹ תִהְיֶה לְאִשָּׁה כו'". (וְיָמָּה שְׂכָתוֹב "לֹא
 יוּכַל לְשַׁלַּח בָּל יָמָיו", וְהָרִי גְלוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַל אֲדָמָתָם", הוּא כִּי הוּא לֹא יוּכַל
 לְשַׁלַּח, וְלֹא בְּהִיפֹךְ הִיא יְכוּלָה לְהִרְחִיקוֹ, וְכְמוֹ בֵּן הָאָרֶץ קָאָה אוֹתָם, אֲךָ לֹא
 בִּיגֵט, כִּי הָאִשָּׁה אֵינָה יְכוּלָה לְגַרֵשׁ אֶת הָאִישׁ בִּיגֵט. וְלָכֵן גַּם בְּזִמְנֵי הַגְּלוּת נִקְרְאוֹת
 "אָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל", שֶׁהִיא אִשְׁתּוֹ דִּישְׂרָאֵל).

Toras Levi Yitzchok

- *Chidushim uBiurim LeShas Mishne uGemoro -
 Tractate Arachin, pg. 265.*

חַקֵּת

CHUKAS

A Sign Not To Fear

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אַל תִּירָא אֹתוֹ כִּי בְיָדִי נָתַתִּי אֹתוֹ

G-D SAID TO MOSES, “DO NOT FEAR HIM (*Og*),
FOR I HAVE DELIVERED HIM (*Og*)... HIS LAND
INTO YOUR HAND. (*Bamidbar, 21:34*)

Introduction: As the Jewish nation approaches the Promised Land, after wandering in the desert for decades, they are faced with nations who block their access. Although preferring and attempting a peaceful negotiation of passing through the adjacent countries, they are confronted with the inevitability of war. Sichon and Og, the two giant brothers, kings of Emori and Bashan respectively, block their pathway. While the former was easily conquered, it appears from our verse that Moses was fearful of Og - something he did not harbor when it came to Sichon¹. The Talmud² clarifies this:

¹ There is no reassurance of G-d “Don’t fear Sichon etc.”.

² Niddah, 61a.

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָאִי: מִתְּשׁוּבָתוֹ לָשׁל אוֹתוֹ צְדִיק אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ מָה הָיָה בְּלִבּוֹ. אָמַר, "שָׂמָא תַעֲמֹד לוֹ זְכוּת שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ..."

Rabbi Yochanan says that Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: From the answer of that righteous one, you know what was in his (Moshe's) heart, i.e., what gave Moshe cause to fear. Moshe said to himself: Perhaps the merit of our forefather Avraham will stand for Og and save him.

(What merit are we referring to? The Talmud continues:)

As it is stated: "And the refugee came and he told Avram the Ivri, and he was living in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshkol and the brother of Aner, who were Avram's confederates וְהָם בְּעַלֵי בְרִית אַבְרָם (Lech Lecha 14:13)." Rabbi Yochanan said that the term "the refugee" is referring to Og, who was spared from the punishment of the generation of the flood.

Driving Questions:

1. What is this Zechus (merit) of Avraham that the Talmud is referring to?
2. Why does the Talmud not simply say "from the answer of Hashem to Moshe..."?
3. Why the unusual expression of אֹתוֹ צְדִיק — 'that Tzaddik' (righteous one)?³

³ The commonly accepted meaning is that this refers to Og's decision to inform Avraham that Lot, his brother-in-law, had been captured. See Tosafot. (See also Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 8, page 138.)

The difficulty with this is that it is not completely compatible with the words of the Talmud. For if that were the case, it should have stated "In his (Og's) merit that he informed Avraham", not "Avraham's merit".

The Zohar⁴ on this week's Parsha points out that there are two places in the Torah where the Hebrew word אֹסוֹ (*Oso*, lit. him) are written מְלֵא (lit. full) i.e. with two Vavs⁵. This alludes to the word אוֹת (*Ois*) which means a sign.

One of these instances is with regard to the laws of returning a lost object. The verse⁶ tells us that when finding an object we are obligated to safeguard it “until your fellow claims it” — “עַד דְּרִישׁ אֶחֶיד אוֹתוֹ”. The word *Oso* also serves as an allusion to teach us the method by which he claims it: by providing an *Ois* – a sign⁷.

Similarly in the narrative with Og, in our Parsha.

When the verse says, “*Do not fear him (Og)*” — “אַל תִּירָא אוֹתוֹ”, the word *Oso* can be understood to mean *Ois* — sign. Meaning, G-d is telling Moses not to be afraid of the sign (of the covenant), Bris Milah, known as the “*Ois Bris Kodesh*” that Og had received.

Where do we find that Og was circumcised?

The Zohar says that when Hashem told Avram to circumcise all the members of his household, this included Og.⁸ It was this “sign” (Bris) that Moshe feared⁹ might stand in Og's merit. Hence, אַל תִּירָא אוֹתוֹ, *Do not fear his Ois*.¹⁰

4 Zohar (III), Chukas, 184a.

5 As it happens, in our Mesorah, the Sefer Torahs we have today, these two words are not spelled with two vavs. See footnote 10.

6 Ki Seitzei, 22:2.

7 The Mishna (Bava Metzia 2:7) seems to derive the need for the claimant to provide an identifying sign from the word דָּרֵשׁ (which can mean to investigate). The Zohar highlights the word אוֹתוֹ as referring to a sign, an אוֹת.

8 ... דָּא עוֹג, דְּאִתְדַבֵּק בְּאִבְרָהִם, וּמֵאֲנָשֵׁי בֵּיתָהּ הוּא, וְכֵן אִתְגַּזַּר אִבְרָהִם מֵה פְתִיב, וְכַל אֲנָשֵׁי בֵּיתוֹ נִגְוִי דָא עוֹג דְּאִתְגַּזַּר עִמָּיה, וְקָבִיל הָאִי אֶת קַדְיֵשָׁא.

9 Furthermore, teaches R' Levi Yitzchak, Moshe was concerned because he himself had been lax in performing Bris Mila on his son, and almost died by the snake as a result (See Shemos 4:24). So, in addition to Og's merit of having the Bris, he may have lacked it's protective power.

10 The reason for Moshe not to fear it, writes the Zohar, is because Og had defiled

Based on this, R' Levi Yitzchak offers a novel approach to understanding the Talmud:¹¹

The Talmud is alluding to the merit of Bris, which is uniquely associated with Avraham and came to Og through Avraham.¹²

This explains the unusual wording when referring to Hashem's reassurance to Moshe, using the term אֹתוֹ צְדִיק "Oso Tzaddik". As we have seen, the word אֹת alludes to the בְּרִית. And "Tzaddik" too, corresponds to יְסוּד¹³ (Yesod) the reproductive organ,¹⁴ which when preserved for sacred use earns one the title Tzaddik.¹⁵ Thus, אֹתוֹ צְדִיק, a reference to Hashem's attribute of Yesod, is reassuring Moshe that his Bris is sacred and has protective power, whilst Og's has been compromised and there is nothing to fear.

This is alluded to in the Talmud's quoting the story of Og visiting Avram, where he is referred to as part of "בְּעֵלֵי בְרִית אַבְרָם," Avram's circle of Bris participants.¹⁶

This idea is also hinted at in the following Gematrias.

the Bris, by utilizing his organ inappropriately, thus violating its protective power. This also possibly explains why the word אָתוּ is ultimately missing the vav in our Torah, alluding to Og's corruption of the אֹת (Mosuk Midvash).

11 Although the simple meaning of the Talmud, regarding the merit of Og is as explained in footnote 3, R' Levi Yitzchok is asserting that the Talmudic language alludes to the Zohar's approach too. This is enhanced by the fact that the Talmudic teaching is by Rashbi, who is also the Zohar's author.

12 See footnote 3. This is now resolved perfectly.

13 As in וְצְדִיק יְסוּד עוֹלָם (Mishlei 10:25).

14 See Pasach Eliyahu, introduction to Tikkunei Zohar, where the body is aligned and representative of various Sefiros, and Yesod corresponds to the reproductive organ.

15 Zohar, Parshas Noach. (This is why Yosef HaTzaddik earned this title, after refusing Potiphar's wife.)

16 See Rashi there, quoting Midrash, that this refers to Mamre encouraging Avram to perform the Bris.

79*	= (3+6+70) עוג
80	= (4+6+60+10) יסוד
617	= (400+10+200+2+5) הברית
617	= (100+10+4+90) צדיק (6+400+6+1) אותו



Likkutei Levi Yitzchok
*Ha'aros L'Zohar, Chukas, p. 390.*¹⁷

17 See *Yalkut Levi Yitzchak Al HaTorah, vol. 1, chapter 92*, for a full reading of the Zohar and further sources referenced there.

* Og is one short of Yesod, which corresponds to the reproductive organ, because he defiled it, thus it is lacking.

דברים

DEVARIM

A Bed for A Bed

הִנֵּה עַרְשׁוֹ עָרֵשׁ בַּרְזֶל...
...הִנֵּה עַרְשׁוֹ עָרֵשׁ בַּרְזֶל...

HIS [OG'S] BEDSTEAD,
AN IRON BEDSTEAD... (*Devarim, 3:11*)

Introduction: In recounting the Jewish people's journey through the desert and the various challenges they faced and prevailed over, Moshe Rabbeinu recalls one adversary, Og the giant, King is Sichon, describing his might by the type of bed he had.

Driving Question:

What is the significance of Og's bed being formed out of iron?

R' Levi Yitzchok offers the following contrast:

Everything that exists in the realm of holiness has a counterpart in the realms of *Klipa* and impurity.¹

¹ See Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, chapter 6.

Thus, Og's bed, being that Og himself is sourced in Klipa, has a counterpart in holiness.

A bed inside one's personal bedroom, represents a very private and intimate place.

In holiness this represents the place where G-d's glory was most revealed — the Beis Hamikdosh.² More specifically, the inner sanctum, the Kodesh HaKodoshim, the Holy of Holier, where the most intimate and sacred encounter occurred between Hashem and His People.

This is seen from the verse,³ *“and [put] him and his nurse in a bedroom.”* Rashi, commenting on these words, explains, *“In the attic of the Holy of Holies, as it states, “And he remained with her in the Beis [Hamikdosh] of G-d, hiding, etc.”*

So the unholy counterpart to G-d's “bedroom” — the holy of holies — is Og's bed.

There exists, however, a major distinction between the two ‘beds’ in regards to the presence of iron. Og's bed was crafted from iron. The Beis Hamikdosh, on the other hand, was prohibited from having iron in it, and even in the tools used for its construction. As the verse explicitly states,⁴ *“There, too, you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them.”* And more generally,⁵ *“So that no hammer or ax or any iron tool was heard in the House while it was being built.”*

What is the spiritual danger of iron?

² See the Sicha of Erev Yom Kippur, 5752.

³ Melochim II, 11:2

⁴ Ki Savo, 27:5.

⁵ Melochim I, 6:7.

The Arizal⁶ points out that the Hebrew word for iron — ברזל (*Barzel*) is an acronym for the four matriarchs:

<i>Bilhah</i>	בִּלְהָה
<i>Rochel</i>	רָחֵל
<i>Zilpah</i>	זִלְפָּה
<i>Leah</i>	לֵאָה

The order in which they are listed in this acronym is important and sheds light on what it represents.

Both Rochel and Leah are listed **after** their maidservants. This is reminiscent of the verse,⁷ “A slave-girl who supplants her mistress.”

The idea of a maidservant preceding her mistress shows a lack of proper order and procedure. Thus, in the Beis Hamikdosh there could be no ‘iron’.

Chassidus⁸ explains what this means on a practical level.

Every individual has a two part mandate to serve G-d. The first and primary aspect is one’s personal connection to G-d, through self refinement and Avodah. This is how one has an intimate relationship with G-d, which is expressed by a bed. This is comparable to the Matriarchs — Rochel and Leah.

The second is in the manner in which a person affects and impacts the world. This is comparable to maidservants — Bilhah and Zilpah.

⁶ Sefer HaLikutim LHa’Arizal, Vayechi, 49:11.

⁷ Mishlei, 30:23.

⁸ See Sefer Halikutim of the Tzemach Tzedek, under *Barzel*. In a number of places, the Rebbe discusses the negativity of *Barzel* and the remedy for fixing it. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos, 5752, Vol. 2, Vayechi, 4-5; Sichos Kodesh 5739, 15 Av, chapter 44.

The word *Barzel* in the context of Og's bed is teaching of misconstrued priorities. It shows a person who places more emphasis on the physical elements of their life to supersede the spiritual.

This is hinted to us by the Torah mentioning that it was specifically Og's bed that was of *Barzel* — not the appropriate manner of serving G-d. Og's life was built on concealment of G-dliness and not drawing it down in the proper manner.

The model by which we are commanded to build a home for G-d is by placing the matriarchs before the maidservant, i.e not following the model of *Barzel* but rather focusing on our Avodah in the appropriate order and set of priorities.



Likkutei Levi Yitzchok
Igros Kodesh — P. 417⁹
Yalkut Levi Yitzchak Al HaTorah, Vol. 2, chapter 39

9 The verse quoted in the beginning continues with the measurements of Og's bed, "it is nine cubits long and four cubits wide, by the standard cubit!" R' Levi Yitzchak continues with a novel explanation on the significance of the numbers 9 and 4. It is a lengthy and complex idea that surpasses the limitations of this essay.

ואתחנן
VA'ESCHANAN

The Truth of Shema

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה יְהוָה
אֵלֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

HEAR, O YISROEL!

THE L-RD (*YHVH*) IS OUR G-D (*Elokeinu*),

THE L-RD (*YHVH*) IS ONE (*Devarim, 6:4*)

“AND IT IS ALL TRUTH

AND THE SECRET OF TRUTH.”¹ (*Zohar*)²

Driving Questions:

1. What is the meaning behind the three mentions of G-d's name in this verse?
2. How do these words show that G-d is truth (Emes)?
3. What is this “secret” of truth?

1 Meaning: Everything about G-d and that which is mentioned in the verse is true.

R' Levi Yitzchak explains:²

The Midrash³ tells us that G-d's seal is *Emes, truth* — חֹתֶמוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֱמֶת. Reish Lakish explains how we see this. The very first letter of the Alef-Beis is an Alef א, the very middle letter⁴ is a Mem מ, and the final letter is a Taf/Sav ת. These three letters together spell the word אֱמֶת — *Emes* (truth). Truth is something which doesn't change from beginning to end; it's consistent and absolute. Thus the very word for truth consists of the beginning, midpoint and last letter of the Alef Beis. This is also implied by the verse in the Prophets,⁵ "I am the first and I am the last, And there is no god but Me — אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבְּלִעְדֵי אֵין אֱלֹהִים", meaning G-d's truth of existence is unchanging from beginning to end.

Based on the above we now understand that the first, middle and last name of G-d in the Shema's opening line, correspond to the beginning, middle and end of time.⁶ Together they are a testimony to G-d's ultimate truth that He is the G-d before time, of creation, and the end of times.

² Zohar, Vol. 2, page 188a.

³ Bereishis Rabbah, 81:1.

⁴ When including all 27 letters, also the final letters.

⁵ Yeshayahu, 44:6.

⁶ See Likkutei Torah, Parshas Matos, 81a.

י-ה-ו-ה ⁷	Before there was any creation.	"I am the first"	א
אלקיני ⁸	Time of creation and when there exists concealment.	"And there is no god but Me"	מ
י-ה-ו-ה	Era of Moshiach when G-dliness will be fully revealed.	"and I am the last"	ת

There is also a ‘secret’ way to arrive at this truth through using the method of Gematria (numerical value) of the letters, as we shall see.

When G-d instructed Moshe to go to Egypt and redeem the Jewish People, Moshe asked G-d,⁹ “They (the Jewish People will) ask me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” And¹⁰ G-d said to Moses, “אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה” — “*Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh*”¹¹ (literally, “I will be as I shall be”).

The name אֶהְיֶה (*Ehyeh*), has the numerical value of 21. The first letter of each of G-d’s names in the Shema also equals 21.

21	א (1) ה (5) י (10) ה (5)
21	י(ה-ו-ה) + א(לקים) + י(ה-ו-ה)

7 Known in Kabbalistic teachings as HaVaYaH. This is the Tetragrammaton, G-d’s Divine Name of the four Hebrew letters yud-hei-vav-hei, expressing His transcendence of time and space.

8 Elokim (or Elokeinu) is one of G-d’s sacred Names. According to Kabbalistic teachings it is related to G-d’s manifestation in nature and the source of concealment.

9 Shemos, 3:13.

10 Ibid, 3:14.

11 . The understanding is that G-d was giving Moshe a name by which to refer to G-d.

Viewing these words on a deeper level, through the world of *Remez*¹² — allusions and hints, “*Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh*” can be understood as the sum total of “*Ehyeh*” x “*Ehyeh*”, i.e. 21x21 which equals 441.

The word *Emes* — אמת also totals 441.

441	= אהי-ה (21) x אהי-ה (21)
441	= א (1) + מ (40) + ת (400)

Thus the statement of Shema Yisroel both mentions and hints to the absolute truth of G-d.¹³



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

“...וְעֵינַי בְּזֵהָר הַקָּדוֹשׁ פִּי תִשָּׂא דִּף קפ”ח עֲמוּד א’ שִׁפְתַי אָמַת אֵלַיִן יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּאֵינִי שִׁפְתַי אָמַת ה’ אֵלֹקֵינוּ ה’ אֶחָד” עֵינַי שָׁם. הָרִי שִׁאֲמַת הוּא בְּחִינַת הָרִי אֶחָד, שֶׁהוּא הָאָמַת הָאֲמִיתִי... (וְעֵינַי שָׁם בְּזֵהָר “וְכֹלֵא אִיהוּ אָמַת וְרָא דְאָמַת, וְהֵינִי אָמַת שֶׁהוּא רֵאשׁ וְאֲמַצְעַ וְסוּף שֶׁל הַכ”ו אוֹתִיּוֹת, רוֹמֵז עַל הַקַּב”ה שֶׁכְּתוּב בּוֹ “אֲנִי רֵאשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבְּלַעֲדֵי אֵין אֵלֹקִים”, בְּאֲמַצְעֵיָתָא, וְכִמוּ שֶׁכְּתוּב בְּמִדְרַשׁ רַבָּה פְּרָשַׁת וַיִּשְׁלַח עֵינַי שָׁם, וּבִלְקוּטֵי תוֹרָה בְּדְרוֹשׁ הַמֵּתַחִיל רֵאשִׁי הַמְטוֹת. עַל זֶה רוֹמֵז הַג’ שְׁמוֹת הָרִי אֵלֹקֵינוּ הָרִי, הָרִי הָא’ עַל שֵׁם “אֲנִי רֵאשׁוֹן” הָרִי הַב’ עַל שֵׁם “אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן”, אֵלֹקֵינוּ שֶׁבְּאֲמַצְעַ בֵּין ב’ הוֹיִוִּת עַל שֵׁם “אֵין אֵלֹקִים” בְּאֲמַצְעֵיָתָא. וְהַכֹּל הוּא אֶחָד. וְרָא דְאָמַת הוּא מֵה שְׂרָאשִׁי תְּבוֹת הָרִי אֵלֹקֵינוּ הָרִי הוּא יֵא”י מִסְפֵּר אֵהִי, אֵהִי פְּעֻמִּים אֵהִי הוּא מִסְפֵּר אָמַת בְּמִכּוּן...”

*Toras Levi Yitzchak,
Chiddushim U’biurim B’shas, pg. 193.¹⁴*

12 There are four levels of Torah interpretation known as *Pardes* (lit. the orchard): **Pshat** (the literal meaning of the text), **Remez** (its allusions), **Derush** (the homilies that can be derived from it), and **Sod** (its mystical secrets).

13 It is also important to note that we conclude our recital of the entire Shema during prayers with the word - *Emes*. And it is also alluded to in the opening line. Thus, it begins and ends with truth.

14 Yalkut Levi Yitzchok al HaTorah, Volume 4, Siman 33.

עקב EIKEV

Tefillin

וְקִשְׂרֹתֵם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל יְדֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפוֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם

YOU SHOULD BIND THEM [THE BOXES OF TEFILLIN]
AS A SIGN UPON YOUR HAND AND THEY SHALL BE FOR
ORNAMENTS BETWEEN YOUR EYES. (*Eikev*, 11:18)

The Talmud instructs the order in which the Tefillin are supposed to be donned:

When one dons the Tefillin, he first dons the Tefillin of the arm and afterward dons the Tefillin of the head. (Talmud, Menachos, 36a)

From another teaching of the Talmud regarding the definition of a rebellious Jew one can appreciate the importance of donning Tefillin:

Who are considered ‘rebellious Jews who have sinned with their bodies’?

Rav said: This is referring to the skull that did not [ever] don Tefillin (תּפּלִין) (קַרְקַתָּא דְּלֹא מִנַּח). (Talmud, Rosh Hashanah, 17a)

Driving Questions:

1. What is the deeper significance of the two boxes of
2. Tefillin, one for the head and one for the arm?
Why do we place the arm Tefillin before the head Tefillin?¹
3. Why is the emphasis on “the **skull** that did not don Tefillin,” and not also the arm that did not don Tefillin?

The Explanation: R' Levi Yitzchok compares the donning of Tefillin to an incident which took place when the Jewish People received the Torah at Mt. Sinai.

The Talmud states:² *“Rabbi Simai taught: When the Jewish people preceded (the declaration) ‘We will do’ (נַעֲשֶׂה) to (the declaration) ‘We will hear’ (נִשְׁמָע), 600,000 ministering angels came down and tied two crowns³ to each and every member of the Jewish people - one corresponding to ‘We will do’ and one corresponding to ‘We will hear.’”*

The implication of this Talmudic teaching seems to be that the ministering angels came down with the crowns as a reward for the Jewish people starting out their commitment to G-d and His Torah with dedicated action, before they even ventured for the understanding and precise reasoning of a commandment.

This importance of commitment to action, which serves as a foundation and precedes understanding, is reenacted each day when a Jew dons his Tefillin.

¹ The Talmud cited above provides a proof from this, from the order of the verse, which precedes the Mitzvah of hand-Tefillin to head-Tefillin, but the question is what is the deeper significance and meaning of this order.

² Shabbos, 88a.

³ Obviously these are not physical crowns but it is a metaphor for a spiritual gift likened to a crown.

The arm Tefillin represents the deed — “We will do” (נַעֲשֶׂה). The arm is a tool of action with no opinion or understanding of its own, it just follows what the brain tells it to do. The arm, thus, represents the concept of *Kabbolas Ol* - the initial acceptance of the yoke of Heaven, which precedes the intellectual pursuit of Torah study and learning the reasons for the Mitzvos.

The head Tefillin represents the understanding — “We will hear” נִשְׁמָע.

The mind is the seat of intellect, and the head Tefillin represents the studying and understanding of Torah and its commandments.

This, then, is the significance of two Tefillin boxes, one on the head and one on the arm, for they represent two aspects of a Jew’s Divine service, one of action and dedication (“We will do”), and one of listening and understanding (“We will hear”) corresponding to the two crowns.⁴

When donning the arm Tefillin first each day,⁵ a Jew is demonstrating that he is dedicated to following G-d’s directives wholeheartedly and with unwavering dedication to action, regardless of whether he fully understands the rationale for the directives or not.

4 The idea that Tefillin is likened to a crown can be seen in the words of the Alter Rebbe in the Laws of Tefillin:

“Rabbeinu Asher, of blessed memory, would recite the Morning Blessings until the blessing of Oter Yisrael BeSifarah [which praises G-d for “crowning Israel with glory”]. [At this point] he would put on tefillin and then recite that blessing, thereby simultaneously offering praise and thanks for the mitzvah of tefillin. [This blessing is associated with tefillin, for] they are referred to as “glory,” as it is written, “Bind your glory upon yourself.” Shulchan Aruch Harav, Chapter 25:9.

5 See Likkutei Sichos, Vol 19, pg. 53.

Now we can appreciate the Talmud's words — “The skull that did not don Tefillin” as referring to both the head and arm Tefillin.

Since both the arm and head Tefillin have a crown associated with them, one who has not donned Tefillin is missing both the crown of the head and of the arm. Thus the Talmud is referring to someone who has not (yet) worn either Tefillin, thus missing the crown for the head and the arm.⁶



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

... והוא בחינת תפלין כמאמר "עוטר ישראל בתפארה", שקאי על תפלין, כי תפלין הם כמו כתר ועטרה על הראש, כי גם תפלין של יד, הם תפלין של ראש דרחל, אם בן הם כמו בחינת כתר ועטרה על ראש רחל, וכמובן. (ואתי שפיר מאי דאתמר בפרק קמא דראש השנה "פושעי ישראל בגופן מאי גיהו? אמר רב קרקפתא דלא מנח תפלין", למה נקט קרקפתא דוקא, שהוא הראש, הרי צריך להניח תפלין של יד גם בן.)
 אך זהו מפני כי תפלין של יד הוא גם בן בחינת תפלין של ראש, דרחל.)
 ויש להבין לפי זה מה שצריך להקדים תפלין של יד לתפלין של ראש, הוא על דרך כמו הקדמת נעשה לנשמע, שזכו בשביל זה לשני בתרים כנגד נעשה ונשמע, כתר ד"נעשה" הוא כתר דרחל, וכתר ד"נשמע" הוא כתר דו"א...

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*- Chidushim uBiurim LeShas Mishno uGemoro -
 pp. 433-434*

- ⁶ In Kabbalistic teachings, the two levels of action and the emotions / intellect which motivate the action correspond to Rochel and Leah, respectively. Thus, R' Levi Yitzchok refers to the two crowns as the crown of Rochel's head and the crown of Leah's head (See the weekly Chayus publication for Parshas Vayeitzei, where this was elaborated: chayenu.org/chayus-archives).
- ⁷ Elaborated at length in Yalkut Levi Yitzchok Al HaTorah, vol. 4, Simanim 89, 116.

י"ט כסלו

19 KISLEV

Chassidus: The Connector

The Giving of the Torah — מתן תורה

Generally speaking, the Torah is divided into two main categories: The revealed part (*Nigleh*¹) and the hidden part (*Nistar*²). And then there is a third element which unifies both of these together. These are the teachings of Chassidus, which harmonizes the two, showing how they are one.³

Each dimension of Torah has its period of revelation which is preceded by a period of darkness, challenge and suffering,⁴ serving as a prelude to its breakthrough:

-
- 1 Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, Halacha etc.
 - 2 Kabbalah, Agada, Chasidus etc.
 - 3 There are two aspects to this: 1) showing how the seemingly polar opposite spheres of *Nigleh* and *Nistar* are ultimately two sides of the same coin and mirror one another; 2) bringing the esoteric, often abstract ideas to be as comprehensible and structured as the subjects of *Nigleh*.
 - 4 This follows the natural order that G-d implanted into creation that before every revelation comes a period of concealment, as alluded to in the verse (Bereishis 1:8), "And there was evening and there was morning." "Evening" (darkness i.e. concealment) is the precursor to light (revelation).

1. The revelation of Torah⁵ at Mt. Sinai was preceded by the Egyptian exile and slavery.
2. The revelation of the secrets of Torah which Moshiach will teach, is preceded by our current exile, *Galus EDOM*, which began with the destruction of the second Beis HaMikdash.
3. The revelation of Chasidus Chabad⁶ launched after the imprisonment of the Alter Rebbe.

The revelation is also commensurate with the nature of the suffering that preceded it. The more subtle the nature of the challenge, the loftier is the light that emerges.

The source of the suffering and the relationship between the perpetrator and the persecuted indicates the depth and subtlety of the pain.

The Egyptians descended from Cham (No'ach's third son), while the Jewish people are the progeny of Avraham & Yitzchak, who descended from Shem (No'ach's second son).

The Romans who brought upon us the current exile are *Edom*, which stems from Eisav,⁷ a grandson of Avraham. Thus, we share the same forefather. Furthermore, Ya'akov and Eisav shared the womb. Thus, the opposition came from a closer relative.⁸

⁵ Although **all** of Torah, including the future Torah which Moshiach will reveal is included in the Torah we received at Sinai, nonetheless at that time what was revealed to the people was primarily the revealed dimension of Torah, *Nigleh*.

⁶ Although Chasidus general began with the Ba'al Shem Tov, the ultimate revelation of Chasidus is when it entered into a comprehensible system of understanding, through Chaba"ד. (See *Kuntres uMa'ayon* pg. 17.)

⁷ Bereishis 36:9

⁸ Perhaps a way to understand this is akin to a family feud. While opposition from a foreign enemy may be more fierce and overwhelming, an inner family fight, even over something seemingly minor can be far more painful and require one to summon deeper resources to overcome.

The Alter Rebbe was slandered and persecuted by fellow Jews, religious Jews who challenged his novel approach. This was an attack from within.⁹

Thus, the light of Chasidus which combines both elements of Torah, *Nigleh* & *Nistar* is of a more transcendent nature — hence its ability to fuse them — stemming from a challenge closer to home.

Now, before each dimension of Torah was revealed, a sea-splitting event occurs.¹⁰ The splitting of the Red Sea upon leaving Egypt, before receiving the revealed Torah, and the splitting of Euphrates River,¹¹ upon leaving the current exile, before the revelation of secrets of Torah by Moshiach.

The Midrash¹² explains that the sea was split into twelve paths, one for each of the twelve tribes. With the coming of Moshiach the Euphrates river will split into seven channels.

Combining these two numbers together (12+7) we reach a total of 19.

9 This can be compared to the brothers of Yosef challenging him, which ultimately brought about his sovereignty and the opposition of King Shaul to Dovid, which ultimately gave rise to the Davidic Dynasty (which endures eternally).

10 Hashem could have easily annihilated the Egyptians any other way. Furthermore, according to *Tosafos* the Jewish people emerged on the same side of Yam Suf. Thus, the splitting of the sea was not merely to drown the Egyptians. Rather, as Chasidus explains, it was a revelation, which was a necessary prelude to Matan Torah. See *Ma'amar VHechrim*, 5631, pg 2. *Vayoilech*, 5704, pg. 179.

11 “And He shall lift His hand over the river with the strength of His wind, and He shall beat it into seven streams” (Yeshaya, 11:15).

12 Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, chapter 42.

This hints at the date of Yud Tes (19th) Kislev which combines the two revelations — *Nigleh* and *Nistar* — together.¹³



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

...וְהַשְּׁנֵי אֹרֹת הוּא לְזִמְנֵי מִמּוֹשֵׁה, דְּהֵינּוּ בְּהִזְמֵן דִּי"ט כְּסֵלוֹ שְׂאֵז הוּא הַתְּחַבְּרוּת דְּב' הַבְּחִינּוֹת יַחַד. וּבַתּוֹרָה אֵלּוּ הֵב' בְּחִינּוֹת אֹרֹת, הוּא הֵב' בְּחִינּוֹת דְּתוֹרָה, נִסְתָּר דְּתוֹרָה, וְנִגְלָה דְּתוֹרָה, קִבְּלָה וְנִגְלָה. וְהַתְּחַבְּרוּתָם יַחַד דְּהֵב' אֹרֹת, הוּא עֲנִינֵן גִּילּוּי אֹרֹת הַחֲסִידוּת שֶׁהוּא מֵה שֶׁהִנְסָתָר דְּתוֹרָה הַסּוּדוֹת הַיּוֹתֵר עֲמוּקִים יִשְׁגּוּ בְּהַפְּשֻׁטָתָן לְשַׁכַּל עַל דֶּרֶךְ כְּמוֹ הַהֲשָׁגָה דְּנִגְלָה דְּתוֹרָה. מֵה שְׂאִין בֶּן קִבְּלָה אֵינָה מוֹשְׁגָת לְשַׁכַּל אֲנוּשֵׁי בֵי הַיָּא בְּדֶרֶךְ קִבְּלָה וְאִמּוּנָה בְּלִבָּד. מֵה שְׂאִין בֶּן גִּילּוּי אֹרֹת הַחֲסִידוּת הוּא בְּחִינָה יוֹתֵר גְּבוּהָ מִקִּבְּלָה וְנִגְלָה שְׂלִיכֵן בְּכַחַה לְחַבֵּר ב' הַבְּחִינּוֹת גַּם יַחַד, שֶׁהִנְסָתָר וְהָרָו גּוֹפָא יְהִי מוֹשֵׁג בְּנִגְלָה...

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Igros Kodesh, pg. 218-224¹⁴
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 5, ch. 5¹⁵)

13 See Likkutei Sichos, vol. 16, page 199, footnote 56. The Rebbe addresses two glaring questions:

- (1) How can it be that 19 Kislev united the 12 (*Nigleh*) and the 7 (*Nistar*) if the prophecy of the splitting river has not yet occurred as it will take place with the coming of Moshiach?
- (2) Seemingly, we have already experienced the revelation of *Nistar*, through the Arizal and Rashbi, before the splitting of the river?

14 This letter, dated 19 Kislev, 5691, was sent by Rabbi Levi Yitzchok to his son, the Rebbe. He begins with an explanation of the names of the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, showing how these names capture the essence of his mission. The name שְׁנֵי אֹרֹת (Shneur) means two lights, yet it is one name, symbolizing the oneness and unification of both the inner and outer lights of Torah.

15 The explanation for the above footnote is also brought down in this source.

חנוכה

CHANUKAH

Lights, Learning and Lockdown

Driving Questions:

1. What is the connection between Parshas Vayeishev and Chanukah?
2. In what way did Ya'akov express his love for Yosef besides for giving him a colorful coat?
3. Why is there no book or chapter on Chanukah in the entire Mishna?

Parshas Vayeishev is occasionally read during Chanukah. There is certainly a connection¹ between them. Indeed there is a fascinating allusion to the Yom Tov of Chanukah in Vayeishev.

1 The Shaloh HaKadosh (Rabbi Yeshaya Halevi Horowitz) in his Shnei Luchos HaBris (commentary on Parshas Vayeishev — this week's Parsha!) writes that every Yom Tov (even the ones instituted by the Sages) is hinted to in the corresponding weekly Parsha.

Before we can explain the connection, let us preface with a general question regarding the Halachos of Chanukah and the candles of the Menorah.

Why is there no book of Mishna (or even one chapter!) dedicated to the laws of Chanukah as there are for other Yomim Tovim?² The story and vast majority of the laws can only be found in the Talmud!³

Another question: The total number of candles (excluding the shamash) a person lights throughout Chanukah is 36. What is the deeper significance of the number 36 and its connection to Chanukah?

To understand all of this, let us analyze one Passuk in the Parsha.⁴

וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב אֶת יוֹסֵף מִכָּל בְּנָיו כִּי בֶן זְקֵנִים הוּא לוֹ וַעֲשָׂה לוֹ כְּתֹנֶת פָּסִים Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his (other) sons, for he was the child of his old age (*Zekunim*) and he made for him a fine wool robe.”

The Midrash,⁵ commenting on this verse explains: “Rabbi Nechemyah said: all the Torah laws which Shem and Ever had passed on to Ya’akov,⁶ Ya’akov passed on to Yosef.”⁷ The word the

- 2 With the exception of an obscure, indirect mention in 7 or 8 Mishnayos on other topics.
- 3 This burning question is raised by many commentaries who struggle to explain it in various ways. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s approach is novel.
- 4 Vayeishev, 37:3.
- 5 Bereishis Rabba 84:8
- 6 See Rashi on this verse and also Vayeitzei 28:11 regarding the many years Yaa’kov learned Torah from (Shem &) Ever. Although the Torah as we have it today was transmitted to Moshe at Sinai, there was a form of Torah learning even prior to Matan Torah.
- 7 This is alluded to in the words בֶּן זְקֵנִים הוּא לוֹ. In this context the word זָקֵן (*zoken*) can also be understood as a mnemonic for the words — זֶה שֶׁקָּנָה חֵכְמָה (*Ze Shekona Chochma*), referring to one who has acquired wisdom i.e. the wisdom of Torah. Thus, the primary favoritism that Ya’akov showed Yosef was choosing him as the primary recipient of his Torah knowledge.

Midrash uses is *Halachos*. This refers to the Oral Torah (*Torah Sheb'al Peh*) specifically and not the written Torah.

The vast majority of the *Halachos* in Torah can only be found in the Oral Torah. It is within the oral tradition where the details of how to fulfill and keep the Torah are explained in both a clear and practical way.

Furthermore, the covenant between Hashem and the Jewish People hinges primarily on the acceptance and practice of the Oral Torah.

As the Talmud states:⁸ “Rabbi Yochanan says: The Holy One, Blessed be He, made a covenant with the Jewish people only for the sake of the matters that (were transmitted) orally [*be'al peh*], as it is stated:⁹ “For on the basis of [*al pi*] these matters I have made a covenant with you and with Yisrael.”

This connection between the covenant and the Oral Torah (which is what Ya’akov studied at the Yeshiva of Shem v’Ever and transmitted to Yosef) can also be seen by way of Gematriya:

$\begin{matrix} 40 & 300 \\ \text{(שם)} & = 340 \end{matrix}$	$\begin{matrix} 400 & 10 & 200 & 2 \\ \text{ב} & \text{ר} & \text{י} & \text{ת} \\ 612 & = & \text{בְּרִית} \end{matrix}$
$\begin{matrix} 200 & 2 & 70 \\ \text{(עבר)} & = 272 \end{matrix}$	
$\text{שם} + \text{עבר} = 612$	

The name **Shem** (340) plus the name **Ever** (272) together equal 612. This is the same (numerical) value as the word **Bris** (covenant). We can now draw a connection to Chanukah.

The main decree of the Greeks was to cause the Jews to forget and stop practicing the Torah. More specifically, the decree was against the Oral Torah, which provides the comprehensive and clear understanding of the Halacha and how to keep each Mitzvah.

⁸ Gittin 60b.

⁹ Ki-Sisa 34:27

(Practically, it would be near impossible for the Greeks to eradicate the complete practice of Judaism as there would always be the Written Torah scroll. They were, however, able to suppress the learning and furtherance of Jewish knowledge and transmission of the Oral Torah by closing down Yeshivos, banning gatherings and the like. Which means in essence they were targeting the study of the Oral Torah).

While the Oral Torah (*Torah she'B'al Peh*) was first written in the form of Mishna, ultimately it is the Talmud which elaborates extensively on every Halacha, and through much in-depth discussion addresses the intricate details of each Mitzvah. Thus, we are not allowed to rule a Halacha based on a Mishna alone.¹⁰

We can now understand why the Halachos of Chanukah can only be found in the Talmud. For it is the Talmud which captures the totality of the Oral Torah, and in whose pages lies the defeat of the Greeks who attempted to eradicate it.

Fascinatingly, the Talmud is divided into 36 tractates.¹¹ This is identical to the cumulative amount of candles kindled in the Chanukah Menorah,¹² symbolizing that the true victory over the Greeks was the continuation and commitment to upholding the Oral Torah.



*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — Igros Kodesh*¹³ pg. 418
(*Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 3, ch. 12, 72*)

10 See Bava Basra 145b, and Rashbam's comment.

11 Although we seem to have 37 tractates (Masechtos), it is possible that Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is not counting Tamid which is not a complete book of Talmud, only several pages and much missing.

12 Not including the Shamash. (1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8=36)

13 This letter, dated 11 Nissan 5698, was addressed to his son, the Rebbe, on the occasion of his 36th birthday. (The letter spans 5 pages on the Kabala of the number 36).

פורים

PURIM

Moshe Vs. Haman

וְאַתָּה תִּצְוֶה...!

AND YOU SHALL COMMAND... (*Exodus 27:20*)

*This is the only parshah in the Torah since Moshe first appears in which he is not mentioned (outside of the book of Devarim in which he is the narrator). This is in fulfillment of the ultimatum he gave G-d, Now, if You will forgive their sin [well and good]; but if not, **erase** me (מִחִי) from the book which You have written! (Exodus 32:32). Although this was conditional upon God's refusal to forgive the people (which He ultimately did), nonetheless "the curse of a Torah scholar is fulfilled in some way, even when made conditionally". (Baal Haturim)*

Driving Questions:

1. Why is the fulfillment of this specifically in Parshas Tetzaveh?
2. What is the connection with Purim?

Purim falls out in proximity to Parshas Tetzaveh as well as to the 7th of Adar - the day of Moshe's birth and passing.¹

This is not merely a coincidence, rather there is a direct correlation between the two.²

When Haman cast lots to determine in which month to annihilate the Jewish People and Adar was chosen, he was overjoyed because he felt that the passing of Moshe was a bad omen for the Jewish People, and he was a force he had to contend with. Ultimately, it was Moshe's birth on that very same day, which proved to be the antidote and transformative power to annul the decree.³ The reason for this is because on a cosmic level Moshe is the antithesis of Haman.

This can be seen in a number of ways:

	MOSHE	HAMAN
Character	Humility. "And Moshe was the most humble man on earth." ⁴	Arrogance. Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king want to honor more than myself?!" ⁵
The number 50 <i>(At their end of life)</i>	Moshe is buried in the valley of Mount Nevo. ⁶ The Arizal explains ⁷ that the word נבו — Nevo can be read as a mnemonic for the words Nun Bo — נ' בו. Translated literally as — the 50th is within him. Meaning, Moshe had now reached the 50th level of spiritual understanding. ⁸	Haman built a gallows 50 cubits high. Later on he was hung on these very same gallows. ⁹ This refers to the 50th level of impurity. ¹⁰

¹ See Talmud, Megillah 13b.

² The Me'or Einayim (Terumah) points out that Moshe's name is absent from Parshas Tetzaveh because it is the week of his passing (in most years 7 Adar is in the week of Tetzaveh). R' Levi Yitzchok connects this, fascinatingly, with the Baal Haturim quoted earlier and adds further depth and insight to this.

³ Ibid. See Rashi there.

<p>Countering Forces</p>	<p>Moshe was buried opposite Beis Peor. The Talmud¹¹ explains the significance of this: “In order to atone for the incident that transpired at Beis Peor.” This was an incident of idol worship that occurred there with the idol of Baal Peor.¹²</p>	<p>The idol worship of Peor is through the reprehensible act of defecating in front of it. The Hebrew word for human waste is Tzo’ah — צֹאֵה. The numerical equivalent (Gematria) is 96. Haman — חָמָן also equals 96.¹³ Hinting that he was determined to have the Jewish people sink to the level of becoming idol worshippers.¹⁴</p>
<p>Erasing the name</p>	<p>When Moshe was pleading before Hashem for the sake of the Jewish People, after they sinned with the golden calf, he said: “Now, if You will forgive their sin [well and good]; but if not, erase me (מִחֵנִי) from the book which You have written!”¹⁵ Hashem replied “He who has sinned against me I will erase”.</p>	<p>Haman wanted to annihilate the Jewish people by putting to action Moshe’s words of “Erase me” against the Jewish People. G-d’s response to Moshe was that “He who has sinned against me I will erase אֶמְחֶנּוּ מִסֵּפֶרִי.”¹⁶ This is referring to Haman, a descendant of Amalek, about whom it is stated, “I will utterly blot out — (מִחָה אֶמְחָה) the memory of Amalek from under the heaven!”¹⁷</p>

The miracle of Purim can be defined with the words of the Megillah — וְנִהְיָה הוּא *V’nahafoch Hu* “but it was reversed,”¹⁸ everything was completely overturned.

So the very Parsha in which Moshe’s name is not mentioned (which is also read at the time of his passing), the semi fulfillment of his “ultimatum”, and the one Haman wanted to use against the Jewish People, is the one connected to Purim, when it was completely transformed and fulfilled in full on Haman and his ilk.



4 Beha’alos’cho, 12:3. This is also hinted at in the place of his burial — a valley (Bracha, 34:6). This symbolises humility.

In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

מֵה שֶׁשָּׂמַח הַמֶּן שֶׁנִּפְלַח הַפּוֹר עַל אֶדְר מִפְּנֵי שְׂמֻשָּׁה נִסְתַּלַּק בּוֹ בְּאֶדְר, הוּא כִּי הַמֶּן
 הוּא הַלְעָמַת דְּמֻשָּׁה שְׁהִי עָנּוּ לְגַמְרִי, וְהַהֶפֶךְ מִזֶּה הַמֶּן שְׁהִי בַעַל גְּאוּה וְחֶצְוִי
 לְגַמְרִי, וְאָמַר לְמִי יִחְפֹּץ הַמֶּלֶךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת יָקָר יוֹתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ (כִּי מֵה שְׁהַמֶּן הוּא הַלְעָמַת
 דְּמַרְדֵּכִי, מַרְדֵּכִי בְדוֹרוֹ כְּמוֹ מֻשָּׁה בְדוֹרוֹ וְכַדְאִיתָא בְּמַדְרֵשׁ-רַבָּה בְּפִסּוּק אִישׁ
 יְהוּדִי), וּמֻשָּׁה נִקְבְּרָ בְּגִיָּא, שְׁהוּא בְּחִינַת שְׁפָלוּת וּבְטוּל וּקְבוּרָתוֹ הוּא בְּנִבּוֹ נ'
 בּוֹ שְׁעַר הַנֵּי דְּבִינָה דְּקֻדְשָׁה, וְהַהֶפֶךְ מִזֶּה הַמֶּן עָשָׂה עֵץ גְּבוּהָ נ' אִמָּה, גְּבוּהָ הֶפֶךְ
 דְּשְׁפָלוּת, וְהוּא שְׁעַר הַנֵּי דְּטַמְאָה, וְשֵׁם הֵיטָה מִפְּלָתוֹ, כִּי נִתְּלָה עַל הַעֵץ הַזֶּה
 הַגְּבוּהָ כְּמִדְתּוֹ שְׁהוּא בַעַל גְּאוּה לְגַמְרִי.

*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak**Al Pesukei Tanach U'maamarei Chazal, pg. 431*

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- 5 Esther, 6:6. See also Talmud, Megillah 7a. The Talmud concludes that it was well known that Haman held himself in the highest regard to the extent that he was sure the royal garb was intended for him.
 - 6 Ha'azinu, 32:49-50. Bracha, 34:1-5.
 - 7 Shaloh, Va'eschanan 369a, in the name of R' Chaim Vital.
 - 8 Referred to in Kaballah as the "Sha'ar Hanun" of the Fifty Gateways of Wisdom.
 - 9 Esther 5:14 and 7:10.
 - 10 See Torah Ohr, Megillas Esther, 93d.
 - 11 Sotah, 14a.
 - 12 Balak, 25:3.
 - 13 $\aleph (90) + \aleph (1) + ה (5) = 96$ $ה (5) + מ (40) + י (50) = 95 + 1$ for the word (in Gematriya this is known as 'Im Hakolel') = total 96.
 - 14 Talmud, Sanhedrin 64a.
 - 15 Ki Sisa, 32:32.
 - 16 Ki Sisa, 32:33.
 - 17 B'shalach, 17:14.
 - 18 Esther, 9:1.

פסח

PESACH

The Secret of the Middle Matzah

בְּעֶרְבַּי תֹּאכְלוּ מַצֹּת

IN THE EVENING, YOU
SHALL EAT MATZOS... (*Bo, 12:18*)

Introduction: Three *matzos* are used at the *Pesach Seder*. Each of them needs to be completely whole when they are placed in the *Ka'arah* (Seder plate). The rationale for these three, explains the *Shulchan Aruch*:¹ Two *matzos* are for *Lechem Mishneh* as is required at every Shabbos and Yom Tov meal. The third unique (middle) *matzah* is known as the *Levi*² and is broken into two pieces by *Yachatz*. The smaller half remains in the Seder Plate,

1 See *Shulchan Aruch Harav, Hilchos Pesach, Siman 473:35-36* and *Siman 475:3-5*.

2 The 3 Matzos correspond to Kohen, Levi, Yisroel. Thus the middle one is Levi (*Arizal*).

while the bigger piece is hidden away for the *Afikoman*. This remaining (smaller) half-*matzah* is called *Lechem-Oni*, (poor man's bread). It is upon this broken *matzah* that the Haggadah is recited³ and the key requirement of eating *matzah* at the *Seder* is fulfilled. The larger half (*Afikoman*) is only eaten at the very end.

Driving Questions:

1. What is the significance of the middle matzah?
2. Why is Yachatz specifically done with this matzah?
3. What is the deeper significance of the 2 halves / stages related to this middle matzah?

The ultimate purpose of the exodus from Egypt was in order that the Jewish People would go on to receive the Torah on Shavuot.

This is evident from what G-d tells Moshe at the *S'neh* (burning bush)⁴ “When you take the people out of Egypt, they will worship G-d on this mountain.” The burning bush was on Mount Sinai. Thus the start of the Exodus process was linked with its final purpose — receiving the Torah.

It therefore follows that every step taken at the *Seder*, which celebrates the Exodus, has a connection to, and a parallel in Torah. This is especially true of the middle *matzah* because it is upon this *matzah* that we fulfill the fundamental elements of the *Seder*.

The two stages of the middle *matzah*, have their parallel in the way the Torah⁵ has been transmitted to us.

³ See Talmud, *Pesachim*, 115b.

⁴ Shemos, 3:12.

⁵ Noting the connection between the two, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak explains the words

By way of introduction: The Talmud⁶ states regarding the learning of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai, that he did not neglect to study “a great matter and a small matter (דְּבַר גָּדוֹל וְדְבַר קָטָן).”

The Talmud continues to elaborate this ambiguous statement. “A great matter” refers to the secrets of the Design of the Divine Chariot (מַעֲשֵׂה מְרֻכָּבָה). “A small matter” is, (for example, *halachos* that make up) the disputes of Abaye and Rava (הַיְוִיּוֹת דְּאַבְיֵי וְרַבָּא).

Generally speaking, the Torah is divided into two main categories: The revealed part (Nigleh⁷) and the hidden part (Nistar⁸). The revealed part is called “A small matter” — דְּבַר קָטָן and the hidden part is called “A great matter” — דְּבַר גָּדוֹל.

Although these are two dimensions of Torah they are nonetheless part of one singular Torah — *Torah Achas*⁹.

Nonetheless, the process by which it was revealed in the world occurred in two stages — *koton and gadol* — *Nigleh and Nistar*.

The revealed part of Torah has always been accessible to the Jewish People. We have studied, learned and expounded on it from the very beginning. The esoteric part, on the other hand, was hidden from the general public for generations.

Over time, as the era of Moshiach looms more imminently, the hidden part has become more accessible and revealed. This reached a new and unprecedented frontier with the dissemina-

of Pirkei Avos (3:17) “If there is no flour, there is no Torah” as follows: If there is no flour for *Matzah* on Pesach there is no receiving of the Torah on *Shavuos*.

6 Sukkah 28a.

7 Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, Halacha etc.

8 Kabbalah, Agada, Chassidus etc.

9 Shelach, 15:16.

tion of the esoteric teachings¹⁰ throughout the world in recent generations, which will ultimately culminate with Moshiach teaching the deepest secrets of the Torah. A parallel can now be drawn from the process of the middle *matzah* to the process of Torah.¹¹

<i>Matzah (Pesach)</i>	<i>Torah (Shavuos)</i>
The <i>matzah</i> starts off perfectly whole.	G-d gave us one Torah (<i>Torah Achas</i> ¹²).
<i>Yachatz</i> — the middle <i>matzah</i> is broken into a large and small piece.	The Torah was divided into two parts: <i>koton</i> and <i>gadol</i> — <i>Nigleh</i> and <i>Nistar</i> .
The smaller half is revealed throughout the recitation of the <i>Haggadah</i> , and is eaten. The bigger half is hidden (צָפוּן) until the <i>Afikoman</i> .	For most of history the <i>Koton</i> part of Torah was revealed and studied by the Jewish people, while the <i>Gadol</i> part was largely concealed (נִסְתָּר).
At the end of the <i>Seder</i> , the larger, hidden piece is revealed and eaten for <i>Afikoman</i> .	Toward the end of <i>Golus</i> , the esoteric teachings, formerly hidden are becoming revealed and accessible. ¹³

This parallel also explains why it is specifically the middle *matzah*, the *Levi*.

This alludes to Moshe who is from the tribe of *Levi*.¹⁴ Moshe¹⁵ is both the redeemer through whom the Exodus happens, and

10 As they are primarily taught in Chassidus.

11 What is true of Torah's evolutionary process is also true of the individual's journey in Torah learning. Our sages caution that one ought to first fill his belly with Tamud, which is likened to meat, before strolling into the "orchard" of Torah to taste its fruits and delicacies (i.e. the secrets). See Shulchan Aruch Yoreh De'ah 246:4 in Rama.

12 See Likkutei Sichos, Vol 21, pg 36.

13 The study of Kabbalah and especially Chassidus in recent generations.

14 And, and whose parents are described as a Ben Levi, who married a Bas Levi (See Chayus for Shemos 5781.)

15 See Ibid. where Rabbi Levi Yitzchok explained that at Moshe's birth too, we find two stages, revelation then concealment (וְהִתְרַצְּוּ... וְהִתְעַפְּנוּ), and how this was the forerunner for his receiving and transmitting the revealed and hidden dimensions of Torah later in his life.

also the one who brought us the Torah. Thus, the two parts of Torah are hinted at in Moshe's *matzah* (*Levi*).



Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Igros Kodesh, pgs. 225-231.
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 4, ch. 31)

שבועות

SHAVUOS

The Two Loaves

מִמּוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם תָּבִיאוּ לֶחֶם תְּנוּפָה שְׁתֵּי שָׁנִי
עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֵלֶת תַּהְיֶינָה חֲמֵץ תֵּאֲפִינָה בְּכֹרִים לַיהוָה

FROM YOUR DWELLING PLACES, YOU SHALL BRING
BREAD, SET ASIDE, TWO [LOAVES] [MADE FROM] TWO
TENTHS [OF AN EIPHAH]; THEY SHALL BE OF FINE FLOUR,
[AND] THEY SHALL BE BAKED LEAVENED (*Emor, 23:17*)

Introduction: On Shavuos, there was an offering in the Beis HaMikdash called the שְׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם, the Two Loaves of Bread. This *Korban Mincha* (grain-based offering) was brought from the new wheat harvest. It was part of the *Bikkurim* (first produce yield offering). Other than the לֶחֶם הַפְּנִים (showbread) it was the only offering that was leavened (*chametz*).

Driving Questions:

1. What is the deeper¹ significance of the two loaves of bread?
2. Why was this offering specifically leavened bread?²

This can be understood through analyzing and explaining the last verse of the Haftorah for Parshas Bamidbar which is always read a week or two before Shavuos. The verse states,³ “וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי”³ וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי “³ And I will betroth you to Me with faith, and you shall know the Lord.”

At first glance the verse appears contradictory. First it mentions that the relationship between G-d and the Jewish People is through faith and then it immediately adds that this is through knowledge.

In his explanation, R’ Levi Yitzchak elaborates on the idea that this verse is alluding to the two holidays of Pesach and Shavuos (and what they represent), which are deeply connected to one another. This inherent connection is evident from what G-d tells Moshe at the *S’neh* (burning bush)⁴ “When you take the people out of Egypt, they will worship G-d on this mountain.”⁵ Thus the start of the Exodus process was linked with its final purpose — receiving the Torah.

-
- 1 The simple idea, according to many commentaries (See Ramban & Sforno) is that this is a thanksgiving offering for the new harvest, which is why Shavuos is also called *Chag HaKatzir* (Harvest Festival) and *Yom HaBikurim* (Day of First Produce). But, there are always layers of meaning and depth beyond the surface.
 - 2 Most other meal offerings were unleavened. This is one of two exceptions.
 - 3 Hoshe’a, 2:22.
 - 4 Shemos, 3:12.
 - 5 Referring to Mount Sinai, since the burning bush was on Mount Sinai.

It is for this reason that the two festivals, Pesach and Shavuos, are closely connected and are in several ways seen as an extension of one another.⁶

The first part of the verse, “And I will betroth you to Me with faith,” refers to Pesach when we eat matzah known in the Zohar⁷ as *מִיִּקְלָא דְמַהֲיָמְנוּתָא* “the bread of faith.”⁸ The second part, “and you shall know the Lord,” refers to Shavuos when two loaves of leavened bread were offered in the Beis Hamikdash.

Bread is a staple of nourishment and the Torah is compared to bread,⁹ which nourishes one’s mind and soul, with knowledge and wisdom. R’ Levi Yitzchak explains that just as there are two loaves of bread on Shavuos, there are similarly two parts of Matzah on Pesach.

The middle Matzah used at the Seder and known as the Levi, is the primary Matzah for the Mitzva and is broken into two parts. The smaller part is revealed as we recite the Haggadah, it is then consumed, while the larger half is initially hidden and later eaten for the Afikoman.

Similarly in Torah there are two parts: *Nigleh* and *Nistar*, the revealed¹⁰ and the hidden.¹¹

6 There is no date for Shavuos in the Torah, rather it is marked as the 50th day counting from Pesach, signifying that it is the culmination of the Exodus.

7 Zohar Vol. 2, 183b.

8 The Jewish People’s relationship to Hashem was in its infantile stages and purely faith-based. Their Exodus into a barren desert was an act of faith.

9 Midrash, Bereishis Rabba 70:5. לֶחֶם, זוֹ תוֹרָה, דְּקָתִיב (משלי ט, ה): לֶכְנִי לֶחֶם וּבְלֶחֶם מִי.

10 Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, Halacha etc.

11 Kabbalah, Agada, Chassidus etc.

Thus, the two halves of the Matzah, one revealed and one hidden,¹² parallel the two loaves of bread — both corresponding to the two dimensions of Torah, revealed and hidden, the exoteric and the esoteric.¹³

The message here is: There is a progression in our relationship with Hashem through Torah. At the outset it is faith-based, which forms the foundation of what will follow, but as it develops and is nurtured it evolves into an intimate knowledge. Furthermore, just as the two halves of the Matzah originate in one whole, so is a holistic approach to Torah one which includes both the revealed and the hidden dimensions.



In R' Levi Yitzchok's own words

וְהִנֵּה יָדוּעַ שְׂנֵי צִיּוֹת מִצְרִים בְּפֶסַח הוּא הַקִּדְמָה לְמִתֵּן תּוֹרָה בְּשָׁבוּעוֹת, כְּמוֹ שְׂאֵרוֹסִין, וְאִרְשֻׁתֶיךָ לִי בְּאֻמוֹנָה" בְּפֶסַח, הוּא הַקִּדְמָה לְנִשְׁוֹאִין "בְּיוֹם חֲתַנְתּוֹ זֶה מִתֵּן תּוֹרָה". וְאִם אֵין אִרוֹסִין אֵין נִשְׁוֹאִין, וְכִמוֹ שְׂכָתוֹב "זֶה לְךָ הָאוֹת בְּהוֹצִיאֲךָ אֶת הָעָם מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּעֲבֹדוּן אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים עַל הָהָר הַזֶּה". וְהֵינּוּ עַל יְדֵי אֲכִילַת מִצָּה בְּפֶסַח, שְׂמִצָּה הִיא מִיְכָלָא דְמַהִימְנוּתָא, "וְאִרְשֻׁתֶיךָ לִי בְּאֻמוֹנָה", עַל יְדֵי זֶה נַעֲשֶׂה הַנִּשְׁוֹאִין בְּשָׁבוּעוֹת, "וְיָדַעְתָּ אֶת הָיוֹי". וַיֵּשׁ לֹאמֹר זֶהוּ "אִם אֵין קָמַח אֵין תּוֹרָה", הֵינּוּ "אִם אֵין קָמַח" לְאֲכִילַת מִצָּה בְּפֶסַח "אֵין תּוֹרָה", מִתֵּן תּוֹרָה בְּשָׁבוּעוֹת. (וְהוּא גַם בֵּן "כָּל הַמְקִיִּם אֶת הַתּוֹרָה מֵעַנִּי", דְּלַחֵם עֵנִי בְּפֶסַח, בְּחִינַת אֻמוֹנָה, "סוּפָה לְקִימָה מֵעֶשֶׂר" בְּבַחֲיִנַת דַּעַת, "וְיָדַעְתָּ", בְּשָׁבוּעוֹת וְהוּא הַשְּׁהִי

12 See Chayus for Parshas Bo, where R' Levi Yitzchak explains why the Matzah is broken into a larger and smaller piece and how the hidden and revealed parts of Torah are large vs. small. See also Chayus for Shemos where this is connected to Moshe Rabbeinu being hidden and then revealed (the previous issues are downloadable at Chayenu.org/Chayus).

13 The Zohar (vol. 1, pg. 260 in השמטות, quoted in Likkutei Torah of the Alter Rebbe, Tzav 17d.) mentions that the Two Loaves correspond to the Written and Oral Torah. However, the concept mentioned here is a novelty (chiddush) of R' Levi Yitzchok.

לָחֶם שְׂמֵחָמֵץ בַּשְּׁבִיעוֹת, שְׂחֵמֵץ אֵינוֹ לָחֶם עֲנִי. ... (וּלְנֶגֶד אֱלוֹ הֵב' חֲלָקִים
 שְׂבִיתוֹרָה, הוּא שְׂתֵי הַלֶּחֶם, שְׂתֵי דוֹקָא.) וּבָשִׂם שֶׁב' חֲלָקֵי הַמִּצָּה הֵם מִמִּצָּה אֶחָד
 גּוֹפָא, שְׂחֵלְקוּהָ לְשָׁנִים, כְּמוֹ בֵן ב' חֲלָקֵי הַתּוֹרָה נִגְלָה וְנִסְתָּר אֵינָם שְׂתֵי תּוֹרוֹת
 חֶסֶד וְשָׁלוֹם, רַק תּוֹרָה אֶחָת גּוֹפָא הַנִּחְלָקֶת לְשָׁנִים, וְכֵמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב "תּוֹרָה אֶחָת"
 כו', וְכַמוֹבֵן).

Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, Igros Kodesh, pp. 231-232
Yalkut Levi Yitzchak Al HaTorah, Vol. 4, ch. 31. (and ch. 12)

הרבנית חנה שניאורסון

FROM THE “MEMOIRS OF REBBETZIN CHANA”



...I RECALL MY HUSBAND DESCRIBING HOW HE FELT UPON ARRIVING IN Alma Ata in 1940, after eleven months of constant surveillance in prison. He was told he was free to go on his own wherever he wanted, except beyond the boundaries of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Despite the latter limitation, he felt such a sense of freedom. It was difficult for him to imagine no one was following or watching him. He felt a strong desire to share his joy with someone, and doubtless it would have been an opportunity to expound on this. But there wasn't even a single fellow-Jew with whom to converse, and he had no choice but to continue stifling this desire, although it was now for a different reason than before.¹

1 I.e. it wasn't by compulsion, as it had been previously, but because he had no one available with whom to share his feelings.

He told me this two months later [after I joined him there], yet, while relating it, he deeply relived that experience.

His life was tragic and after his passing the situation remains tragic. Throughout his life he wrote down so many of his Torah insights. Thousands of pages of his writings were left in his study at our home [in Yekaterinoslav], which was later destroyed by Hitler. As for his other writings on Chasidism and Kabbalah during the course of his six years of wandering—until two weeks before his passing—I left them in Moscow. Friends took them from me and concealed them in various hiding places.² Who knows where they are now?...

Publishing Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's works

Several weeks have passed, but I feel no better, and perhaps even weaker. It could be this is just a temporary feeling which will improve.

I would like to make a wish that I will see publication of the letters of my husband, of blessed memory, which are extant.³ Something ought to be published from such a personality, such a flowing “wellspring” of incessant Torah thought, never ceasing even a moment, who, when he had no one to address, would write down his thoughts on paper in installments.

Certainly I am entitled to hope for this, after all that I have witnessed in my life. In any event, it is something that ought to

2 See the Rebbe's letters of 6 Kislev, 5718; Tevet, 5720 (Igrot Kodesh, vol. 16, p. 128; vol. 19, p. 117ff.).

3 The Rebbetzin is referring here to her husband's letters and accompanying writings sent to his son, the Rebbe, from 1927 to 1939. At that time, the volumes of Zohar with Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's handwritten comments around the margins had not yet been brought out of the Soviet Union. See the following footnote.

come about. I can do nothing to help it happen, but my desire for it is strong and I hope it will happen.⁴

Date: After 15 Shevat, 5713 (1953)

(Memoirs of Rebbetzin Chana, Part 35⁵)

The life of my husband, of blessed memory, was tragic, and the same is true after he left this world. It would be desirable that there be some memorial to him. It appears to me that some of his writings could be published. But perhaps not? There are probably good reasons [why they are not being published yet].

Thursday, Kislev, 5715

(Memoirs of Rebbetzin Chana - Part 38⁶)

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-
- 4 On 20 Menachem Av, 5729 (1969, the 25th anniversary of his father's passing), after the Minchah service, the Rebbe gave the following instructions: his father's comments written on the margins of the volumes of Zohar and Tanya (that had been brought to him in his place of exile by his mother) should be typeset for publication.

The following is a listing of the publication dates of the extant works by R. Levi Yitzchak:

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on Tanya: Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5730 (1970)

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on Zohar, Bereishit: Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5730 (1970)

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on Zohar, Shemot-Devarim: Purim, (1971)

Torat Levi Yitzchak on the Talmud (Mishnah and Gemara): 20 Menachem Av, 5731 (1971)

Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on assorted Scriptural verses and Rabbinic passages, together with his letters to his son, the Rebbe: Erev Shabbat Mevarchim Menachem Av, 5732 (1972)

- 5 For the full Memoir, in English, visit: Lahak.org/2980304

- 6 For the full Memoir visit Lahak.org/2980306

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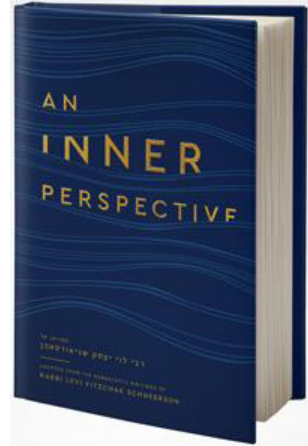
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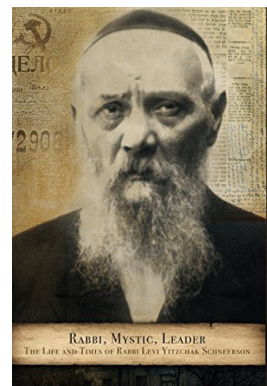
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EFFORTS IN ORGANIZING THE CHARTER FLIGHT
TO ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN FOR THE
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