

**ONE THOUSAND AND EIGHTY-TWO**  
**SELECTED PASSAGES**

**FROM**

**THE ZOHAR**

**Compiled by REUVEN BRAUNER**

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**ראובן בראונר**

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**26 Teves 5776**

Dedicated in the Memory of  
My Dear Grandparents of Blessed Memory

They never knew their grandchildren, and none of us knew them.

**Rubin and Bertha Brauner**  
Erfurt

**ר' חונה ראובן בן שיע הלוי בראונר ז"ל**  
**מרת ברטה בת משה (אייזמן) הי"ד**

**Menashe and Hinda Kampler**  
Frankfurt-am-Main

**ר' מנשה בן חיים הכהן קמפּלר הי"ד**  
**מרת הינדה בת יוסף (קרצר) הי"ד**



**ולע"נ ר' מאיר שמואל בן יוסף יהודה ליב ואסתר ז"ל**



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Some say that the practices and viewpoints expressed by the Zohar conflict with Talmudic rulings. As such, the reader should consult with accepted Halachic codes and a rabbi for the practical Halacha.

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he following pages present a selection of over a thousand passages from Judaism's most fundamental and influential work on Jewish mystical thought, the Zohar. These representative sections were chosen for their general interest, perceptiveness and straight-forward nature, that is, those which do not require any training in or previous exposure to Kabbalistic terminology or concepts.

The selections herein have all been drawn from the scholarly Simon/Sperling/Levertoff translation (Soncino Press, 1934) of the first Jewish-printed edition of the Zohar, printed in Mantua in 1558, with minor editorial adjustments necessary for accommodating this sort of compilation.

### Notes

- 1) Each passage concludes with a reference to its page number in the Mantua Edition and may differ from other versions of the Zohar. Numbering begins anew for each of the Five Books of the Torah.
- 2) A number of ideas are repeated in this work, as they are in the Zohar itself. As a rule, the first presentation of a particular passage has been presented. However, when a passage is repeated, it is due to an interesting nuance or because the passage nicely fits the topic there being discussed.
- 3) Since the original text is often ambiguous regarding the speaker, and numerous passages are quoted anonymously, most should probably be attributed to R' Shimon bar Yochai, the chief protagonist of this work.
- 4) For the most part, passages have been avoided which deal with fundamental and more serious Kabbalistic concepts such as the Siferos, the Emanations, the symbolism of materials and colors, the Higher and Lower Spheres, angelology, the concept of the "Grades", or of the "Other Side", Right and Left, the Divine Chariot, numerologies, permutations of the letters, and so forth.

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## Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the great assistance of my good friend and Gemara Rebbe, Rabbi Bruce (Chanoch) Goldberg of Raanana, Israel who spent many hours of his valuable time reviewing numerous Halachic issues discussed herein. Rabbi Goldberg was invaluable in tracking down many of the references found in the footnotes, the completeness of which owes a great debt to his efforts. The breadth of his encyclopedic knowledge of Talmudic and Halachic sources is only surpassed by his patience with me and my vexatious questions. May Hashem grant him health, and success in all his endeavors.

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Reuven Brauner  
Raanana, Israel  
January 6, 2016

## Abbreviations

*CM: Choshen Mishpot; OC: Orech Chaim; R': Rabbi; SA: Shulchon Aruch; YD: Yoreh Deyoh*



## FOREWORD

**T**he Holy Zohar, as it has been called, is the quintessential book of the Kabbalah and the crown of all Jewish Mystical wisdom literature. The book offers tantalizing, sublime explanations of the deep esoteric matters hinted at in the Torah, those most mysterious matters concerning the meaning of life and the purpose of all existence itself.

It addresses the fundamental questions of why God created the universe, and what role Man has been designated to fulfill in this vast, confusing and complex cosmos.

It speaks of Good and Evil, sin and repentance, the role of Male and Female, what exists Above and what lies Below.

Tradition has it that it was composed by the Tanna Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his son Rabbi Eleazar during their thirteen years of refuge in a cave during the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman persecutions. Hidden for hundreds of years, it was introduced to the world by the 13<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Kabbalist Rabbi Moses de Leon, but not without much controversy about its true authorship and authenticity as an ancient work. Some have suggested that there are parts which are forgeries.

Be that as it may, the Zohar, as we have it, has been accepted as a legitimate Jewish text by virtually every Jewish scholar since its introduction, if not in its entirety, certainly the majority of the composition and its concepts. This profound book has been deemed “unquestionably sacred.....even if we do not know who its true authors were” (R' Jacob Emden in *Mitpachas Seforim*, p. 36).

What is most noteworthy is how this book has captured the imaginations of generations of Jews and opened up the world, Jewish and Gentile, to the enigmatic understandings and insights of the essence of the Creation, and matters of the nature of the Divine.

It has been suggested that only the Torah and the Talmud have had more of an impact on what we today call Judaism, its *Weltanschauung* and practices, than has had the Zohar.



# PROLOGUE

## PROLOGUE

1. *"In the Beginning"*.<sup>1</sup> Rav Hamnuna the Venerable said: We find here a reversal of the order of the letters of the Alphabet, the first two words, **ברא** **בראשית**, *"In the beginning He created"* commence with **ב**, whereas the following two words, **אלוקים** **את** commence with **א**. The reason is as follows.

When the Holy One, blessed be He, was about to make the world, all the letters of the Alphabet were still embryonic. For two thousand years the Holy One, blessed be He, had contemplated them and toyed with them. When He came to create the world, all the letters presented themselves before Him in reverse order.

The letter **ת** advanced in front and pleaded, "May it please You, O Lord of the world, to place me first in the Creation of the World seeing that I am the concluding letter of **אמת**, Truth, which is engraved upon Your seal. Seeing that You are called by this very name of **אמת**, it is most appropriate for the King to begin with the final letter of **אמת** and create the world." The Holy One, blessed be He, said to her, "You are worthy and deserving, but it is not proper that I begin the Creation of the world with you since you are destined to serve as a mark on the foreheads of the faithful ones (vide Ezekiel 9:4<sup>2</sup>) who have kept the Torah from **א** to **ת**. Through the absence of this mark, the rest will be

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<sup>1</sup> This long discussion is absent in some other editions of the Zohar.

<sup>2</sup> "And God said to him, 'Pass through the midst of the city...and mark a sign (ת) on the foreheads of men, etc.'" i.e. the righteous, as protection from the fate of the sinners.

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killed. Further, you form the conclusion of **מוֹת** (death). Hence, you are not suitable to initiate the Creation of the world.”

The **ש** then came to the fore and pleaded, “O Lord of the world, may it please You to begin the world with me, seeing that I am the initial letter of Your Name **ש-ר-י** (Almighty), and it is most fitting to create the world through that Holy Name.” Said He in reply, “You are worthy, you are good, you are true, but I may not begin the Creation of the World through you since you form part of the group of letters expressing forgery, **שקר** (falsehood) which is not able to exist unless, the **ק** and the **ר** draw you into their company. Hence, a lie, to obtain credence, must always commence with something true. For the **ש** is a letter of truth, that letter by which the Patriarchs communed with God<sup>3</sup>. But the **ק** and the **ר** are letters belonging to the Evil Side<sup>4</sup> which, in order to stand firm, attach themselves to the **ש**, thus forming a conspiracy (**שקר**).” Having heard all this, the **ש** departed.

Enters the **צ** and says, “O Lord of the world, may it please You to create the world with me, since I am the sign of the righteous, **צדיק** and of Yourself Who is called Righteous, as it is written, “*For the Lord is righteous, He loves righteousness*” (Ps. 11:7). Hence, it is proper to create the world with me.” The Lord answered saying, “O **צ**, you are **צדיק**, and you signify Righteousness. But you must be concealed. You may not come out in the open so much lest you give the world cause for offense. For you consist of the letter **נ** surmounted by the letter **י** (representing together the Male and the Female principles).” And this is the mystery of the creation of the first man, who was created with two faces (male and female combined). In the same way, the **נ** and the **י** in the **צ** are turned back to back and not face to face<sup>5</sup>, whether the **צ** is upright or turned downwards<sup>6</sup>. She then departed.

<sup>3</sup> The reference here is unclear.

<sup>4</sup> There is no explanation as to the meaning of this here. Neither of these letters makes any independent attempt to promote itself for the job at hand.

<sup>5</sup> This is in accordance with the Ksav Ha’Ari whereby the right side of the **צ** faces to the right. The more popular Ksav Beis Yosef has the “י” face left, as with the “נ” portion. This is one of several

## PROLOGUE

The letter **ב** presented herself and pleaded thus, "May it please You, O Lord of the world, to create through me the world seeing that I signify redemption and deliverance (**פְּרוּקְנִיָּה** and **פְּרוּת**) which You are to vouchsafe to the world. It is hence fitting that through me the world be created." The Lord answered, "You are worthy, but you represent transgression (**פְּשָׁע**) and, moreover, you are shaped like the Serpent who had his head curled up within his body, symbolic of the guilty man who bends his head and extends his hand."

The letter **ע** was likewise refused as it stands for iniquity (**עוֹן**), despite her plea that she also represents humility (**עֲנוּוָה**).

Then the **ד** appeared and said, "O Lord of the world, may it please You to create through me the world, inasmuch as I represent upholding (**סוּמָךְ**) of the fallen, as it is written, "*The Lord supports all that falls*" (Ps. 145:14). The Lord answered her, "This is just the reason why you should remain in your place. For should you leave it, what will be the fate of the fallen, seeing that they are upheld by you?" She immediately departed.

The **נ** entered and pleaded her merits as being the initial letter in "*Too awesome (נורא) for praises*" (Ex. 15:11), as well as in "*Comely (נאוה) is praise for the righteous*" (Ps. 33:1). The Lord said, "O **נ**, return to your place, for it is for your sake (as representing the falling, **נופלים**) that the **ד** returned to her place. Remain, therefore, under her support." The **נ** immediately returned to her place.

The **כ** came up and said, "O Lord of the world, may it please You to create the world by me inasmuch as I commence the word **מֶלֶךְ** (king) which is Your title." The Lord replied, "It is so assuredly, but I cannot employ you in the Creation of the World for the reason that the world requires a King. Return, therefore, to your place, you along with the **ל** and the **ב** since the world cannot exist without a **מֶלֶךְ**."

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letters which are different between the two types of script used by Ashkenazim for Sifrei Torah, Tefillin and Mezuzohs (STAM). Sephardim use a squarer script called **רליש**.

<sup>6</sup> I believe that upright refers to the **צ** while downwards refers to the **ץ**.

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At that moment the **נ** descended from its Throne of Glory, and quaking and trembling said, "O Lord of the universe, may it please You to begin the Creation of the World through me seeing that I am Your own **נבוֹד** (honor)." And when the **נ** descended from its Throne of Glory, two hundred thousand worlds began to shake, the Throne trembled, and all the worlds quaked and were about to fall to ruins. Said to her the Holy One, blessed be His Name, "**נ, נ**, what are you doing here? I will not create the world with you. Go back to your place, since you stand for extermination (**בלה**). Return, then, to your place and remain there." Immediately she departed and returned to her own place.

The letter **ו** then presented herself and said, "May it please You, O Lord, to bestow me first place in the Creation of the World, since I stand first in the Sacred Name." The Lord said to her, "It is sufficient for you that you are engraved and marked in Myself and you are the channel of My Will. You must not be removed from My Name."

The **ט** then came up and said, "O Lord of the universe, may it please You to place me at the head in the Creation of the World, since through me You are called Good (**טוב**) and upright." The Lord said to her, "I will not create the world through you, as the goodness which you represent is hidden and concealed within you, as it is written, "*How abundant is Your goodness (**טובך**) which You have stored away for those who fear You*" (Ps. 31:20). Since then it is treasured within you, it has no part in the world which I am going to create, but only in the World to Come. And further, it is because your goodness is hidden within you that the gates of the Temple sank into the ground as it is written, "*Her gates are sunk (**טבעו**) in the ground*" (Lam. 2:9). And furthermore, the letter **ת** is at your side, and when joined you form sin (**חט**). (It is for this reason that these two letters are not to be found in the names of any of the tribes.) She departed immediately<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> There is no separate discussion regarding the letter **ת**. Maybe it is obvious that since it is the first letter of **חטא**, as just pointed out, it was not a worthy candidate.

## PROLOGUE

Then the ו presented herself and put forth her claim, saying, "O Lord of the world. May it please You to put me at the head of the Creation, since I represent the observance of the Sabbath (שבת), as it is written, "Remember (זכור) the Sabbath day to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). The Lord replied, "I will not create the world through you, since you represent war, being in the shape like a sharp-pointed sword or lance." The ו immediately departed from His Presence.

The ו entered and put forth her claim saying, "O Lord of the world. May it please You to use me first in the Creation of the World inasmuch as I am one of the letters of Your Name." Said the Lord to her, "You, ו, as well as ה suffice it for you that you are of the letters of My Name, part of the mystery of My Name, engraved and impressed in My Name. I will thus not give you first place in the Creation of the World."

Then appeared the letter ט as well as the letter ל and put forth similar claims. The Lord gave them a similar reply, saying, "The poor will not cease from the Land" (Deut. 15:11), who will thus need benevolence. For the ט signifies poverty (דלות) and the ל beneficence (גמול). Therefore, separate not from each other, and let it suffice you that one maintains the other."

The ב then entered and said, "O Lord of the world. May it please You to put me first in the Creation of the World since I represent the benedictions (ברכות) offered to You on High and Below." The Holy One, blessed be He, said to her, "Assuredly, with you I will create the world, and you shall form the beginning in the Creation of the World."

The ש remained in her place without presenting herself. Said the Holy One, blessed be His Name, "ש, ש, why do you not come before Me like the rest of the letters?" She answered, "Because I saw all the other letters leaving Your Presence without any success. What, then, could I achieve there? And further, since You have already bestowed on the letter ב this great gift, it is not befitting for the Supreme King to take away the gift which He has made to His servant and give it to

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another.”<sup>8</sup> The Lord said to her, “**א** ,**א**, although I will begin the Creation of the World with the **א**, you will remain the first of the letters. My unity shall not be expressed except through you. Through and by you shall be based all calculations and operations of the world and unity shall not be expressed save by the letter **א**.” (2b-3b<sup>9</sup>)

2. R' Shimon<sup>10</sup> opened his discourse with the text, “*And I put My words in your mouth*” (Isa. 51:16). How greatly is it incumbent on a man to study the Torah day and night! For the Holy One, blessed be He, is attentive to the voice of those who occupy themselves with Torah, and through each fresh discovery made by them in the Torah a new Heaven is created. Our teachers have told us that at the moment when a man expounds something new in the Torah, his utterance ascends before the Holy One, blessed be He, and He takes it up and kisses it and crowns it with seventy crowns of graven and inscribed letters. (4b)
3. Each word of which the purpose is not obvious contains some lesson of special value. (5a)
4. **ויכלו**<sup>11</sup> contains thirty-five words and the **קדוש** (sanctification blessing) contains thirty-five<sup>12</sup> words, making together seventy, corresponding to the seventy names of the Holy One, blessed be He. (5b)
5. R' Abba said: It is assuredly true, as we have been taught, that whenever the righteous on their journey busy themselves with expositions of the Torah, they are favored by visits from the Other World. (7a)

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<sup>8</sup> In other editions of the Zohar the **א** is rejected because it is the first letter of the word **ארוך**, cursed.

<sup>9</sup> This section is from a short Prologue which is found prior to the main body of the Zohar. It appears as part of the main body of text in other editions.

<sup>10</sup> This being Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai who is quoted extensively throughout the Zohar and to whom authorship of the Zohar is traditionally attributed.

<sup>11</sup> Referring to the paragraph recited at the beginning of the Friday night Kiddush.

<sup>12</sup> The standard version contains 45 words. Some recite a version shortened to achieve the total of 70 words, in conformance with this Mystical lesson.



## PROLOGUE

6. The sage is superior to the prophet. (7b)
7. R' Hamnuna discoursed, *"Let not your mouth bring guilt on your flesh"* (Eccl. 5:5). This is a warning to man not to utter with his mouth words that might suggest evil thoughts and so cause to sin the sacred body on which is stamped the Holy Covenant. For he who does this is dragged into Gehenna (גהיננום). (8a)
8. The incident of Bath-Sheba happened on the twenty-fourth of Elul. Another account - the incident of Bath-Sheba happened on the fifteenth of Elul. (8b)
9. A man should be on his guard not let slip an incautious word. (8b)
10. Everyone who keeps vigil with Her this night<sup>13</sup> will be guarded Above and Below and will complete the year in peace. (9a)
11. The holy angels do not pay attention to Aramaic, and do not understand it. (9b)
12. At the beginning of the day, when one rises in the morning, it is his duty to bless his Master as soon as he opens his eyes. The pious men of old would keep a cup of water by their side. When they awoke in the night they would wash their hands, rise up and occupy themselves in the study of Torah, having first pronounced the appropriate blessing<sup>14</sup>.

When the cock crows, it is precisely midnight, and at that moment the Holy One, blessed be He, is to be found in the company with the righteous in the Garden of Eden (גן עדן). It is then, therefore, proper to pronounce the benediction and study Torah.

One may not pronounce the benediction with unclean hands; so too, at any time when one rises up from his sleep. For while one is asleep, his soul departs from him and an impure spirit comes forth and settles on his hands and defiles them. Hence, one may not pronounce a blessing without first washing them.

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<sup>13</sup> i.e. Learns Torah on Shavuot night.

<sup>14</sup> Presumably the ברכת התורה

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Why then, one may ask, is it forbidden, after one has been to the toilet, to pronounce a blessing or to read even one word of Torah, even in the daytime, without washing the hands, although one has not been asleep and one's soul did not depart, and one's hands have not been defiled by an evil spirit? Why is it forbidden even if one's hands are quite clean? The answer is: Woe to those who pay no heed to the majesty of their Master, and do not realize on what this world is founded. There is a spirit in every toilet which feasts on filth and excrement, and settles forthwith on the fingers of a man's hands. (10b)

13. Whenever a banquet is given, the Accuser comes to spy out whether the owner has first dispensed charity and invited poor people to his house. If he finds that it is so, he departs without entering the house. But if not, he goes in and surveys the merry-making, and having taken note that no charity had been sent to the poor nor had any been invited to the feast, he ascends Above and brings accusations against the owner. (10b)
14. It is incumbent upon a man to occupy himself in the study of Torah day and night without cessation, in accordance with the text, "*And you shall meditate thereon day and night*" (Joshua 1:8). If he abandons such study, it is as though he abandons the Tree of Life. (11a)
15. When one goes to bed at night, he should wholeheartedly acknowledge the kingship of Heaven and entrust his soul to the keeping of Heaven. He will then immediately be guarded against all diseases and evil spirits, and they will have no power over him. In the morning, when he rises from his bed, he should bless his Master and proceed to His house, bow down before His sanctuary with awe<sup>15</sup>, and then offer up his prayer. (11a)

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<sup>15</sup> The Mogen Avraham at SA OC, Siman 93, Sif Koton א says, "Upon entering a synagogue, one should stop a moment and, in awe, say: 'ואני ברוב חסדיך וכו'' 'As for me, in the abundance of Your kindness, I will enter Your house; I will bow down before Your Holy Sanctuary in awe'" (Ps. 5:8).

## PROLOGUE

16. It is fitting to invoke the names of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob first<sup>16</sup>, and then enter the synagogue to offer up one's prayer. (11a)
17. There are three types of fear; two have no proper root, while the third is the real fear. There is the man who fears the Holy One, blessed be He, in order that his children may live and not die, or lest he be punished in his body or his possessions, and so he is in constant fear. Evidently, this is not the genuine fear of God. Another man fears the Holy One, blessed be He, because he is afraid of punishment in the Other World and the tortures of Gehenna. This is a second type which is not genuine fear. The genuine type is that which makes a man fear his Master because He is the Mighty Ruler, the Rock and foundation of all worlds, before Whom all existing things are as nothing, as it has been said, *"And all the inhabitants of the Earth are as nothing"* (Dan. 4:32), and place his goal in that spot which is called יראָה (awe)<sup>17</sup>. (11b)
18. He who cherishes fear observes the whole Torah, and he who does not cherish fear does not observe the other precepts of the Torah, since it is the gate of all. (11b)
19. One should love his Master with perfect love, that which is called "Great Love". R' Eleazar explained, "Great Love" is the love which is complete through the union of two phases, without which it is not genuine love. This is signified by the dictum that the love of the Holy One, blessed be He, has two aspects. There is, for instance, the man who loves Him because he has riches, length of life, children, power over his enemies, success in all his undertakings - all these form the motive of his love. Should the Holy One, blessed be He, turn the wheel of fortune against him and bring suffering upon him, he will change and his love will be no more. This kind of love has no root. Perfect love

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<sup>16</sup> The Zohar explains that וְאֵיךְ חֲסִידֵיךְ refers to Abraham, אֲשֶׁתְּחֹהוּ אֵל הַיְכָל קִדְשֶׁךָ refers to Isaac, and בִּירְאֶתְךָ refers to Jacob.

<sup>17</sup> Although typically used interchangeably, I offer that there is a difference between the terms פֶּחַד and יִרְאָה, the first designates fear of punishment or harm, and the latter term refers to awe in the sense of wonderment and overwhelming amazement which causes a person to reflect on how relatively small and insignificant he is, thus leading to veneration and respect.

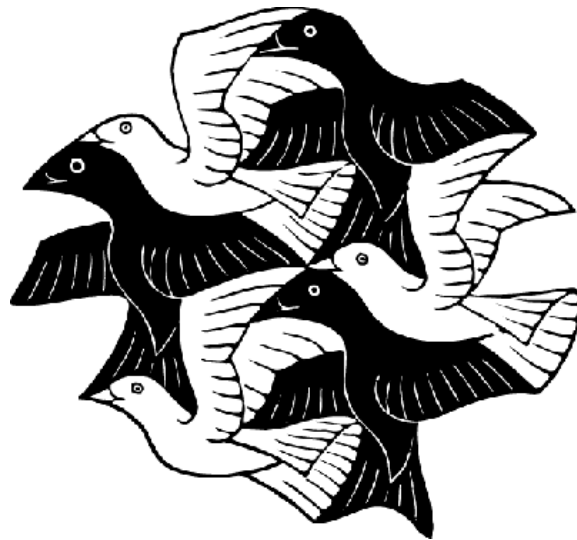
## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

is the kind which remains steadfast in both phases, whether of affliction or prosperity. (11b-12a)

20. Through chastisement, a man becomes filled with the true fear of God and does not harden his heart. (12a)
21. We are to combine the names of אֱלֹהִים and יְקוֹק in the consciousness that they form an indivisible unity. (12a)
22. It behooves a man to labor in the study of Torah and to strive to make progress in it daily, so as, thereby, to fortify his soul and his spirit. For when one occupies himself in the study of Torah, he becomes endowed with an additional and holy soul. (12b)
23. The man who does not occupy himself with the study of Torah has no holy soul, and the Heavenly holiness does not rest upon him. (12b)
24. Marital intercourse of the wise and learned men is weekly, from Sabbath to Sabbath. (14a/b)
25. People who perform their conjugal intercourse immodestly and by the light of the candle have the result that the children born of such intercourse are epileptics, being possessed by spirits of the "evil power", which are the nude spirits of the wicked, called demons (שְׁדִים). (14b)
26. Our teachers, of blessed memory, said: There are three persons who bring evil upon themselves. One is the man who utters a curse against himself. The second is he who throws a piece of bread the size of an olive onto the floor. The third is he who lights his candle at the close of the Sabbath before the congregation has reached the recital of "Sanctification" at the close of the Service. (14b)
27. It is not lawful to kindle a light at the close of the Sabbath before Israel has pronounced the "Separation Blessing" in the prayer, and the

## PROLOGUE

**“Separation Blessing” over the cup as, until that time, it is still Sabbath and the sanctity of the Sabbath still rests on us. (14b)**



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### *BEREISHIS*

### בראשית

- 28.** For a hundred and thirty years, Adam had intercourse with female spirits until Naamah was born. She, by her beauty, led astray the “sons of God”, Uzza and Azael, and bore them children. And so from her went forth evil spirits and demons into the world. She wanders about at nighttime, vexing the sons of men and causing them to defile themselves. Wherever these spirits find people sleeping alone in a house, they hover over them, lay hold of them and cleave to them, inspire desire in them and beget from them. They further inflict diseases on them without their being aware. (19b)
- 29.** A woman enjoys no honor save in conjunction with her husband. (20a)
- 30.** The male rules by the day to regulate his household and to bring food and sustenance to it. When night arrives, the female takes command. The dominion of the day belongs to the male and dominion of the night to the female. (20b)
- 31.** Man’s fingers symbolize the mystic Grades of the Upper World which are divided into front and back. The latter are outside and are symbolized by the fingernails. It is, therefore, permissible to look at the fingernails at the expiry of Sabbath by the light of the candle. But it is not permissible to look at the fingers from the inside by the light of the candle. Therefore one should not look at his fingers from the inside

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when he recites the blessing, "Creator of the lights of the fire". (20b-21a)

32. A woman may not do anything without the consent of her husband. (22a)
33. Said the colleagues: If so, why was Man, after all, created? R' Shimon replied: If God had not created Man with good and evil inclination, which correspond to light and darkness, created Man would have been capable neither of virtue nor of sin. But now that he has been created with both, it is written, "*See, I have set before you this day life and death*" (Deut. 30:19). They said to him: Still why all this? Would it not have been better that he should not have been created and so not have sinned, thereby causing so much mischief Above, and that he should have neither punishment or reward? He replied: It was just and right that he should be created in this way, because for his sake the Torah was created in which are inscribed punishments for the wicked and rewards for the righteous, these are only for the sake of created Man. They said: Of a truth we have heard now that we never knew before. Certainly God created nothing that was not required. (23a)
34. When a person sins it is as though he strips the Divine Presence (שכינה – the Shechina) of her vestments, and that is why he is punished. When he carries out the precepts of the Torah, it is as though he clothes the Divine Presence in her vestments. (23b)
35. It is well to preface one's prayer with the verse, "*But He is merciful and forgives iniquity, etc.*" (Ps. 78:38) (23b)
36. When an Israelite wearing Tzitzis (fringes) and Tefillin (phylacteries) prays with devotion, then the words of the Torah are fulfilled, "*All the peoples of Earth shall see the Name of the Lord is called upon You and they shall fear You*" (Deut. 28:10). (23b)
37. When reciting the Amida prayer during the weekdays, one should stand like a poor man at the king's gate on account of the Divine

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Presence, and he should clothe it in the vestment of the fringes. He should stand in his תפלין like a beggar at the gate when he begins with the נני-ס. (23b)

38. The study of the Talmud is bitter compared with that of the esoteric wisdom<sup>18</sup>. (27a)
39. Idolatry has its root in the liver. Bloodshed has its root in the gall. Incest has its root in the spleen. (27b)
40. Whoever sins by murder, idolatry and incest bans his soul through the liver, the gall and the spleen, and is punished in Gehenna in these three members. (27b)
41. The Moon is the cause of croup in children. It is also the cause of other misfortunes. (33b)
42. It is forbidden to make an appointment with a woman without her husband, for fear of suspicion of adultery. (36a)
43. This sin (Eve's taking the fruit) is the cause of menstruation which keeps a woman apart from her husband. (36a)
44. R' Isaac said: The generations which followed in the steps of Seth were all pious and righteous. Subsequently, as mankind spread and multiplied, they learned the arts of war which they practiced until Noah came and taught them the arts of peace and agriculture; for at first they used not to sow or reap, but afterwards they found this necessary, as it is written, "*While the Earth remained, seedtime and harvest, etc.*" (Gen. 8:22).

R' Eleazar said: God will one day re-establish the world and strengthen the spirit of the sons of men so that they may prolong their days forever, as it is written, "*For as the days of a tree, shall be the days*

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<sup>18</sup> I would imagine that many Talmudic scholars would disagree with this statement. This statement may also be a reflection of the tension that existed between strict Talmudists/Halachists and those who gravitated towards the Kabbala. Sort of a dig.



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*of my people, etc.” (Isa. 65:22) and also, “He has swallowed up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of His people shall He take away from all the Earth, for the Lord has spoken it” (Isa. 25:8). (38a)*

45. R' Judah said: The reason why it is written, *“And there was evening and there was morning”* for each day is to show that there is no day without night and night without day, and the two cannot be separated. (46a)
46. R' Eleazar said: All forces were latent in the Earth from the first day, but it did not spring forth its products until the sixth day, as it is written, *“Let the Earth bring forth living soul”*. True, it is written that on the third day, *“The Earth brought forth grass”*, but this only means that it brought its forces into a state of preparedness, and all its products remained latent in it until its due time. First it was *“void and without form”*, then it was duly prepared and furnished with seeds and with grass, plants and trees, and finally it put them forth. Similarly, the luminaries did not emit their light until their due time. (46b)
47. *“Let us make Man in our own image, after our own likeness”*.....so that Man should be unique in the world and ruler over all. (47a)
48. *“And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.”* God foresaw all and placed all potentiality in the work of Creation. (47a)
49. R' Eleazar discoursed on the text, *“How great is Your goodness which You have laid up for those who fear You, You have wrought for them who put their trust in You, before the sons of men”* (Ps. 31:20). He said: God created Man in the world and gave him the faculty to perfect himself in His service and to direct his ways so as to merit the enjoyment of the celestial light which God has hidden and reserved for the righteous, as it is written, *“Eye has not seen, O Lord, beside You what You will do for him who awaits You”* (Isa. 64:3). It is through the Torah that Man can make himself worthy of that light. For whoever studies Torah every day earns a share in the Future World, and is even accounted as a

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builder of worlds, because through the Torah the world has been built and completed.

So Scriptures says, *"The Lord founded the Earth with Wisdom (i.e., the Torah); He established the Heavens with Understanding"* (Prov. 3:19), and again, *"And I (the Torah) was a craftsman with Him; and I was His delight every day."* Thus, whoever studies the Torah completes the world and preserves it. Further, God made the world through a breath, and through a breath preserved it; the breath of those who assiduously study the Torah and still more the breath of schoolchildren when reciting their lesson. (47a)

50. The Holy Name does not rest on anything defective. (48b)
51. We require protection against demons and, therefore, the recital of the *"Hymn of Accidents<sup>19</sup>"* (Ps. 41) has been prescribed for every occasion when danger is threatened from them. For when Sabbath is sanctified on Friday evening, a Tabernacle of Peace descends from Heaven and is spread over the world. This Tabernacle of Peace is Sabbath, and when it comes down, all evil spirits and demons and the creatures which defile hide themselves within the orifice of the millstones of the chasm of the great abyss. For when sanctity spreads over the world, the spirit of uncleanness remains inactive, since the two shun one another. (48a)
52. Hence, the world is under special protection on Sabbath eve, and we are not required to say the prayer, "Who keeps his people Israel forever, Amen". This prayer has been prescribed for weekdays when protection is needed. But on Sabbath, a Tabernacle of Peace is spread over the world which is thus sheltered on all sides. Even the sinners in Gehenna are protected and all beings are at peace, both in the Upper and Lower Spheres. Therefore, we conclude our prayer with the words "Who spreads a Tabernacle of Peace over us and over all his people Israel and over Jerusalem." (The reason why Jerusalem is mentioned is because it is the abode of the Tabernacle.) Thus, it behooves us to

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<sup>19</sup> אשרי משכיל אל דל

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invite that tabernacle to spread itself over us and to rest upon us and to shield us as a mother shields her children, so that we should feel secure on every side.

See now, when Israel, by reciting this blessing, invite this Tabernacle of Peace to their homes as a holy guest, a divine sanctity comes down and spreads its wings over Israel like a mother encompassing her children. Then all evil spirits disappear from the world, and Israel is at rest under the sheltering sanctity of their Master. Further, this Tabernacle of Peace imparts new souls to her children. For souls have their abode in her and issue from her, so when she comes down and spreads her wings over her children, it sheds a new soul on each one of them."

R' Shimon said further: It is on this account that, as we have learned, the Sabbath is a mirror of the Future World. For this same reason, too, the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year mirror one another. This additional soul descends from the mystic force implied in the word זָכוֹר (remember) upon the Tabernacle of Peace being taken from the Future World. The tabernacle gives it to the holy people who are gladdened by it and enabled to forget all worldly matters and all their troubles and sorrows, thus realizing the words of the prophet, *"On the day that the Lord shall give you rest from your sorrow, and from your trouble, and from the hard service, etc."* (Isa. 14:3). (48a-b)

53. On Friday night, one should have a full course meal to show that this Tabernacle of Peace has been formed by a union of all principles, provided only that he leaves himself enough for one meal the next day or, according others (and this is more correct), for two meals. All the more so, of course, if he has more than enough left for the next day. For children, two dishes are enough (or the minimum) and so the Colleagues agreed. (48b)
54. The function of lighting the Sabbath light has been entrusted to the women of the holy people. The colleagues put it, "Woman put out the light of the world and brought darkness, etc.", and so we agree. There

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is, however, a more esoteric reason. This Tabernacle of Peace is the Matron of the world, and the souls which are the celestial lamp abide in her. Hence, it behooves the matron to kindle the light because, thereby, she is attaching herself to her rightful place and performing her rightful function.

A woman should kindle the Sabbath light with zest and gladness, because it is a great honor for her and, further, she qualifies herself to become the mother of holy offspring who will grow to be shining lights of learning and piety, and will spread peace in the world. She also procures long life for her husband. Hence, she should be very careful to observe this ceremony.

Observe that the words *"remember"* and *"keep"* in the commandment of the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8 and Deut. 5:12). Both apply equally to the day and to the night. Nevertheless, *"remember"* has a more special application to the man and *"keep"* to the woman, whose chief observance is at night." (48b)

55. The Oral Torah must not be studied by itself, but in conjunction with the Written Torah which then nourishes and supports it and provides all its needs. (48b)
56. When a man gives his daughter in marriage, up to the time of the wedding, the father and mother are responsible for her upkeep. Once she is married, the husband must support her and provide all her necessities. (48b)
57. Throughout Scriptures, worshippers of the Sun are called Servants of Baal, and worshippers of the Moon, Servants of Asherah. (49a)
58. It is incumbent on the father and the mother of the bride to transfer her to the charge of the bridegroom. (49a)
59. Of the father and mother it is written that they *"brought"*, but of the husband, he *"came"*, to show that he must obtain her permission (to marry). (49a)

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- 60.** A man who desires his wife's society must first entreat and coax her. If he cannot persuade her, he must not stay with her, for her companionship must be loving and unconstrained. (49a/b)
- 61.** Sexual intercourse is forbidden during the day<sup>20</sup>. (49b)
- 62.** Even a king who has a bed of gold with precious coverings, if his wife prepares for him a bed of stones, must leave his own bed and sleep on the one she prepares<sup>21</sup>. (49b)
- 63.** One should pray to God before he starts out on a journey in order to draw to himself the presence of his Master. (49b)
- 64.** All the time that one is on travel, he should be very careful of his actions in order that the Celestial Partner may not desert him and leave him defective, through lacking the union with the female. (49b-50a)
- 65.** When he does reach home again, it is his duty to give his wife some pleasure because it is she who procured for him this Heavenly Partner. He should be as diligent to procure this gladness as to procure the gladness of the Sabbath. "You shall know that your tent is peace". That is, since the Divine Presence comes with you and abides in your house "you shall visit your house and not sin" - by performing with gladness the religious duty of conjugal intercourse in the company of the Divine Presence. (50a)
- 66.** When the Sabbath comes, it is incumbent on students of the Torah to gladden their wives for the sake and honor of the Heavenly Partner, and to seek to perform the Will of their Master. (50a)

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<sup>20</sup> Actually, marital relations are only forbidden in a lit room. See SA OC 240:11. There it states "It is forbidden to have marital relations during the day, unless the house is darkened." The Mishneh Brura adds, "for doing so would be immodest behavior".

<sup>21</sup> This, as well as many other dictums, is repeated elsewhere, and sometimes often, in the Zohar. As a rule, I have quoted only the first place an adage is mentioned, unless there is an interesting nuance later.

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67. It is the husband's duty to gladden his wife through the happy performance of a religious precept. (50a)
68. For when one is at home, the foundation of his house is the wife. For it is on account of her that the Divine Presence does not depart from the house. (50a)
69. All colors seen in a dream are of a good foreboding, except blue<sup>22</sup>. (51b)
70. When God judges the world, He passes sentence only in accordance with the conduct of the majority. (53a)
71. When men sleep on their beds at night, and Night spreads her wings over the world, they have a foretaste of death and, in consequence, the unclean spirit is let loose in the world carrying pollution. In particular, it rests upon a man's hands and defiles them so that when he wakes up and his soul is restored to him, everything which he touches with his hands is rendered unclean. Hence, one should be careful when dressing not to take his garments from a person who has not washed his hands because, in this way, he draws upon himself the unclean spirit and becomes defiled.
- This spirit is authorized to settle in every place where there is the merest trace of the Side from which it issues. Hence, one should not let water be poured over his hands by one who has not yet washed his own hands because, in this way, he draws on himself the unclean spirit from contact with the one who pours the water over him. (53b)
72. The entire Torah can be expounded in seventy ways. (54a)
73. When one walks the path of truth, he goes towards the Right and attracts to himself a Holy Spirit from Above which, in turn, ascends with holy intent to attach itself to the Upper World and cleave to the Supernal Holiness. When, however, one walks in the path of evil, he

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<sup>22</sup> We shall see this repeated again below, and in more detail. The blue referred to is probably the תכלת.

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draws to himself an unclean spirit belonging to the Left Side which renders him impure. (54a)

74. Happy are the righteous who walk in the straight path, they being the truly righteous. Their children are also blessed, and of them it is written, *"For the upright shall dwell in the Earth"* (Prov. 2:21). (55a)
75. Lilith brings epilepsy on children. (55a)
76. When Adam was in the Garden of Eden, God sent down to him a book by the hand of Raziel, the angel in charge of the holy mysteries. (55b)
77. God does not place His abode in any place where male and female are not found together, nor are blessings found save in such a place, as it is written, *"And He blessed them and called their name Man on the day that they were created."* Note that it says *"them"* and *"their"* name, and not *"him"* and *"his"* name. The male is not even called Man until he is united with the female. (55b)
78. When God sees that a man who cleaves to Him and with whom He abides will one day degenerate, He takes him from the world prematurely. (56b)
79. The good die young in order that they may not degenerate. The wicked live on in order that they may have a chance to repent or in order that a virtuous progeny may issue from them. (56b)
80. If one cleaves to the evil imagination and follows after it, not only does he defile himself thereby, but he is led further into defilement. (56b)
81. One is called רשע (wicked) if he merely lifts his hand against his neighbor without doing him harm. One is called רע (evil) if he corrupts his ways and defiles himself. (57a)
82. When the time comes for God to pass sentence on sinners, although they have provoked Him every day, He is yet unwilling to destroy them, and though He sees their deeds, He is yet indulgent towards

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them because they are the work of His Hands and, therefore, He gives them respite. When, at last, He does come to execute judgment upon them, He is, as it were, grieved, since they are the work of His Hands, although it is written, "*Honor and majesty are before Him, strength and joy are in His place*" (Ps. 96:6). (57a)

83. Whenever destruction of the wicked takes place, there is grief for them Above. (57b)
84. Every sin which is committed openly repels the Divine Presence and causes her to remove her abode from this world. (57b)
85. Whenever mankind is virtuous and walks in the right path, God puts in motion the spirit of life from Above until it (the spirit) comes to the place where Jacob abides. (58a)
86. R' Jose said: When a man wants to take vengeance on another, he keeps his counsel and says nothing for fear that if he discloses his intention, the other will be on his guard and escape him. Not so God. Before punishing the world, God proclaims His intention once, twice and three times because there is no-one who can stay His Hand and say to Him, 'What are You doing?' and in vain would one attempt to guard against Him. So now God said, "*I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the Earth*". He proclaimed His intention to them by the hand of Noah, and warned them several times, but they would not listen. Then, at last, He executed judgment on them and exterminated them. (58a)
87. R' Jose said: The names of the righteous influence their destiny for good, and those of the wicked for evil. (58b)
88. Every man who fears God is secure in his faith, since he is whole-hearted in the service of his Master. But he who does not constantly fear his Master is not truly possessed of faith nor is he accounted worthy of a share in the Future World. (59a)



# NOAH

## *NOAH*

### נח

89. R' Hiya said: Happy are the people of Israel who occupy themselves with the Torah and are familiar with its paths, through following which they will merit the world to come. (59b)
90. The desire of the female towards the male only awakens when a certain spirit enters into her and the flow ascends to meet the male. (60b)
91. When a son is good, people mention his father's name with praise. But if he is bad, they mention his father with reproach. (60b)
92. R' Hiya said: When the sons of men are righteous and observe the Commandments of the Torah, the Earth becomes invigorated, and a fullness of joy pervades it because the Divine Presence rests upon the Earth and there is, thus, gladness Above, as well as Below. But, when mankind corrupt their ways and do not observe the commands of the Torah and sin before their Master, they, as it were, thrust the Divine Presence out of the world, and the Earth is thus left in a corrupt state. For when the Divine Presence is thrust out, another spirit comes and hovers over the world bringing with it corruption. (61a)
93. The Holy One, blessed be He, never inflicts punishment on the wicked before the full time, except when they interfere with Israel in order to do them harm. (61b)

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94. *“And Noah fathered three sons.”* Said R’ Hiya to R’ Judah: Let me tell you what I have heard regarding this text. A man once entered the recesses of a cavern and there issued two or three children together who differed from one another in their character and conduct. One was virtuous, a second vicious and the third, average. Similarly, we find three strands of spirits which flit about and are taken up into three different worlds. The **נשמה** (spiritual soul) emerges and enters between the gorges of the mountains where it is joined by the **רוח** (intellectual spirit). It then descends Below where the **נפש** (vital spirit) joins the **רוח** and all three form a unity. R’ Judah said: The **נפש** and the **רוח** are intertwined together, whereas the **נשמה** resides in a man’s character, an abode which cannot be discovered or located. Should a man strive towards purity of life, he is aided thereto by a holy **נפש** and **רוח** and is devoid of a holy **נשמה**. What is more, he who commences to defile himself is led further into defilement, and Heavenly help is withdrawn from him. Thus, each is led along the path which he chooses. (62b)
95. We have a dictum that when death rages in a town or in the world at large, no man should show himself in the street because the Destroying Angel is then authorized to kill immediately<sup>23</sup>. (63a).
96. As long as the Destroyer does not see the face of a man, he has no power over him. For the same reason Noah withdrew himself and all under his charge into the ark, so that the Destroyer had no power over him. (63a)
97. The possessions of one which are hidden from sight are receptive of the Heavenly blessing, whereas the things which are exposed to view

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<sup>23</sup> This basic concept is repeated numerous times in the Zohar with slightly different meanings, e.g. “When the Destroying Angel is at large in the world, a man should take shelter in his house, remain under cover and not show himself in the open, so that no hurt may befall him” (Vayeiroh 101b-102a), and “For when the Angel of Destruction obtains authorization to destroy, he does not discriminate between innocent and guilty. It is for this reason that when punishment falls upon a town, a man should flee from there before he is overtaken” (Vayeiroh 113a), etc.

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attract the notice of the Accuser and are subject to the influence of him who is named the Evil Eye<sup>24</sup>. (64b)

98. Said R' Isaac: When a man sins in secret, if he repents, the Holy One, blessed be He, being merciful, relents and forgives him. But, if not, He then publishes his sins before the world. (66a)
99. Jealousy provokes love. The male is incited to love the female through jealousy. (66b)
100. In the generation of the Flood, the measure of sin was not filled up until mankind became (sexually) perverted and destroyed their seed – and although they defrauded each other.....(66b)
101. Thus, they suffered measure for measure; they were doomed to corruption for having corrupted and perverted their ways. According to another view, it was the sin of violence which finally completed the measure of their guilt, as they used to overreach one another and were thus wicked both towards Heaven and towards their fellow men. (67a)
102. A woman should not admit a guest into her house without the consent of her husband. Neither may a guest enter the house save with the consent of the husband, who is master of the house. (67a)
103. One should not admit into his house any guest whom he suspects of wrongdoing, but only such a one as is above all suspicion in his eyes. (67a)
104. When the righteous multiply in the world, then the Earth is truly productive and filled with goodness. But, when the wicked multiply in the world, then it may be said that, "*The waters cease from the sea, and the river is drained dry*" (Job 14:11). (67a)
105. When endeavoring to appease a man who is angry with his neighbor for an offense committed against him, one should not magnify the

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<sup>24</sup> This, as with many other dictums herein are to be found in the Talmud, as well.

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offense but, on the contrary, should seek to minimize it. Whereas subsequently, when speaking to the offending person himself, he should emphasize the enormity of the offense. (67b)

106. R' Isaac said: When the wicked spread, it is the righteous man in their midst who first suffers for their sins. (68a)
107. He who warns the wicked, even if his warning is disregarded, saves himself and is not involved in the punishment which befalls them. If it is asked, how long should one go on warning, the answer is until he is absolutely forbidden<sup>25</sup>. (68b)
108. It was the wicked among mankind who brought about the unnatural intercourse in the animal world and who sought, thereby, to undo the work of Creation. They made the rest of Creation pervert their ways in imitation of themselves. Said God to them, "You seek to undo the work of My hands. Your wish shall be fully granted, for every living thing that I have made will I blot out from the face of the Earth. I will reduce the world to water to its primitive state and then I will form other creatures more worthy to endure." (68a)
109. When one sins before his Master and uses all devices to conceal himself, the Holy One, blessed be He, chastises him openly. Should, however, the man purify himself of his sins, God will then shield him so that he shall not be visible in the day of the fierce wrath of the Lord. (68a)
110. It is necessary to be aware of a man with an evil eye. (68b)
111. When the wicked are blotted out and removed from the world, the Divine Presence again takes up her abode therein (68b).
112. When death is raging in the world, the prudent man goes into hiding and does not venture abroad, so as not to be seen by the Destroying

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<sup>25</sup> To do so by Halacha. After which any further rebuke may affect the opposite result.

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Angel who, once he has obtained his leave, destroys whomsoever he meets at large, and whoever passes before him in the open (69a).

113. For as long as Judgment hangs over the world, there is no communion of man with God and the Destroying Angel is rampant. But as soon as Judgment has run its course and wrath has been allayed, everything returns to its previous state. (69b)
114. He who manifests an eagerness to examine things and to acquire new knowledge, although he lacks talent, merits praise and receives praise from all around him. (parenthetically at 69b)
115. He who keeps himself in the midst of his own people does not draw attention to himself and so escapes criticism. (69b)
116. R' Yesa said: We have been taught that no man should proceed on a journey unaccompanied. We have been taught that he who makes a journey unaccompanied by discussions of Torah exposes himself to danger. (69b)
117. There is no smoke without fire. (70a)
118. When mouth is joined with mouth to kiss, fire issues from the strength of affection, accompanied by radiance of the countenance, by rejoicing on both sides, and by gladsome union. (70a)
119. Wine is exhilarating and cheering, and induces love and affection. (70a)
120. It is the master of the house who takes in the guest, and it is the wife who speeds him forth, but she may not herself bid him enter. (70b-71a)
121. It is proper for the guest, on departing, to leave presents for the mistress of the house as she is always in the house and supervises it. It is fitting to give her those presents, not in her own hand directly, but through the agency of her husband, so as to enhance their mutual affection. (71a)

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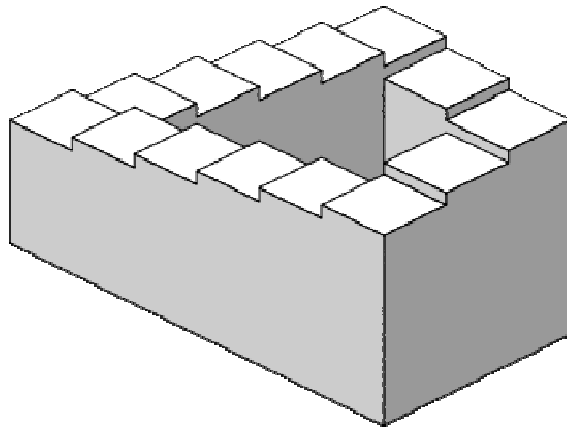
- 122.** When men transgress the precepts of the Torah, their visages change, and they fear the other creatures and tremble before them. The beasts of the field obtain dominion over men because they do not see any more in them the true supernal image. (71a)
- 123.** It is not permitted to gaze at the rainbow when it appears in the heavens as that would be disrespectful to the Divine Presence since the hues of the rainbow here Below are a replica of the vision of the supernal splendor, and are not for a man's gaze. (71b)
- 124.** Copies of the Written Law should rest on copies of the Oral Law (and not vice versa). (71b-72a)
- 125.** The study of Torah must be approached with proper preparation, not only of the mind, but also of the body. (72a)
- 126.** The study of Torah requires a seemly garb as well as an attentive mind. (72a)
- 127.** The words of the Torah must be clearly articulated. (72a)
- 128.** Abraham instituted the Morning Prayer (Shacharis) and taught the world the character of his Master, and made that hour a propitious one for prayer. Isaac instituted the Afternoon Prayer (Mincha) and taught the world that there is a supreme Judge who can either pardon or condemn the world. Jacob instituted the Evening Prayer (Ma'ariv). (72a)
- 129.** R' Judah said: The rainbow that appears in the sky has a profound mystic significance. When Israel will go forth from exile, that rainbow is destined to be decked out in all the finery of its colors, like a bride who adorns herself for her husband. (72b)
- 130.** Do not expect the coming of the Messiah until the rainbow will appear decked out in resplendent colors which will illumine the world. Only then expect the Messiah. (72b)

## NOAH

- 131.** At present, the bow appears in dull colors since it is only designed as a reminder that there shall be no return of the Flood. But, at that time, it will appear in its full panology of colors as a bride does for her husband. (72b)
- 132.** R' Eleazar here quoted the verse, "*O Lord, You are my God, I will exalt You, I will praise Your Name for You have done wonderful things, even counsels of old, in faithfulness and truth*" (Isa. 25:1). "How greatly", he said, "it behooves men to reflect on the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, and to offer up songs of praise to His glory. For when one knows how to offer praise to his Master in the appropriate manner, the Holy One, blessed be He, accomplishes His will.  
Such a man, furthermore, causes an increase of blessings on High and Below. He, therefore, who knows how to offer praise to his Master and to proclaim His unity is held in affection on High and is beloved Below. The Holy One, blessed be He, is proud of him, and of him it is written, '*And he said to me, you are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified*'" (Isa. 49:3). (73a)
- 133.** When one commits a sin once before God, it leaves a mark. When he repeats the same sin, that mark is deepened. After a third time, it becomes a stain spreading from one side to the other. (73b)
- 134.** R' Shimon replied: Such is the way of the Holy One, blessed be He. Although a woman is destined for a certain man, He first allows her to be the wife of another man until his time arrives. As soon as that time arrives, he departs from the world to make way for the other, although the Holy One, blessed be He, is loathe to remove him from the world to make way for the other man before his time arrives. (73b)
- 135.** In the utterance of prayer, it is Hebrew words which fully express the purpose of the heart and, thus, help to the attainment of the desired goal. (75b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 136.** The angels on High do not understand any language save the sacred language. For whatever men utter Below in the holy tongue all the hosts of Heaven understand and take heed of, but any other language they do not understand. (75b)
- 137.** It is incumbent upon a man to guard himself against sin, and to purify himself. (76a)
- 138.** When the Torah forms a crown over a man's head, the Divine Presence does not depart from him. (76a)
- 139.** R' Jose said: Quarrelsome folk soon come to grief. (76b)





## LECH LECHOH

# LECH LECHOH

לך לך

140. R' Hezekiah said that those who keep themselves far from God and refuse to draw near to God are far from righteousness. And because they are far from righteousness, therefore, they are far from peace and they have no peace, as it is written, "*There is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked*" (Isa. 48:22). (76b)
141. Whoever makes an effort to purify himself receives assistance from Above. (77b)
142. For the Upper World is not stirred to act until an impulse is given from the Lower World. (77b)
143. God delights in the repentance of sinners. (78b)
144. R' Eleazar expounded the text, "*By His hand, every man seals, that all men may acknowledge their works*" (Job 37:7). He said: On the day when man's time arrives to depart from the world, when the body is broken and the soul seeks to leave it, on that day, man is privileged to see things that he was not permitted to see before, when the body was in full vigor. Three messengers stand over him and take an account of his life and of all that he has done in this world, and he admits all with his mouth and signs the account with his hand, as it written, "*Every man seals with his hand*". The whole account is signed with his hand so that he should be judged in the Next World for all his actions, former

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

and latter, old and new, not one of them is forgotten, as it is written, *"That every man should acknowledge his works."* For all his deeds which committed with his body and his spirit in this world, he gives an account with body and spirit before he leaves this world. For just as sinners are stiff-necked in this world, so they are stiff-necked even when they are at the point of departing from the world.

Happy, therefore, is he who learns the Ways of God in this world, and walks in them. But sinners, even though they observe the righteous, are too stiff-necked to learn from them. Therefore, it behooves the righteous to importune them and, even if the sinner be stiff-necked, not to relax his hold of him. For if he lets him go, he may depart and destroy the world. (79a)

145. A man is not permitted to take his wife with him to another country without her consent. (79a)
146. Famine comes only when Mercy ceases to temper Justice. (parenthetically at 81b)
147. At midnight, all the truly righteous arise to read the Torah and sing Psalms. (82b)
148. It is the praises which are sung at night which constitute the most perfect praise. (82b)
149. R' Shimon was once on journey with his son R' Eleazar and R' Abba and R' Judah. As they were going along, R' Shimon said: I marvel how indifferent men are to the words of the Torah, and the problem of their own existence! (83a)
150. Happy are the righteous to whom God reveals His secrets in dreams so that they may be on their guard against sin! Woe to the sinners who defile their bodies and their souls! (83a)
151. When a man comes to ask something of Heaven, he should only say that of which he is certain. (84a)

## LECH LECHOH

- 152.** Whoever associates with a sinner eventually follows in his footsteps and so brings punishment upon himself. (84a/b)
- 153.** In the time of the First Temple, before Israel defiled the Land, the Gentiles could not rule over it. But when Israel sinned and defiled the Land, they drove the Divine Presence from Her place and other nations were allowed to rule over the Land. For no angel has control of the Land of Israel, but only God. When Israel sinned and burned incense to other gods in the Holy Land, the Divine Presence was driven from Her place, and other gods were associated with it, and so other nations obtained dominion and the prophets died out. (84b)
- 154.** As the wicked upset the world and cause blessing to be withheld, so the righteous bring blessing to the world and for their sake all its inhabitants are blessed. (87b)
- 155.** Whoever does not wash his hands as required, although he is punished in the Next World, is also punished in this world because he endangers his health. Similarly, he who washes his hands as required procures for himself blessings Above which rest upon his hands, and is also blessed with wealth. (87b)
- 156.** We do not say Grace over an empty table, since blessings from Above do not rest on an empty table. (88b)
- 157.** The Divine Presence is not found in the company of sinners, but when a man exerts himself to purify himself and to draw near to God, then the Divine Presence rests upon him. (88b)
- 158.** Before a man is circumcised, he is not attached to the Name of God. But, when he is circumcised, he enters into the Name and is attached to It. (89a)
- 159.** R' Eleazar said: When God created the world, it was on condition that if Israel, when they come into the world, should accept the Torah - it

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

would be well, but if not, then the world should revert to chaos. Nor was the world firmly established until Israel stood before Mount Sinai and accepted the Torah. From that day, God has been creating fresh worlds, to wit, the marriages of human beings. For from that time, God has been making matches and proclaiming, "The daughter of son-and-so for so-and-so". These are the worlds which He creates. (89a)

160. A man who has not begotten a son is not rewarded in the Future World. (90b).
161. When desire brings man and woman together, there issues from their union a son in whom both their forms are combined, because God has fashioned him in a mold partaking in both. Therefore, a man should sanctify himself at that time in order that the form may be as perfect as possible. (90b)
162. From the day on which the world was created, all the souls which were destined to come to life among mankind existed before God in that very form which they were destined to assume on Earth. (90b-91a)
163. A man only obtains the wife he deserves. If he leads a virtuous life, he is privileged to marry his own true mate. (91b)
164. Elijah traverses the world in four sweeps and presents himself at the circumcision ceremony. For this reason we have been taught that it behooves the father to prepare an extra chair for his honor and says, "This is the chair of Elijah." If he neglects to do so, Elijah does not visit him nor goes up and testify before the Almighty that the circumcision has taken place. Why has Elijah to testify? For this reason. When God said to him, "*What are you doing here, Elijah?*" (I Kings 19:9). He answered, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of Hosts, for the Children of Israel have forsaken your Covenant". Said God to him, "As you live, wherever My sons imprint this sign upon their flesh, you shall be there, and the mouth which charged Israel with forsaking the Covenant shall testify that they are observing it." Our teachers have

## LECH LECHOH

also taught that the reason why Elijah was punished was because he brought false charges against God's children. (93a)

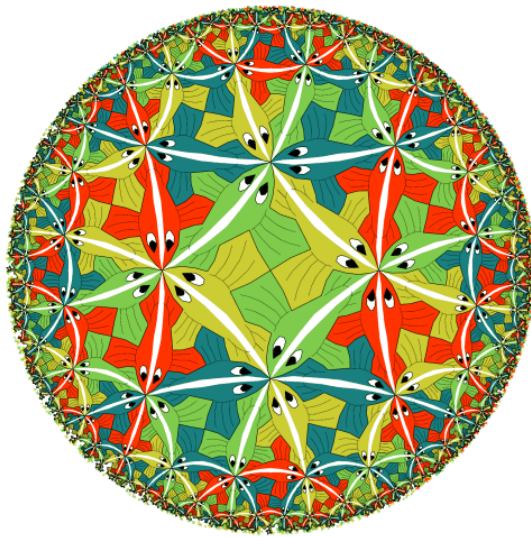
- 165.** As long as Israel observes this Covenant, the Heavens and Earth go on in their appointed course. But if Israel neglects this Covenant, then Heaven and Earth are disturbed and blessing is not vouchsafed to the world. Now in the time of the Judges, the Gentiles gained power over Israel only because they neglected this Covenant. (93b)
- 166.** If birds are driven from their homes, they do not know where to fly, as it is written, *"As a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man who wanders from his place"* (Prov. 28:8). (94a-b)
- 167.** One should first pray for himself and then for his neighbor, as it is written, *"And (the High Priest) shall make atonement for himself and for all the congregation of Israel."* For himself first, and then for the congregation. (94b)
- 168.** It is fitting that they should make a kind of altar in the shape of a vessel full of earth over which the circumcision may be performed, that so God may reckon it to him as if had sacrificed on it burnt offerings and peace offerings, sheep and oxen, and be even better pleased therewith. (95a)
- 169.** The proselyte must not<sup>26</sup> enter into the service of God, and that he must not be circumcised until he puts out of his mind the alien worship which he practiced until now, and removes the stoniness of his heart. For if he is circumcised before he does this, then he is like a statue which, though hewn into shape, still remains stone. (95a)
- 170.** All who are not holy keep afar from one who is circumcised, and have no power over him. (95b)

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<sup>26</sup> The Soncino translation does not include the word "not" which I have added for lexical unambiguity.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

171. A proselyte of righteousness who enters in this way is called by the name of the first pioneer "Abraham". (96a)
172. Royalty is always anointed from a horn. (96a)



## VAYEROH

# VAYEROH

וַיֵּרֶוּ

173. R' Abba continued: I once found myself in a town inhabited by descendants of the 'children of the East', and they imparted to me some of the Wisdom of the antiquity with which they were acquainted. They also possessed some books of Wisdom within which were written that, according to the goal which one sets for himself in this world, so does he draw to himself a spirit from on High. If he strives to attain some holy and lofty object, he draws that object from on High to himself Below. But if his desire is to cleave to the Other Side, and he makes this his whole intent, then he draws to himself the "other influence" from Above. Further, that all depends on the kind of speech, action and intention one habituates himself, for he draws to himself here Below from on High that Side to which he habitually cleaves.

I found also in the same book the rites and ceremonies pertaining to the worship of the stars with the requisite formulas and the directions for concentrating the thought upon them so as to draw them near the worshipper. The same principle applies to him who seeks to be attached to the sacred spirits on High. For it is by his acts, by his words, and by his fervency and devotion that he can draw to himself that spirit from on High.

They further said that if one follows a certain direction in this world, he will be led farther in the same direction when he departs this world. As that to which he attaches himself in this world, so is that to

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

which he will find himself attached in the other World. If he cleaves to holiness, he will, on High, be drawn to that Side and be made a servant to minister before the Holy One among the angels and will stand among those holy beings who are referred to in the words, *"Then I will give you free access among these who stand here"* (Zech. 3:7). Alternatively, if he clings here to impurity, he will be drawn there towards that Side and be made one of the unclean company and be attached to them. (99b-100a)

174. I then said to them, "My children, all this is similar to what we learn in our Torah. Nevertheless, you should keep away from these books so that your hearts should not be led astray after those idolatrous services and Sides mentioned therein. Be on your guard lest, God forbid, you be led astray from the worship of the Holy One since all these books mislead mankind.

For the ancient children of the East were possessed of a wisdom which they inherited from Abraham, who transmitted it to the sons of the concubines, as it is written, *"But unto the sons of the concubines that Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away for Isaac his son while he yet lived eastward unto the country of the children of the East"* (Gen. 25:6). In the course of time, they followed the track of that wisdom into many (wrong) directions. Not so with the seed of Isaac, with the portion of Jacob. For it is written, *"And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac"* (Ibid. 5). (100a/b)

175. Angels do not know of the happenings in this world save what is necessary for their mission. (101b)
176. When the Destroying Angel is at large in the world, a man should take shelter in his house, remain under cover and not show himself in the open so that no hurt may befall him. (101b-102a)
177. The Holy One makes Himself known to everyone according to the measure of his understanding and his capacity to attach himself to the spirit of Divine wisdom. (103b)



## VAYEROH

178. Man's soul cannot be known directly save through the members of the body which are the Grades forming the instruments of the soul. The soul is thus known and unknown. So it is with the Holy One, blessed be He, since He is the Soul of souls, the Spirit of spirit, covered and veiled from everyone. (103b)
179. When Israel returns from Exile, men will obtain knowledge of the precious supernal wisdom of which hitherto they know not (103b)
180. It behooves a man to partake of the cup of blessing after a meal in order that he merits the blessing from on High. (104a)
181. It is highly incumbent on a man to escort a departing guest, for this crowns the good act. (104a)
182. When one escorts his departing friend, he draws the Divine Presence to join him and to accompany him on the way for protection. (104b)
183. Any place inhabited by wicked people is doomed to destruction. (105a)
184. R' Shimon said: Note that any service rendered to a righteous man procures protection for the doer. Even more! Even if he himself is sinful, yet by rendering service to a righteous man he is bound to learn some of his ways and practice them. (105a)
185. R' Hezekiah here discoursed on the verse, "*For He looks to ends of the Earth and sees under the whole Heaven*" (Job 28:24). How incumbent it is upon the sons of men to contemplate the works of the Almighty and to busy themselves in the study of Torah day and night for through him who busies himself, the Almighty is glorified on High and Below. The Torah indeed is a tree of life for all those who occupy themselves with it, affording them life in this world and in the World to Come. (106b-107a)
186. As long as the Destroying Angel does not see the face of a man, he does not harm him. (108b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

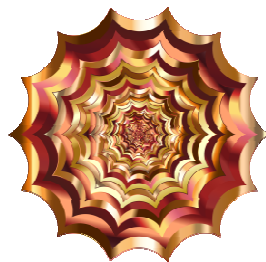
187. R' Hiya said: Whoever grudges assistance to the poor does not deserve to exist in this world and he also forfeits life in the World to Come. Contrariwise, whoever is generous towards the poor deserves to exist in the world, and it is for his sake that the world exists. The fullness of life is reserved for him in the World to Come. (109a)
188. The Holy One, blessed be He, constantly turns the wheel of events, bringing hidden things to the top, and then again giving another turn and shaping things differently. Thus, 'by His devices' He is ever scheming and planning how to affect the change and make a new pattern. The variation takes place in accordance to the works and deeds of man. That is, it is in accordance with man's works that God shapes the course of events. (109a-b)
189. The Holy One guides the course of events so as to bring to pass a seemingly stable state of things. But when the sons of men imagine that all before them is fixed and firmly established, then the Holy One turns His works into something altogether different from their former state. (109b)
190. Compare God to a potter who, in turning His wheel, constantly fashions new vessels according to His fancy. So is the Holy One constantly reshaping His vessels. (109b)
191. All is done in accordance to Man's works. If they are good, the wheel revolves to the Right, making the course of events highly favorable to them. However long the wheel revolves, punishment never settles on that side. Should men, however, turn to evil ways, the Holy One imparts to His device a spin to the Left and all things now take a direction to the left, and the wheel gives to events a course unfavorable to the sons of Men. So it goes on until they become penitent and retrace their evil ways. But, the motive power of the wheel is centered in the works of Man. Hence the phrase, "*By His device, according to their work*", there being no permanency. (109b-110a)

## VAYEROH

- 192.** A man should not rely on miracles, and even if the Holy One, blessed be He, has once performed a miracle for him, he should not count on it another time. For miracles do not happen every day. And whoever runs into obvious danger may, thereby, exhaust all his accumulated merit. (11b)
- 193.** Abraham clave to the true faith when he went down to Egypt and also when he went to the land of the Philistines. He was like a man who wanted to go down into a deep pit, but was afraid he would not be able to come up again. He, therefore, fastened a rope above the pit and having, thus, assured his ascent, he went down. In the same way, Abraham, when he was about to go down to Egypt, first secured his faith firmly, and thus having something to hold by, he went down there. (112b)
- 194.** Observe how assiduous Abraham was in his love towards the Holy One. For wherever he went, he had no regard whatever for himself, and sought only to cleave to the Almighty. (112b-113a)
- 195.** For when the Angel of Destruction obtains authorization to destroy, he does not discriminate between the innocent and guilty. It is for this reason that when punishment falls upon a town, a man should flee from there before he is overtaken. (113a)
- 196.** A miracle is not performed in halves, rescuing half and leaving half to be destroyed. Either the whole is miraculously saved or left to its doom. (113a/b)
- 197.** The Holy One does not punish the guilty until the measure of their guilt is full. (113b)
- 198.** R' Judah said to R' Jose: Whenever the Torah is studied earnestly, the Divine Presence comes and joins. All the more so on the road where the Divine Presence comes in anticipation. (115b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 199.** R' Jose discoursed: So long as a woman abides in the innermost parts of the house, she remains chaste and is fit to bear worthy children. She is like a vine, for just as a vine is never grafted with another kind, but only with its own, so the worthy woman does not bear offspring from a strange man, but only from her husband. (115b)
- 200.** Many saintly and holy men have perished through tyrannical decrees, all as part of Israel's punishment for not keeping the Law when they were in the Holy Land. (116a)
- 201.** R' Shimon continued: The Holy One, blessed be He, does not desire that so much should be revealed to the world. But when the days of the Messiah will be near at hand, even children will discover the secrets of wisdom and thereby be able to calculate the millennium. At that time, it will be revealed to all. (118a)
- 202.** In the human courts here Below, the age of liability is reached at thirteen years. In the Heavenly court, it is reached only at twenty years. Before that age, even if one is guilty, he is not punishable. Said R' Eleazar: If that is so, why should anyone be punished by dying before twenty? R' Hiya replied: The Holy One has mercy on such a one so that he should die while still innocent and obtain a reward in the other World instead of dying in guilt and receiving punishment in that World. (118b)
- 203.** For this is the way of the Holy One, that when He confers kindness on one, the same kindness may result in punishment for another. (119b)



## CHAYEI SARAH

# CHAYEI SARAH

## חיי שרה

**204.** Our teachers say that the sea resembles the sky and the sky resembles the Throne of Glory (121a)

**205.** Every night, when one retires to his bed, his soul leaves him and ascends to be judged before the King's tribunal. If she is found deserving to continue in her present state, she is allowed to return to this world.

In the judgment, good and evil actions are not weighed in the same way. No account is taken of evil deeds which a man is likely to perpetrate in the future, for so it is written, "*For God has heard the voice of the land where he is*" (Gen. 21:17). But, in regard to good actions, not only those already performed in the past are taken into consideration, but also those which a man is going to perform in the future. So that even if the present account would prove a man guilty, the Holy One, in His bounty towards His creatures, puts to his credit all his future good deeds, and the man is thus saved. (121b)

**206.** For the Heavenly tribunal, at a time when the world is under judgment, is like a pregnant woman who is convulsed with the pangs of childbirth which cease, however, as soon as she is delivered of the child. Similarly, the Heavenly tribunal in time of judgment is agitated and convulsed, but once judgment is executed it becomes pacified and resumes with gladness its wonted calm, as it is written, "*And when the*

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

*wicked perish there is joy.*" (Ps. 11:10). There is, indeed, a passage to the contrary saying, *"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?"* (Ezek. 18:23). This passage, however, speaks of those sinners who have not yet gone to the limit of provocation, whereas the previous passage speaks of those sinners whose measure is full. (121b)

- 207.** The Divine Presence does not dwell in a house unless the master of the house is married and is united to his wife for the purpose of bearing offspring. (122a)
- 208.** *"A Psalm. O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He has done wonderful things: His right hand and His holy arm have achieved for Him victory"* (Ps. 98:1). This verse is uttered by the cows<sup>27</sup>. (123a)
- 209.** Everything that the Holy One has created sings songs and praises before Him, both on High and here Below. (123a)
- 210.** For after the Resurrection of the dead, the world will be perfectly renewed, and will not be as before when death prevailed in the world. (124a)
- 211.** Happy are the righteous who have not polluted themselves and in whom no pollution has remained. (125a)
- 212.** All sorceries are called נחשים (literally, serpents). And whoever becomes addicted to them pollutes himself, nay more, he has first to become polluted in order to attract to himself the Side of the unclean spirit. For it is a dictum of our teachers that corresponding to the impulses of man here are the influences which he attracts to himself from Above. Should his impulse be towards holiness, he attracts to himself holiness from on High and so he becomes holy. But if his tendency is towards the Side of impurity, he draws down towards himself the unclean spirit and so becomes polluted.

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<sup>27</sup> This does not correspond with our version of Perek Shira which lists those verses which were sung in praise of the Creator by various of His creations including the celestial bodies, the birds and animals, etc. Neither cows, per se, nor this verse are found in our version of Perek Shira.

## CHAYEI SARAH

For this reason, in order to draw towards himself the unclean spirit from that supernal serpent, the wicked Balaam besmirched himself nightly by bestial intercourse with his ass, and he would then proceed to his divinations and sorceries. To begin with, he would take one of the familiar serpents, tie it up, break its head and extract its tongue. Then he would take certain herbs and burn them as incense. He would then take the head of the serpent, split into four sections and offer it up as a second offering. Finally, he traced a circle around himself, mumbled some words and made some gestures until he became possessed of the unclean spirits who told him all that they knew from the Side of the Heavenly dragon. He thus continued his magical practices until he became possessed of the spirit of the primeval serpent. It is, thus, that we understand the passage, *“He did not go, as every other time, toward נַחֲשִׁים”* (divinations or enchantments) (Num. 24:1).

Said R' Jose: Why is it that many kinds of magic and divination are only found in women? R' Isaac replied: Thus I have learned. When the serpent had intercourse with Eve, he injected defilement into her, but not into her husband. (125b-126a)

213. Greater numbers of women are found to be addicted to magic and lasciviousness than men. (126b)
214. During the period of a woman's menstruation, a man must keep away from her as then she is in close touch with the unclean spirit. Therefore, at such a period she will be more successful in the use of magical arts than at any other time. Whatever thing she touches becomes unclean, and all the more so any man coming too near her. (126b)
215. Whoever looks at the form of Adam cannot escape death. For when a man is about to pass out of this world he catches sight of Adam, and at that moment he dies. (127a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 216.** Whilst there, Abraham saw a light issuing from the Cave of Machpelah, so that he prayed at that spot, and at that spot the Holy One communed with him. (127b)
- 217.** Had Ephron seen inside the cave what Abraham saw, he would never have sold it to him. But he never saw there anything, since such things are never revealed except to their rightful owner. (127b)
- 218.** Everything in this world should be a replica of something in the World Above, and that the two should be united so that His glory should be spread Above and Below. Happy is the portion of the righteous in whom the Holy One finds pleasure both in this world and the World to Come! (129a)
- 219.** Happy is the man whose ways are found right before the Holy One and in whom He finds pleasure so as to bring him near to Himself. (129a)
- 220.** R' Jose said: We have been taught that the place assigned to the penitent in the Next World is one where even the wholly righteous are not permitted to enter, as the former are the nearest of all to the King; they are more devoted and strive more intently to draw near to the King. (129b)
- 221.** For there are many abodes prepared by the Holy One, blessed be He, for the righteous in the Next World, each one according to his grade. It is written, "*Happy is the man whom You choose and bring near that he may dwell in Your courts*", that is, those whom the Holy One brings near unto Him, those souls who mount from Below on high so as to possess themselves of the heritage prepared for them, "*That he may dwell in Your courts*", to wit, the outer halls and grades referred to in the words, "*Then I will give You free access among these who stand by*" (Zech. 3:7), i.e. a grade among the supernal holy angels. Those who attain that grade are messengers of the Lord, equal to the angels and are constantly being used in the service of their Master, because in life they always strove to remain holy and keep afar from impurity.



## CHAYEI SARAH

Contrariwise, whoever pollutes himself in this world draws to himself the spirit of uncleanness and when his soul leaves him, the unclean spirits pollute it and its habitation is among them. For according to a man's strivings in this world is his habitation in the Next World. Hence, such a man is polluted by the spirit of uncleanness and cast into Gehenna.

Thus, whoever sanctifies himself and is on his guard against defilement in this world finds his habitation in the Next World among the supernal holy angels where they carry out God's messages. (129b-130a)

- 222.** When men sleep at night and their souls leave them and flit about through the world, not everyone alike rises to behold the glory of the Ancient of Days, but each one in proportion to a man's constancy of attachment to God and his good deeds. (130a)
- 223.** Happy are the righteous for whom many blessings are reserved in the Next World. But for none is the more interior abode reserved than for those who penetrate into the Divine mystical doctrines and enter each day into close union with their Divine Master. (130b)
- 224.** Abraham penetrated into the Divine Wisdom and united himself with his Divine Master after he had duly prepared himself by a life of pious deeds. (130b)
- 225.** The women of the idolatrous nations pollute their husbands and those who come into close contact with them. (130b)
- 226.** Each son of man is a composite of the Heavenly and the Earthly. All those who know how to sanctify themselves in the right manner in this world when they father a son cause the Holy Spirit to be drawn upon him from the region where all sanctities emerge. Such are called the children of the Holy One. (130b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 227.** The Holy One will, in the future, raise the dead to life again, and the good principle will prevail in the world and the Evil One will vanish from the world. (131a)
- 228.** Whoever forms an attachment with a woman of any of the idolatrous nations becomes defiled, and the offspring born from such an attachment receives a defiled spirit. It may be asked why, seeing that the father is an Israelite, the offspring should receive a defiled spirit? The reason is that as soon as the father attached himself to that woman, defilement entered into him. Now, if the father became defiled through the unclean woman, how much more must the offspring born of her be defiled to its very spirit. (131b)
- 229.** When one applies himself to the study of Torah, all the nations of the world cannot prevail against him. (131b)
- 230.** Whoever applies himself to the study of the Torah attains perfect freedom; freedom in this world from the bondage of idolatrous nations, and freedom in the Next World, as no accusation will be brought against him there. For the Torah contains sublime and recondite truths, as it says, *"She is more precious than rubies"* (Prov. 3:15). (132a)
- 231.** It is an established rule that one, while praying, should not let anything interpose between himself and the wall, as it is written, *"Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to God"* (Isa. 38:2). It is further forbidden to pass within four cubits of a man who stands in prayer. They have now laid down that this means on any side save directly in front of him<sup>28</sup>. Further, one may not pray standing behind his teacher. (132a)
- 232.** Prayerful tears ascend before the King. No gate can withstand them, and they are never turned away empty<sup>29</sup>. (132b)

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<sup>28</sup> The translation is misleading. The Zohar's position, as explained by the Mogen Avraham (SA OC 102:4) is that one may neither pass in front of nor to the sides of one standing for the Amida. The Eliyoh Rabba, however permits passing to the sides. The Halacha is that one may pass to the side of and behind one who is praying Shmone Esrei, but not within four cubits in front of him.

<sup>29</sup> This notion is one of the most frequently repeated ideas in the Zohar.

## CHAYEI SARAH

- 233.** There are two categories of prayer; one is to be said standing and the other sitting, although they form but one whole. There are also two phylacteries (תפליין), one for the arm and one for the head, corresponding to day and night. The two again make one whole. The sitting prayer corresponds to the arm phylactery which prepares and adorns it like a bride before entering under the bridal canopy. So the prayer is surrounded and escorted, mystically speaking, by chariots and legions mentioned in the prayer, "Creator of ministering spirits...and the Ofanim and Holy Chayos..." This prayer, therefore, is recited sitting.

But when the prayer approaches the Supreme King and He is about to receive it, then we are to stand up before the most High King, for then the Male is united with the Female. Hence, there must be no interruption between the redemption benediction at the end of the sitting prayer and the beginning of the standing prayer. Since one is standing before the Supreme King, he must, on concluding, step backward four cubits<sup>30</sup> which has been explained to be a Divine measure. Thus, whatever part of the prayer is symbolic of the Male principle must be recited standing. The supplicant bends his knee at the utterance of "Boruch" (ברוך) and erects himself to his full height at the utterance of the Divine Name to symbolize the superiority of the Male over the Female. (132b)

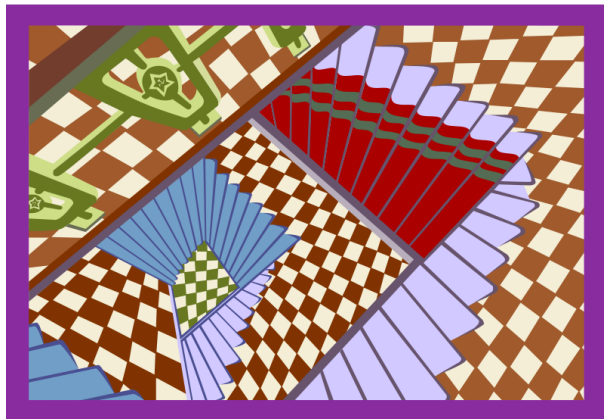
- 234.** One should not, while praying, stand immediately behind his teacher. This reason is this. It is written "*You shall fear the (אס) Lord your God*" (Deut. 6:13). The particle אס here indicates that the teacher is associated with God as the object of fear. Hence, during prayer, one should not be faced with that object of fear so that he may be filled exclusively with the fear of the Holy One alone without any adjunct. (132b)

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<sup>30</sup> Although the Halacha is to take three steps back (SA OC 123:3), there is no indication in the Shulchon Aruch that these three steps have to total four cubits. The Chida in Birkei Yosef does say that the three steps should equal four cubits but, curiously, does not quote the Zohar as his source for his ruling.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 235.** One should be careful not to miss the Afternoon Prayer. (132b)
- 236.** The evening is an opportune time for one to busy himself with the study of Torah. (132b)
- 237.** A maidservant may not be the heir to her mistress. (133b)
- 238.** When the Sanctuary was destroyed and the Temple was burned, and the people driven into Exile, the Divine Presence left her home in order to accompany them into captivity. (134a)
- 239.** When the Holy One, blessed be He, will remember His people, the Community of Israel, the Divine Presence will return from exile first and proceed to her House, as the Holy Temple will be built first. Then, *“He gathers the dispersed of Israel”*, and afterwards the Resurrection of the Dead. (134a)



## TOLDOS

# TOLDOS

## תולדות

**240.** R' Hiya once discoursed: When God resolved to create the world, He used the Torah as the plan both of the whole and the parts. When God was about to create Man, the Torah remonstrated saying, "Should Man be created then sin and be brought to trial before You, the work of Your hand will be in vain for he will not be able to endure Your judgment." To this God replied, "I had already fashioned repentance before creating the world."

When God created the world He said to it, "O world, world! You and the order are founded only upon the Torah and, therefore, I have created Man in you that he may apply himself to its study, otherwise I will turn you into chaos again." Hence, Scriptures says, "*I have made the Earth and created Man upon it*" (Isa. 45:12). (134a/b)

**241.** Whoever labors in the Torah upholds the world and enables each part to perform its function. For there is not a member of the human body which does not have its counterpart in the world as a whole. For as a man's body consists of members and parts of various ranks all acting and reacting upon each other so as to form one organism, so does the world at large consist of a hierarchy of created things which, when they properly act and react upon each other, together form literally one organic body. Thus the whole is organized on the scheme of the Torah which also consists of sections and divisions which fit into one another and, when properly arranged together, forms one organic body. (134b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 242.** The Torah contains all the deepest and most recondite mysteries, all the sublime doctrines, both disclosed and undisclosed; all essences both of the higher and the lower grades of this world and of the World to Come are found there. But there is no one to fathom its teachings, hence, it is written, *"Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord or make the whole of His praise to be heard?"* (Ps. 106:2). (134b-135a)
- 243.** God constantly mates couples of opposing natures so that the world preserves its balance. (137a)
- 244.** God delights in the prayer of the righteous. (137a)
- 245.** All creatures of the same kind love one another and are drawn to one another. (137b)
- 246.** Lentils form a red pottage which is cooling to hot blood. (139b)
- 247.** The Almighty does not mete out punishment to a man in strict accordance with the evil deeds to which he is addicted or else the world could not endure. God is thus long-suffering with the righteous and even more so with the wicked. He is forbearing with the wicked in order that they may change in their ways in complete repentance and so establish themselves in this world and in the World to Come, as it says, *"Have I any desire, says the Lord God, in the death of the wicked, and not rather that he should return from his ways and live?"* (Ezek. 18:23), i.e., that he may live in this world and in the World to Come.

The Almighty is also forbearing with the wicked for the sake of the goodly seed which may spring from them for the benefit of the world, as there issued from Terach the goodly scion Abraham who was a blessing for the world. But with the righteous, God is strict as He knows that they will turn aside neither to the right nor to the left and He, therefore, puts them to the test, not for His own sake, since He knows the firmness of their faith, but so as to glorify them the more. (140a)

## TOLDOS

- 248.** God proves the righteous in order to glorify them in this world and in the World to Come (140b)
- 249.** R' Eleazar said: The Divine Presence does not abide outside the Holy Land. (141a)
- 250.** God is found in the man who crowns himself with תפלין (phylacteries) and envelops himself in ציצית (fringes). Whoever does not envelop himself in the latter nor crown himself with the former each day to invigorate himself in faith, makes it appear as though faith does not dwell within him and fear of his Master has departed from him. And so his prayer is not as it should be. (141a)
- 251.** For all the works of the Almighty are manifestations of truth and contain deep lessons; and all the words of the Torah assist faith and are deeply symbolic (141b)
- 252.** One should not confidently affirm, "God will deliver me or will do for me this or that". Rather, he should endeavor to fulfill the precepts of the Torah and walk in the path of truth. He should put his full trust in Him that He will help him. For assuredly, whenever one sets out to purify himself, he is helped from on High. One should thus put his trust in God and not anywhere else. (142a)
- 253.** One should purge his heart of all strange thoughts so as to make it like a path that leads straight to the desired destination. (142a)
- 254.** One should study the Torah with single-hearted devotion to the Almighty, for whoever labors in the Torah from worldly motives had better not have been born. (142a)
- 255.** The serpent bites and kills but feels no satisfaction. (143a)
- 256.** It is fitting not to deviate from the custom of the place where one happens to be. (144a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 257.** For according to our doctrine, two Heavenly messengers are sent to accompany a man in his path through life, one on his right and one on his left, and they are his witnesses to all his acts. One is called the Good Prompter and the other the Evil Prompter. Should a man be minded to purify himself to observe diligently the precepts of the Torah, the Good Prompter who is associated with him will overpower the Evil Prompter who will then make his peace with him and be his servant. Thus, when a man sets out to purify himself and his Good Prompter prevails, then God makes even his enemies be at peace with him, that is to say, the Evil Prompter submits himself to the Good Prompter. (144b)
- 258.** Each incident recorded in the Torah contains a multitude of deep significations, and each word is itself an expression of wisdom and the doctrine of truth. (145b)
- 259.** One should not go out alone in the nighttime. How much less than in the night when the lights were created (the fourth night of the week)<sup>31</sup> since the Moon is defective and on such a night the Evil Serpent is especially powerful. (146a)



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<sup>31</sup> I am not familiar with any such Halacha. However, SA YD 179:2 on the Laws of Sorcery rules that one should not “begin something (new?) on Mondays or Wednesdays”.



## VAYEITZEI

# VAYEITZEI

## נצ"ו

- 260.** Anyone who invites a king should strive to entertain him in some novel fashion so as to afford him special pleasures. If, for instance, it is the king's will to be entertained by ordinary clowns and jesters, he should provide for him specially refined and courtly entertainers. (148a/b)
- 261.** In his own house, one may arrange things as he pleases. But when invited out, he must be at the command of his host and conform to his desires. (148b)
- 262.** Even a king, when he desires to visit his consort, should coax her and use words of endearment, and not treat her as mere chattel. And though he should have a golden couch with embroidered coverings in a grand palace, and she prepares for him a bed on a floor of stones with a straw mattress, it is incumbent on him to leave his own couch and lie down on hers so as to give her satisfaction and so that their hearts may be united without any constraint. (148b)
- 263.** The style of an invitation must accord with the rank of the recipient. (149a)
- 264.** The custom is that whoever sits at a table with a bride and bridegroom gives them presents and gifts. (149a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 265.** A little hurt from one's kin is worse than a great hurt from a stranger. (151b)
- 266.** Whoever exerts himself in the study of Torah and lays hold of it, lays hold of the Tree of Life. Whoever relaxes his hold of the Tree of Life, behold, the Tree of Death overshadows him and takes hold of him. (152b)
- 267.** When one holds fast to the ways of the Torah, he is beloved both on High and Below, and is the favorite of the Holy One, blessed be He, as we read, "*And the Lord loved him*" (2 Sam. 12:24). (152b)
- 268.** When charity is given to the poor, its effect is felt both on High and here Below. (153a)
- 269.** A man is not naturally tempted by his mother. Hence, he may remain alone with his mother in any place whatever without scruple. (154b)
- 270.** For just as the one hammer blow causes sparks to fly off in all directions, so God brought into being simultaneously manifold species and hosts, each differing from the other without number. (156a)
- 271.** Mandrakes are a help to women who are slow in childbearing, but not barren. The latter being under the influence of Mazal<sup>32</sup>. (156b-157a)
- 272.** There is no species which is not divided into male and female. Further, whatever being exists on the dry land has its counterpart in the sea. (157b)
- 273.** Whoever diligently studies Torah inherits the World to Come and the inheritance of Jacob. (158a)
- 274.** When one prays, he should not say, "O remember me and visit me", since remembrance and visitation can be for evil as well as for good.

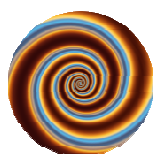
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<sup>32</sup> I do not understand the theological implication of this statement and several others below which discuss מזל. Is life random or predetermined and at the behest of "the stars"? Dr. Alain Frey z"l of Raanana suggests that מזל is a derivative of the root נזל, flow-down (from Heaven); i.e., this matter would not be successful without God's Help.

## VAYEITZEI

The evil forces are ready to take the word out of the mouth of the suppliant and thus make remembrance of his sins bring punishment on him. Unless, indeed, he is a perfectly righteous man so that when search is made for his sins, he will be unaffected. (160a/b)

- 275.** When one prays, it is best that he should merge himself in the general mass of the community. It is requisite for a man to mingle himself among the mass and not to isolate himself so that no special notice may be taken of his sins. (160b)
- 276.** A blessing from on High never results in less than a thousand of each kind. (161a)
- 277.** We have learned from Tradition that some blessings from Above are obtained by action, some by speech, and others by devotion. Thus, whoever wishes to draw down to himself blessings must employ prayer which comprises speech and devotion. Yet, there are blessings which cannot be obtained by prayer, but only by action. (161a)
- 278.** The outpouring of the blessings only occurs when there is close union of the female with the male. (162b)
- 279.** Said R' Jesse: Whoever occupies himself with the Torah draws Her near to himself. (164a)
- 280.** No man should ever treat slightly another man. (164a)
- 281.** It is not right for one to swear, even a true oath, by the most High realm. (165a)
- 282.** A blessing does not reside save in a spot where there are male and female. (165a)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### VAYISHLACH

### וישלח

- 283.** The Divine Presence abides only in the Holy Land. From there only, she bestows blessings; but for purposes of protection, she is also found elsewhere. (166a)
- 284.** R' Shimon opened a discourse on the verse, *"Better is he who is lightly esteemed and has a servant, than he who plays the man of rank and lacks bread"* (Prov. 12:9). "This verse", he said, "speaks of the Evil Prompter who lays plots and unceasingly brings up accusations against a man. He puffs up a man's heart, encouraging him to arrogance and conceit, and induces him to twirl his hair and carry his head high until he obtains an ascendancy over him and drags him down to Gehenna. Better, therefore, is on who is 'lightly esteemed' and who does not follow the Evil Prompter, but remains humble in heart and spirit, and submits himself to the will of the Holy One, blessed be He. The Evil Prompter is bowed down before such a one, and so far is he from obtaining mastery over the man that it is the man who obtains the mastery over him, as it says, *'But you rule over him'*" (Gen. 4:7). (166a/b)
- 285.** Only those who are themselves holy are permitted to make use of holy things. Contrariwise, those who are impure are brought in contact with impurity and become more impure. (167b)
- 286.** God always delights in the prayer of the righteous. (167b)

## VAYISHLACH

- 287.** R' Shimon said: The prayer of a congregation ascends to the Almighty and He is crowned therewith because it comprises many hues and directions. Therefore, it is made into a crown to be placed on the head of the Righteous One, the Living One of the worlds. However, the prayer of an individual is not many-sided and presents only one hue and, therefore, is not so complete and acceptable as the prayer of the congregation. (167b)
- 288.** The bodies of the righteous who have labored in Torah remain undefiled after death. (168a)
- 289.** One should always go in fear and offer up prayer to the Almighty. (168a)
- 290.** The prayer of (most) people is just a prayer, but the prayer of a poor man breaks through all barriers and storms its way to the presence of the Almighty<sup>33</sup>. (168b)
- 291.** When offering prayer, first recite the praises of the Master and only then present the petition. (169a)
- 292.** When praying, one should state in precise terms what he requires. (169a)
- 293.** When one is sleeping and is not in control of himself, he is assailed by an unclean spirit. (169b)
- 294.** One should not pass his hands over his eyes when he wakes in the morning due to the unclean spirit hovering over his hands. (169b)
- 295.** One who walks alone at certain periods and in certain places, even in a town, attracts to himself the unclean spirit. Therefore, no one should ever go on a lonely road, even in a city, but only where people are about. One should not go out in the nighttime when people are no longer about. (169b)

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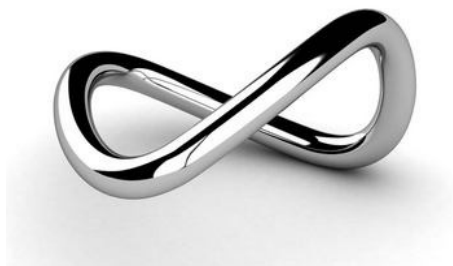
<sup>33</sup> Another oft-repeated idea in the Zohar.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 296.** When one has been long shut up in darkness, it is necessary, on bringing him into the light, first to make for him an opening as small as the eye of a needle, and then one a little larger and so on until gradually he can endure the full light. (170a)
- 297.** A sick man who is recovering cannot be given a full diet all at once, but only gradually. (170a)
- 298.** When scholars are not encouraged and no one gives them pecuniary support, Torah is forgotten from one generation to another and its strength is weakened, those who toil in it having no support, and the sinful kingdom increases in power with each day. Much evil, therefore, results, since the upholders of the Torah become weaker. (171a)
- 299.** Whenever the voice of Jacob is interrupted, the hands of Esau are reinforced. (171a)
- 300.** It is incumbent on a man to praise God and give Him thanks for any miracle or any kindness that He has shown him. (173b)
- 301.** One to whom a miracle is vouchsafed must himself offer thanks, just as he who has eaten a meal should say grace, and not one who has eaten nothing. (173b)
- 302.** It is a general rule that beginnings are rough, whereas the subsequent course is smooth. (174a)
- 303.** Whomsoever holds firmly to the Torah, hold firmly to the Tree of Life, and adds to the strength of the community. (174b)
- 304.** It is incumbent on a man to walk in the path of truth so that the Accuser should be turned into his defender. (174b)
- 305.** The Accuser attacks a man only in time of danger. (174b)

## VAYISHLACH

- 306.** The curse of a righteous man, even if pronounced under a misapprehension, once uttered, is caught up by the Evil Prompter (יצר הרע) to be used at a moment of danger. (175b)
- 307.** One should never open his mouth to Satan, since the latter is sure to take hold of his utterance and use it to bring accusations on High and Below; all the more so if it is the utterance of a righteous man or a sage. (175b)
- 308.** The righteous will be resurrected for an everlasting life. (176a)
- 309.** The Divine Presence is always present whenever marital intercourse is performed as a religious duty. (176a)
- 310.** Israel, although they seemingly die, always re-emerge and persist in the world as before (178a)
- 311.** Whoever is afraid of his sins has cause to fear. (178a)
- 312.** One should continually offer praise to God since He takes delight in songs and hymns. When one knows how to offer praise to God in the proper manner, He accepts his prayer and delivers him. (178b)
- 313.** It is incumbent on a man to be on his guard against the Evil Prompter so that he shall not obtain mastery over him. Such a man God guards in all his ways. (179a)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### VAYEISHEV

#### וישב

314. Beasts, from the day they are born, are able to take care of themselves and avoid fire and similar dangers, whereas man, on the other hand, seems to feel at first a natural propensity to throw himself into the fire. The reason is that the Evil Prompter dwells within him and from the beginning lures him into evil ways. (179a)
315. A judge who receives the pleadings of one litigant in the absence of the other is comparable to acknowledging strange gods. (179b)
316. R' Jose said: When God surveys the world and finds it misbehaving and ready for chastisement, He first removes from it any righteous man who is present in it so that chastisement should be visited on all the others and there should be none to shield them. For as long as there is a righteous man in the world, chastisement cannot befall it. (180a)
317. R' Hiya discoursed on the text, *"Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God that He should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. For the work of man will he require unto him and cause every man to find according to his ways"* (Job 34:10-11). God, he said, in creating the world, meant it to be based on justice and all that is done in the world would be weighed in the scales of justice. Was it not that, to the save the world from perishing, God screened it with mercy which tempers pure justice and



## VAYEISHEV

prevents it from destroying the world. The world is thus governed in mercy and thereby able to endure.

But, you may ask, is not man often punished by God undeservedly? The answer is, as been affirmed, when suffering befalls a righteous man, it is on account of the love which God bears for him. He crushes his body in order to give more power to his soul so that He may draw him nearer in love. For it is needful that the body should be weak and the soul strong, that so one may be beloved of God, as the Companions have affirmed, that the Holy One inflicts suffering on the righteous in this world in order that they may merit the World to Come. But he who is small of soul and strong of body is hated by God. It is because God has no pleasure in him that He inflicts no pain upon him in this world, but permits his life to flow smoothly along with ease and comfort, in that for any virtuous act he may perform he receives his reward in this world, so that no portion should be left him in the Next World. (180a/b)

- 318.** The Divine Presence does not dwell amid sad surroundings, but only where there is cheerfulness. (180b)
- 319.** Children, life and livelihood do not depend on one's merits, but on Mazal. (181a)
- 320.** All dreams follow their interpretation. (183a)
- 321.** Since a dream contains both falsehood and truth, the word has power over it. Therefore, it is advisable that every dream be interpreted in a good sense. (183a)
- 322.** When one retires to rest, it behooves him to first acknowledge the Kingdom in Heaven (i.e. recite the Shema) and then to say a short prayer. For when one goes to bed and sleeps, his soul leaves him and soars aloft. God then reveals to the soul future events or things which correspond to a man's own thoughts so as to serve as an admonition to him. (183a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 323.** One should not tell his dream save to a friend, otherwise the listener may pervert the significance of the dream and delay its fulfillment. (183a)
- 324.** R' Hiya and R' Jose used to study with R' Shimon. R' Hiya once put to him the following question: We have learned that a dream uninterrupted is like a letter undeciphered. Does this mean that the dream comes true without the dreamer being conscious of it or that it remains unfulfilled? R' Shimon answered: The dream comes true, but without the dreamer being aware of it. For nothing happens in the world but what is made known in advance either by means of a dream or by means of a proclamation, as it has been affirmed that before and even comes to pass in the world, it is announced in Heaven from where it is broadcast to the world.
- So Scriptures says, *"For the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His counsels to His servants, the prophets"* (Amos 3:7). This refers to the time when there were prophets in the world. When Prophets were no more, their place was taken by the Sages who, in a sense, even excelled the Prophets and, in the absence of Sages, things to come are revealed in dreams, and if not in dreams, through the medium of the birds of heaven, as we have laid down. (183b)
- 325.** There are two species of anger. There is anger which is blessed, and there is anger which is accursed. (184a)
- 326.** R' Shimon said: It is written, *"I will wash my hands in innocence, and circle around Your altar O Lord"* (Ps. 26:6). The inner implication of this verse has been explained as follows. Every man has a foretaste of death during the night because the holy soul then leaves him and the unclean spirit rests on the body and makes it unclean. When, however, the soul returns to the body, the pollution disappears save from one's hands which retain it, and thus remain unclean. Hence, one should not pass his hands over his eyes before washing them. When he has washed them, however, he becomes sanctified and is called holy.

## VAYEISHEV

For this sanctification, two vessels are required. One is held above and the other is placed beneath so that he may be sanctified by the water poured on his hands from the vessel above. The lower vessel, then, is the vessel of impurity receiving, as it does, the water of contamination, while the upper vessel is a medium of sanctification. The upper one is to be referred to as “blessed” and the lower one as “cursed”. (184b)

- 327.** The water of contamination should not be emptied in the house in order that no one may come near it, for it forms a gathering place for the elements of the Unclean Side and so no one may receive injury from the unclean water. (184b)
- 328.** Neither may one pronounce a benediction before the pollution is removed from his hands. Thus, before he sanctifies his hands in the morning, one is called unclean, and after he is called clean. For this reason one should not allow water to be poured over his hands save by someone who has already washed his own hands, in harmony with the precept, *“And the (ritually) clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean”* (Num. 19:19). We see that the one with his hands washed is the clean person, the other is unclean. Similarly with the two vessels. The upper and lower, the one being the holy vessel and the other the unholy. (184b)
- 329.** Nor is it permitted to put the polluted water to any use or even let it stay overnight in the house, but it must be emptied in a spot where people do not pass as it is liable to cause harm through the Unclean Spirit that clings to it. It is quite permissible, however, to let it flow down a slope into the Earth. It must not be given to witches as by means of it they can do harm to people. One should, then, avoid this water since it is water of curse and the Holy One desires to purify Israel so that they may be holy as it is written, *“And I will sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean from all your impurity, and from all your idols will I cleanse you”* (Ezek. 36:25). (184b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 330.** R' Judah said: Whoever devotes himself to the study of Torah in this world will be privileged to study it in the World to Come. On the other hand, the one who fails to study the Torah in this world, and so walks in darkness, when he leaves this world, is taken and cast into Gehenna, a nethermost place, where there will be none to pity him, a place called *'Tumultuous pit, miry clay'* (Ps. 40:3) (185a)
- 331.** Whoever repents of his sin, God preserves in this world and in the World to Come. (185b)
- 332.** The Almighty is particular with the righteous to a hairbreadth. (186a)
- 333.** For when the whole body of man had been duly shaped with all its members, God associated Himself with him and put a holy soul into him so as to teach Man to walk in the ways of the Torah and to observe His Commandments in order that he might attain to his full perfection. Thus, while the holy soul is still within one's body, it is incumbent upon him to multiply the image of the King in the world. (186b)
- 334.** He who dies without leaving children will not enter within the curtain of Heaven and will have no share in the Other World. His soul will not be admitted to the place where all souls are gathered, and his image will be cut off from there. (186b)
- 335.** He who has not succeeded in this place must go to another place where he may have better fortune. (187a)
- 336.** A man who has not been blessed with children is like wood that burns without giving off any light. (187a)
- 337.** Precious, indeed, are the words of the Torah, each one containing sublime and holy mysteries. (187a)
- 338.** For a man who has children eats his bread in good cheer and gladness in heart. But, to him who has no children, the bread he eats is bread of sadness. (187a)

## VAYEISHEV

- 339.** *“There is one that is alone”* (Eccl. 4:8) is an allusion to the man who is improperly alone, without a wife; *“and he has not a second”* – no one to uphold him, no son to establish his name in Israel or bring him to his due reward; *“yet there is no end of all his labor”* – as he is always laboring, day and night; *“neither is his eye satisfied with riches”* – and he has not the sense to reflect, *“for whom, then, do I labor and bereave my soul of pleasure?”*. You may say that he has pleasure in that he eats and drinks and feasts every day, but it is not so since his soul (נפש) does not share in his pleasure so that assuredly he bereaves his soul of pleasure, of the blissful illumination of the World to Come. For it is left stunted without attaining its full and proper growth. For God cares for His works, and so desires that a man should be set right and not perish from the World to Come. (187a/b)
- 340.** R' Hiya put the following question: What is the position of a man who is just and upright and occupies himself with the study of Torah day and night, and devotes himself wholly to the service of the Almighty, and yet is not blessed with children in this world despite all his efforts or had children who died? What is his position in the World to Come? R' Jose replied: His good deeds and the Torah will shield him in the World to Come. R' Isaac said: Of such it is written, *“For says the Lord concerning the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and hold fast My Covenant – even unto them will I give in My house and within my walls a monument and a memorial, better than sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting memorial that shall not be cut off* (Isa. 56:4-5), so that these have a share in the World to Come. (187a/b)
- 341.** R' Hiya said: It behooves a man to be well on his guard against sin and to be heedful in his actions before the Holy One, blessed be He. (188a)
- 342.** Of all the sins which defile a man, that which defiles him the most, both in this world and in the World to Come, is the sin of spilling one's

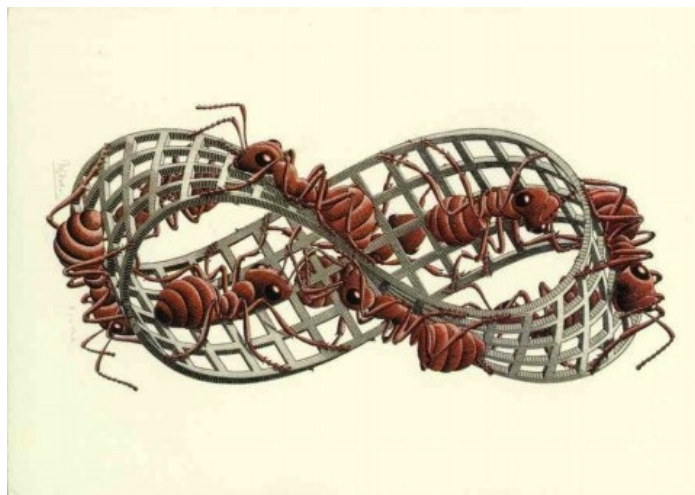
## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

seed. One guilty of this sin will not enter within the Heavenly Curtain and will not behold the presence of the Ancient of Days. (188a)

343. There is no greater reward in the Next World than that of the man who has trained his children in the fear of their Master and in the ways of the Torah. (188a)
344. Happy is the man who is blessed with children and who trains them in the ways of the Torah. (188a)
345. Wherever the righteous walk, the Divine Presence accompanies them and does not abandon them. (189a)
346. Joseph exposed himself to his accusations because he used to pay great attention to his personal appearance. (189b)
347. R' Jose said: When one perceives that evil thoughts are assailing him, he should study Torah, and that will drive them away. (190a)
348. Once a man yields to the Side of the Unclean Spirit, he is more and more drawn towards it and defiles himself with it in this world and in the Other World. This unclean side is ugly and filthy and by it is punished he who goes astray from the Torah, and all those sinners who have no faith in the Holy One, blessed be He. (190b)
349. When the Evil Prompter sees that there is no man to stand up against him and wage war with him then, *"She caught him by the garment, saying, Lie with me"*, for when the Evil Prompter gains an ascendancy over a man, he decks him out with fine raiment and curls his hair and says, *"Lie with me"*, that is, attach yourself to me. He who is righteous stands up to him and offers him battle. So Scriptures says, *"And he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and he got out"*. Thus, the righteous, by an effort, shakes him off and flees from him so that he should not have command over him anymore. (190b)

## VAYEISHEV

- 350.** Said R' Jose: It behooves one to be on his guard against sin and to turn neither to the right or the left. However careful he may be, he should still search himself daily for sin. (191a)
- 351.** A person should be on his guard against his sins the whole day and every day. When night comes, it behooves him to look back and examine all the actions he has done that day, so that he may repent. (191a)
- 352.** It is necessary before interpreting a dream to entrust the interpretation to the Holy One, since there, on High, is the shaping of events and His is the interpretation. (191b)
- 353.** Whoever contemplates that which he learns from his master while, at the same time, seeing that wisdom reflected in his face, can thereby obtain an additional measure of spirit. (192a)



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### MIKEITZ

### מקץ

- 354.** A river seen in a dream is a presage of peace. (193b)
- 355.** R' Judah said: What one is shown in a dream corresponds to his own character. (194a)
- 356.** R' Isaac said: Although it has been affirmed that no man is shown anything in a dream save what falls within his own Grade, it is different with kings who are permitted to see more deeply than other men. For inasmuch as a king's Grade is higher than that of other men, he is permitted to see that which falls within a higher Grade than that of other men. (194b)
- 357.** God does not reveal what He is about to do except to the prophets, saints and sages of the generation. (194b)
- 358.** A dream is determined by its interpretation. (194b)
- 359.** Everything is dependent on man's free will. (195b)
- 360.** One ought never to begin his speech with an ill-omened utterance as he does not know who will take it up, and he may come to grieve over it. The righteous thus always begin their discourse with words of peace. (195b)



## MIKEITZ

361. The way of the Almighty is to provide the cure before inflicting the wound. (196a)
362. If one has not acquired merit in this world, he will not acquire it any more in the Other World. (196b)
363. The spirit needs sustenance in the same way as the body, and that as the body goes on developing, so is the spirit granted increased strength and energy. (197a)
364. The term "way" everywhere in Scripture denotes an open road, accessible to all. (197b)
365. Nothing happens in the world which does not depend on Mazal. (198a)
366. Whoever enters the path of defilement is carried further along it. (198b)
367. All those imbued with severity take no pity on men when they fall into their hands. (198b)
368. Happy are the righteous who know how to guard themselves against their sins and continually examine their deeds so that no Accuser may rise up against them either in this world or in the World to Come, the Torah being their guide and preparing the way for them. Of these, it is written, "*Her ways are the ways of graciousness, and all her paths are peace.*" (199a)
369. R' Hiya said: God created Man in order that he should make himself worthy of His glory and always serve Him, and be occupied in the Torah, day and night. (199a)
370. One ought to remember a good dream because, although there is no forgetfulness before the Holy One, yet if one forgets the dream he also will be forgotten. A dream that is not remembered might well have not have been dreamt. Therefore, a dream forgotten and gone from the mind is never fulfilled. (199b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 371.** Some dreams are altogether true and others are a mixture of true and false. But to the truly righteous, no false messages are ever communicated, but all they are told is true. (199b)
- 372.** How is it that a good man is often shown a bad dream? The explanation is that what he sees in such a dream is the evil that is to cleave to those who transgress the commands of the Torah and the punishments which will be meted out to them in the Other World. The good man sees all these in his dreams in order that the fear of his Master may constantly be upon him. (200a)
- 373.** When one has had a dream, he should unburden himself of it before his friends so that they should express to him their good wishes and give utterance to words of good omen. (200a)
- 374.** One's friends should affirm the good interpretation, and so all will be well. (200a)
- 375.** When people live in peace and harbor no quarrelsome persons in their midst, God has compassion on them and rigorous Justice is not invoked against them, even though they worship idols. (200b)
- 376.** Whoever promotes charity, promotes peace. (200b)
- 377.** When ten assemble together in the Synagogue and one of them slips out, God is wrathful with him. (parenthetically on 201a)
- 378.** R' Jose said: It behooves the sons of men to abound in love for each other, and banish enmity from their midst. (201a)
- 379.** One day, R' Abba was sitting at the gates of Lod when he saw a man come and seat himself on a ledge overhanging the ground. Being weary from travel, he fell asleep. R' Abba saw a serpent glide up towards the man, but before it reached him, a branch fell from a tree and killed it. The man then woke up, and catching the sight of the serpent in front of

## MIKEITZ

him stood up. No sooner had he done so that the ledge gave way, and crashed into the hollow below.

R' Abba approached him and said: Tell me what have you done that God should perform two miracles for you? The man replied: Never did anyone do an injury to me but that I made peace with him and forgave him. Moreover, if could not make peace with him, I did not retire to rest before I forgave him together with all those who vexed me. Nor was I at any time concerned about the evil the man did me. No, even more. From that day onward, I exerted myself to show kindness to such a man.

R' Abba then wept and said: This man's deeds excel even those of Joseph, for Joseph showed forbearance towards his own brethren upon whom it was natural for him to have compassion. But this man did more, and it was thus befitting him that the Holy One should work for him one miracle upon another. (201b)

- 380.** It behooves a person to contend daily with his Evil Prompter and to picture himself the day when he will stand before the King to be judged, when they will lower him into the ground to rot there, while the soul will become separated from him.

We have been taught that it behooves a person always to rouse the Good Prompter against the Evil Prompter. If the latter departs, well and good, but if not, the man should study the Torah, as there is nothing so well calculated to crush the Evil Prompter as the Torah. If he departs, well and good, but if not let the man remind him<sup>34</sup> of the day of death so as to subdue him. We know the Evil Prompter and the Angel of Death are one and the same.

How is it possible that the Angel of Death should be conquered by the thought of the day of death seeing that he, himself, is the slayer of the sons of men, and this is his joy and, in fact, his whole purpose in leading men astray is to bring them to this?

The truth, however, is that the purpose of bringing to mind the day of death is primarily to humble a man's heart, for the Evil Prompter

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<sup>34</sup> Maybe, himself.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

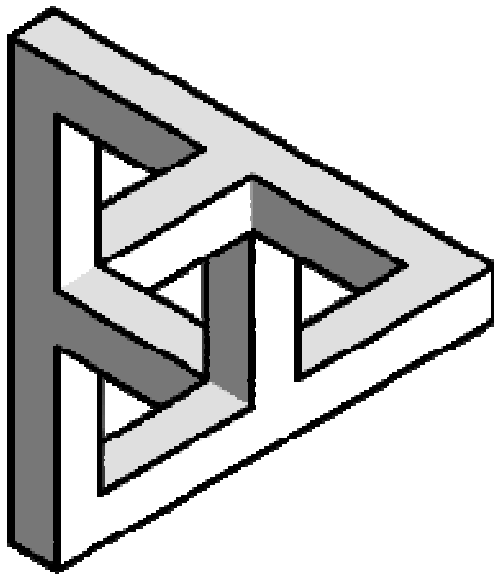
dwells only in place where pride and intoxication are rampant. But, where he finds a broken spirit, he leaves the man alone.

Observe that the Good Prompter requires the joy of the Torah and the Evil Prompter, the joy of wine and lewdness and arrogance. Hence, a man should constantly be in fear of that great day, the Day of Judgment, the day of reckoning when there will be none to defend him save his own good deeds which he performed in this world. (201b-202a)

- 381.** It is only one's sins that break his courage and deprive him of strength. (202a)
- 382.** Whoever is burdened by sins is constantly in fear as it says, "*And you shall fear night and day*" (Deut. 28:66). (202b)
- 383.** One, when praying to the Almighty, should not observe too closely whether his prayer is answered or not, lest the numerous Accusers who are about will come to scrutinize his deeds. (202b)
- 384.** Whoever desires that the Holy One, blessed be He, should accept his prayer, should be diligent in the study of Torah. (202b)
- 385.** From the time when the Temple was destroyed, no day has passed without its curses. For as long as the Temple was in existence, Israel performed Divine service, offering up burnt-offerings and other offerings, while the Divine Presence in the Temple hovered over them like a mother hovering over her children. All faces were lit up and all found blessing both Above and here Below. No day passed without its blessings and joys. Then Israel dwelt securely in its Land and the entire world was provisioned through them. But now that the Temple is destroyed and the Divine Presence is in exile with Israel, there is not a day which does not bring its curses. The world is under a curse and joylessness reigns on High and Below. Nevertheless, the Holy One, blessed be He, will, in due time, raise Israel from the dust and suffuse the world with joy. (203a)

## MIKEITZ

- 386.** It is incumbent on every man not to bring offspring into the world during years of famine. (204a)
- 387.** When one sets out on a journey, he should prepare himself for three courses: for making presents (which includes greetings for peace), for fighting, and for praying. (204b)
- 388.** That it is forbidden to salute a sinner we know from the verse, "*There is no peace, says the Lord, concerning the wicked*" (Isa. 48:22) (205a)



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### VAYIGASH

#### ויגש

- 389.** The soul is a compound of three Grades and, hence, it has three names. To wit: נפש (vital principle), רוח (spirit) and נשמה (soul proper). נפש is the lowest of the three, רוח is a Grade higher, while נשמה is the highest of all and dominates the others. These three Grades are harmoniously combined in those men who have the good fortune to render service to their Master. For, at first, man possesses נפש which is a holy preparative for a higher stage. After he has achieved purity in the Grade of נפש he becomes fit to be crowned by the holy Grade that rests upon it, namely רוח. When he has thus attained to the indwelling of נפש and רוח and qualifies himself for the worship of his Master in the requisite manner, the נשמה, the holy superior Grade that dominates all the others takes up its abode with him and crowns him so that he becomes complete and perfected on all Sides. He becomes worthy of the World to Come and is beloved of the Holy One, blessed be He. Of him Scripture says, *"I have what to bequeath to those who love Me"* (Prov. 8:21), the, *"Those who love me"*, being those who have attained the holy נשמה. (205b-206a)
- 390.** For up to the fifty-ninth breath, the sleeper is still completely alive. From that point, he has a foretaste of death and the spirit of impurity obtains power over him. (207a)

## VAYIGASH

- 391.** For at midnight, when the supernal holiness is awakened, the man who remains asleep in his bed without regarding the glory of his Master falls under the spell of death and is attached to the Other Place. (207a)
- 392.** Whatever God does in the world has a deep symbolic significance and is all as it should be. (207a)
- 393.** We have to get up early in the morning and recite His praises in the proper order and bless His Name before we are allowed to salute any living person. (207b)
- 394.** R' Judah said: Happy are those righteous ones whose coming together brings peace to the world, since they know how to affect unity. (208a)
- 395.** Those who collect for charity receive as great a reward as those who give the charity all together. (208a)
- 396.** The righteous should not put their Master to trouble by exposing themselves to an obvious danger. (209a)
- 397.** When a female becomes pregnant from a male, it is mostly the result of an equal and reciprocal desire or less often of the predominating desire of the female. When the desire of the male predominates, then the soul of the child who is born has great vitality inasmuch as the whole of its being is the result of the desire and yearning for the Tree of Life. (209a)
- 398.** Before offering his prayer to his Master, one should first recite some thanksgiving. (209b)
- 399.** In praying before his Master, one should not make his voice heard, as if he does so his prayer will not be accepted. It thus behooves one to pray silently, to pray with that voice which is inaudible. (209b-210a)
- 400.** The prayer which the Holy One, blessed be He, accepts is that which is performed with earnestness and proper concentration of the mind on the unity of God. (210a)

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- 401.** Wherever Israel was exiled, the Divine Presence followed them into exile. (211a)





## VAYECHI

# VAYECHI

ויחי

- 402.** R' Jose said: The Divine Presence does not rest on a place which is defective or disturbed, but only in a place properly prepared, a place of joyfulness. (216b)
- 403.** R' Jose said: When one's appointed time draws near, proclamation is made concerning him for thirty days, and even the birds of heaven announce his doom. If he is virtuous, his coming is announced for thirty days among the righteous in the Garden of Eden. We have learned that during those thirty days, his soul departs from him every night and ascends to the Other World and sees its place there. During those thirty days, the man has not the same consciousness or control of his soul as previously. R' Judah said: From the first arrival of those thirty days, a man's shadow becomes faint and his form is not outlined clearly on the ground. (217b)
- 404.** At the hour of a man's departure from the world, his father and relatives gather around him and he sees them and recognizes them and likewise all with whom he associated in this world, and they accompany his soul to the place where it is to abide. (218a)
- 405.** So when man's judgment hour is near, it commences to call to him and no one knows save the patient himself, that when one is ill and his time is approaching to part from the world, a new spirit enters into him

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

from Above in virtue of which he sees things which he could not see before, and then he departs from the world. So it is written, *"For man shall not see me and live"*. In their lifetime they may not see, but at the hour of death they may. We have further learned that at the time of one's death he is allowed to see his relatives and companions from the Other World. If he is virtuous, they all rejoice before him and give him greeting. If not, then he is recognized only by the sinners who every day are thrust down to Gehenna. They are all in great gloom and begin and end their conversations with "Woe"! Raising his eyes, he beholds them like a flame shooting up from the fire, and he also exclaims, "Woe"! We have learned that when one's soul departs from him, all his relatives and companions in the Other World join it and show it the place of delight and the place of torture. If he is virtuous, he holds his place and ascends and sits there and enjoys the delights of the Other World. But if he is not virtuous, his soul remains in this world until the body is buried in the dust. Then the executioners take hold of him and drag him down to Dumah and to his appointed storey in Gehenna.

R' Judah said: For seven days the soul goes to and fro from his house to his grave and from his grave to his house, mourning for the body, as it is written, *"His flesh shall suffer pain for him, and his soul shall mourn for it"* (Job 14:22) and it grieves to behold the sadness in the house.

We have learned that, after seven days, the body begins to decay, and the soul goes to its place. It enters the cave of Machpelah where it is allowed in up to a certain point according to its deserts. It then reaches the place of the Garden of Eden and meets the Cherubim and the flashing sword which is in the Lower Garden of Eden. If it is worthy to enter, it enters.

We have learned that four pillars (angels) are waiting there with the form of a body in their hands. With this the soul gleefully clothes itself and remains in its appointed circle in the Garden of Eden for its allotted time. Then a herald makes proclamation and a pillar of three colors is brought forward, which is called, *"The habitation of Mount*

## VAYECHI

*Zion*" (Isa. 4:5). By means of this pillar, it ascends to the Gate of Righteousness in which are Zion and Jerusalem. If it is worthy to ascend further, then happy is its portion and lot that it becomes attached to the Body of the King. If it is not worthy to ascend further then, *"He that is left in Zion and he that remains in Jerusalem shall be called Holy"* (Ibid. 3). But if it is privileged to ascend further, then it beholds the glory of the King and enjoys the supernal delight from the place which called Heaven. Happy is he who is awarded this grace!

406. R' Jose said: There is a Superior Grace and an Inferior Grace. The Superior Grace is above the Heavens, as it is written, *"For great above the Heaven is Your kindness"* (Ps. 108:5). Of the Inferior Grace it is written, *"For great unto Heaven is Your kindness"* (Ibid. 57:11) and to this class belong the *"faithful kindnesses (promised) to David"* (Isa. 55:3). (Veyechi 218b-219a)
407. A man should not cease from propagating his kind until he has a son and a daughter. (219a)
408. R' Isaac said: The word **עַל** (ill) in this passage refers especially to him who willfully spills his seed, like Er the son of Judah. Such a one is thrust down lower than all the others in that world. All others have a chance to ascend, but not he. Is he even worse, it may be asked, than a murderer? A murder kills another man's children, but he kills his own, and he spills very much blood. Hence, it is written of such a one particularly, *"And that which he did was evil in the sight of the Lord"* (Gen. 38:10). R' Judah said: Every sin admits of repentance, barring this, and every sinner may hope to see the face of the Divine Presence barring this one. (219b)
409. Whoever prays with tears before the Almighty can procure the cancellation of any chastisement that has been decreed against him. (223a)
410. Wisdom is not acquired by a man save when he sits and rests. (223a)

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411. Said R' Hiya: Study of Torah for worldly ends does not ascend aloft. (223b)
412. R' Eleazar said: Though one should live a thousand years, yet at the time of this departure from the world it seems to him as if he had only lived a single day. (223b)
413. Woe to the generation the members of which do not rise when the Scroll of the Torah is displayed. (225a)
414. We have learned that the soul is linked with the body twelve months in the grave, and they are judged together (this, however, does not apply to the souls of the righteous, as we have laid down). It is present in the grave and is aware of the sufferings of the body. It also knows the sufferings of the living, but does not intervene on their behalf. After twelve months, it is clad in a certain vesture and goes to and fro in the world, learning certain things from the spirit and interesting itself on behalf of the living who are in distress. (225a)
415. God does not show mercy to the world until He has informed the Patriarchs, and for their sake the world is blessed. (225b)
- R' Judah said: If a man dies on foreign soil and his body is buried in the Holy Land, to him may be applied the verse, "*And you came and defiled My land and My inheritance, you made an abomination* (Jer. 2:7). How, then, could Jacob ask to be buried in the graves of his fathers seeing that he was dying on alien soil? Jacob was different because the Divine Presence was closely attached to him. (225b-226a)
416. When the father dies, the son ought to put dust on his eyes at the time of his burial<sup>35</sup>. This is a mark of respect for him being a sign that the world is now concealed from him, and his son inherits the world in his place. (226a)
417. When one departs from this world, his soul is still enclosed in him. Before his eyes are closed they see certain recondite things, as we have

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<sup>35</sup> See Geshet Hachaim, Vol. 1, Chapter 10, Para. 3.

## VAYECHI

explained in connection with the verse, *"For a man shall not see me and live"*, indicating that they see things in their death which they do not see in their lifetime.

It behooves those who are present (at the death) to place their hands on his eyes and close them and, as we have learned in connection with customs and manners, if he has a son, it behooves the son in the first place to do so, as it is written, *"And Joseph shall put his hand on your eyes"*. The reason for the closing of the eyes is because some sight the reverse of holy might present itself and it is not befitting that the eyes which have just beheld a holy vision should now dwell on a sight of a different character.

A further reason is that the soul is still attached to him in the house and, if the eye is open with that unholy vision still resting upon it, everything it looks upon is cursed. This is not respectful to the eye, to allow it to gaze upon anything improper. The best sign of respect, therefore, is that the man's eyes should be closed by the hand of the son whom he has left behind. (226a)

- 418.** For seven days, the soul goes to and fro between the house and the grave, mourning for the body. Thrice a day, the soul and the body are chastised together, though no one perceives it. After that, the body is thrust out and the soul is purified in Gehenna, where it goes forth roaming about the world and visiting the grave until it acquires a vestment. After twelve months, the whole is at rest. The body reposes in the dust and the soul is clad in its luminous vestment. The spirit regales itself in the Garden of Eden and the higher soul (נשמה) ascends to the place where all delights are concentrated. (226a/b)
- 419.** In truth, books are opened every day and acts are recorded. Though no one notices or inclines his ear, the Torah testifies against man every day, and a voice cries aloud, *"Who is simple, let him turn in here"*, but no one listens. We have learned that when a man rises in the morning, witnesses stand by him and adjure him, but he pays no heed. His

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higher soul adjures him at all times and seasons. If he heeds her, it is well, but if not, then the books are open and the deeds recorded. (227a)

420. The holy soul (נשמה) is withheld from man for thirty days before he departs from the world. During that time, he observes that he throws no shadow. The reason being that his נשמה is withheld from him. For it does not wait until he is at the point of dying, but even while he is still in his full vigor, it passes out of him. It does not illumine the spirit which in turns does not illumine the vital soul, so that his shadow no longer shows. From that day, all proclaim his coming fate, even the birds of the heaven.

When the spirit ceases to illumine the vital soul, the latter becomes weak and rejects food and all bodily enjoyments.

R' Judah said further: Also, whenever a man is on a sickbed and is not able to say his prayers, his נשמה leaves him and the spirit does not illumine the soul until he is judged. If the judgment is favorable, then the נשמה returns to its place and illumines the whole.

We have learned that when one is judged Above, his נשמה is brought to trial and she confesses all and testifies to all the thoughts of a man, but not to his deeds, since they are all recorded in a book. While the trial is going on, the body is in greater pain than at other times. If he is judged favorably, he obtains ease and sweat breaks out over his body and his נשמה returns to its place and illumines the whole. But a man never rises from his bed of sickness until he is judged. How is it, then, it may be asked, that so many sinners and transgressors are alive and active?

The reason is that God looks ahead and, if he sees that a man, though sinful now, may become virtuous subsequently, He judges him favorably or it may be because he is destined to bear a son who will be virtuous. All God's judgments incline to beneficence, as it is written, *"Have I any desire in the death of the wicked, says the Lord God, and not rather that he should return from his ways and that he may live?"* (Ezek. 18:23).

## VAYECHI

Sometimes it is because the malady has run its course, for illnesses have a fixed period after which they depart, whether from the righteous or the wicked, and all is done in justice. (227a/b)

421. The righteous see into the distant future. In the same way, God shows them all generations before they come into the world. (227b)
422. The blessing of a man's sons is his own blessing. (227b)
423. Wherever blessings are to be bestowed, God should be blessed first. Otherwise, the blessing will not be fulfilled. (227b-228a)
424. In the morning, one should first bless God, and only then give his greetings to his fellow men. (228a)
425. R' Judah discoursed on the text, "*Then Hezekiah turned his face unto the wall and prayed to the Lord*" (Isa. 38:2): We have derived from this verse the lesson that a man when praying should stand near the wall with nothing intervening between himself and the wall. (228a)
426. Whoever has not labored to father children in this world is not established in the future, and his soul is banished and can nowhere be found. (228b)
427. Anyone who is conscious of a sin for which he means to ask forgiveness, should first form a resolution to cure himself of that sin and then offer his prayer. Therefore, Hezekiah first resolved to marry, and then offered his prayer. (228b)
428. The possession of a good wife comes to a man only from God. For God mates couples before they are born, and when a man is worthy, he obtains a wife according to his deserts. Sometimes it happens that after the lot has been cast, that man perverts his ways and then his mate is transferred to another until he rectifies his ways or else until his time comes and then the other is removed to make way for him and he comes into his own. But it is grievous in the sight of God to remove one

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

man to make way for another. Nor is it only a prudent wife who is from God. For if God has purposes to bestow benefits on a man, but he goes astray to the Other Side then from that Other Side to which he cleaves there shall come to him one who shall bring upon him all accusations and all ills. (229a)

- 429.** R' Jose discoursed on the verse, *"Serve the Lord with gladness, come before Him with singing"* (Ps. 100:2). The service of prayer offered by man to the Holy One, blessed be He, should be carried out with gladness and with singing so that he may associate the Community of Israel with him. He should then proclaim the unity in the fitting manner, as it says *"Know that the Lord, He is God"* (Ps. 100:3). These two activities of gladness and song correspond to the two prayers of morning and afternoon, and to the two daily sacrifices – gladness in the morning and singing in the afternoon. The Evening Prayer, on the other hand, is optional, because at that time the Divine Presence is distributing sustenance to all Her hosts and it is not the time for blessing. In the daytime, She is to be blessed from these two Sides, morning and afternoon, out of gladness and singing. At night, She divides the blessings among all in the fitting manner. (229b)
- 430.** The Incense symbolizes universal joy and universal union. (230a)
- 431.** One should say the Afternoon Prayer with special devotion, even more than other prayers. (230a)
- 432.** R' Judah and R' Jose were traveling together and found themselves in a dangerous place. R' Jose said: One should not rely on a miracle for God does not perform miracles at all times. Said R' Judah: That applies only when a man is by himself. But, we are three for when words of Torah pass between us, the Divine Presence is with us and, therefore, we have no need to fear. (230b)
- 433.** The world did not come into being until God took a certain stone which is called the "foundation stone" and cast it into the abyss so that



## VAYECHI

it held fast there. From it, the world was planted. This is the central point of the universe and on this point stands the Holy of Holies. (231a)

434. Blessed are those who stand at their posts and study the Torah at night because God and all the righteous in the Garden of Eden listen to the voice of those sons of men who study the Torah. (231b)
435. A eulogy should not be extravagant. To ascribe to another merits which he did not possess is really to reproach him. Therefore, in recounting the praises of a deceased person, we should say only what he deserves and no more, otherwise through trying to praise him, we shall really blame him. (232b)
436. The word הללויה (lit. praise be Yah) contains the highest of all praises of the Lord. (232b)
437. A man loves his grandchildren more than his children. (233a)
438. Women derive blessings only from the blessings of the men. (233a)
439. God gives extra blessings to a man who is married in order that his wife may be blessed through him. So he receives two portions, one for himself and one for his wife. (233a/b)
440. When one is virtuous in this world, his days are blessed Above. (233b)
441. The prayer of an individual man only enters before the Holy King with great difficulty because before it can be crowned in its place God examines it closely and weighs the merits and defects of that individual. He does not do so with the prayer of the congregation. For congregational prayers are offered by many who are not virtuous and yet they all come before God and he does not regard their sins. Therefore, it says, *"God turns to the prayer of the solitary one"* and weighs and considers it and examines in what spirit it is offered and who is the man who offers it and what is his conduct. Hence, one

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should pray with the congregation because, "*God does not despise their prayer*" even though they do not all pray with devotion. (234a)

442. One who praises his Master and addresses supplications to Him, establishes his Master more firmly by showing that all depends upon Him and not upon any other power. (234b)
443. R' Eleazar put the following question to R' Shimon: Since it is known to God that men will die, why does He send souls down into the world? He answered: This question has been discussed many times by the teachers and they have answered it thus. God sends souls down to this world to declare His glory and takes them back afterwards. (235a)
444. He who dwells by the seashore has access to all luxuries. (235b)
445. The sons of Reuven have been scattered in captivity to all four quarters of the world, having been taken captive four times. Correspondingly, they are destined to make war in the four quarters of the world and to carry all before them and to conquer many peoples and rule over them. (236a)
446. "*I will divide them in Jacob*". R' Hiya said: From this verse we learn that the tribes of Shimon and Levi were never again united. There is no generation in which their punishment does not descend upon the world and great is the number of beggars among them. (236b)
447. R' Jose discoursed: How little do men care for the glory of their Master or pay heed to the words of Torah! At first prophecy was vouchsafed to men and through it they know the glory of God. When prophecy ceased, they had the *בַּת קוֹל*, but now they have nothing but dreams. Dreams are a Lower Grade, being one-sixtieth of prophecy, and they are bestowed to everyone. (238a)
448. R' Hezekiah said: Sinners are punished in Gehenna for twelve months, half with fire and half with snow. (238b)

## VAYECHI

- 449.** The Holy Spirit spoke to David: Do not challenge a wicked person because you do not know if you have the strength to prevail against him. Perhaps he is a tree which has never been uprooted (i.e. perhaps his soul is the first time on Earth and yours is the second time) and you will be repulsed by him. Do not look at the works of those who do unrighteousness so that you will not become indignant with them. For whoever sees their works and is not zealous for God transgresses three negative precepts, namely, *"You shall have not strange God before me"*, *"You shall not make for yourselves any graven image"*, and, *"Those shall not bow down to them nor serve them."* Therefore, one should keep away from them. (239a)
- 450.** The "vine", as we have said, is the Community of Israel. It is called vine because just as the wise will receive no graft from another tree, so the Community of Israel accepts no master but God and, therefore, all other powers are subdued before her, and cannot obtain dominion over her. (239b)
- 451.** Grace after meals should not be said over an empty table, but there should be bread on it and a cup of wine. The wine should be taken in the right hand. (240a)
- 452.** He who supports a student of Torah is blessed from Above and Below. He is privileged to eat of two tables, a privilege granted to no other man. He is granted wealth in this world and he is granted a portion in the Next World. (242a)
- 453.** Whoever is able to discuss Torah and does not do so, renders his life forfeit and is further subjected to the burden of worldly cares and the domination of others. (242b)
- 454.** R' Jose and R' Hezekiah were once going to see R' Shimon in Cappadocia. Said R' Hezekiah: We have laid down that one before praying should first pronounce God's praises. But what of the man who is in great distress and is in haste to pour out his prayer and is not

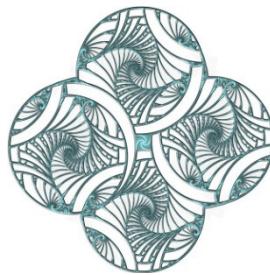
## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

able to pronounce the blessings of his Master fittingly? He replied: That is no reason why the praise of his Master should be omitted. He should pronounce it, even without proper devotion, and then say his prayer. Thus it is written, *"A prayer of David. Hear, O Lord, righteousness, listen to my song"* (Ps. 17:1) - first praise, then prayer. Of him who is able to pronounce the praise of his Master and does not do so, it is written, *"When you offer many prayers I will not listen"* (Isa. 1:15). (243b-244a)

- 455. Prayers were ordained to correspond to the daily offerings. (244a)
- 456. The most perfect form of praising God is to unify His Name. (244a)
- 457. R' Hezekiah said: God placed Israel in exile among the Nations in order that they might be blessed for their sake, for they bring blessings from Heaven to Earth every day. (244a)
- 458. When one is about to depart from this world and sees strange things, his spirit courses through all his limbs and goes up and down like a boatman without oars who is tossed up and down on the sea and makes no progress. It then asks leave of each limb and its separation is only effected with great violence. (245a)
- 459. Love without jealousy is not true love. Hence we learn that a man should be jealous of his wife in order that his love for her may be perfect, for then he will not look at any other woman. (245a)
- 460. Silence is good everywhere, except in connection with the Torah. (245a)
- 461. *"The righteous man is the foundation of the world"* (Prov. 10:25). Esoterically speaking, the צדִיק is the foundation of the Upper World and the foundation of the Lower World. *"The righteous shall inherit the Earth"* (Ps. 38:29). (245b)
- 462. It is forbidden for one to bless his neighbor in the morning until he has blessed God. (248a)

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- 463.** Anyone who desires to praise God with singing should have an agreeable voice in order that those who listen may derive pleasure from hearing him. If not, he should not come forward to sing. The Levites were commanded to retire from service at the age of fifty<sup>36</sup> because at that age, a man's voice begins to fail and is no longer so agreeable. (249b)
- 464.** He who blesses God is blessed, and he who does not bless God is not blessed. (250a)
- 465.** A cup (of blessing) should be taken in the right hand and not in the left. The table over which the blessing is said should not be devoid of both bread and wine. The cup should be raised both by the right hand and the left hand so as to be set between. It should be filled with wine. He who says the blessing should fix his eye upon the cup to bless it with four blessings<sup>37</sup>. (250a/b)
- 466.** R' Shimon said: With Jacob's admission, the Cave of Machpelah obtained its full complement and it never again received another occupant, nor will it ever receive one. (250b)



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<sup>36</sup> See Num. 8:25. The Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Klei Mikdosh 3:8 rules, "That which it says in the Torah with regard to the Levites, 'One who is fifty years old shall retire from Service' refers to the time when they carried the Sanctuary from place to place. This is not a Mitzvoh 'for the generations'. However, in subsequent generations the Levite was not disqualified neither due to age or blemish. Only if his voice faltered due to his advanced years was he disqualified from singing the Song. He becomes a gatekeeper."

<sup>37</sup> The four blessings in the **ברכת המזון**.

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### *SHEMOS*

### שמות

**467.** It is written, *“And the wise shall be resplendent as the splendor (Zohar) of the firmament, and they who turn many to righteousness shall be like the stars forever and ever”* (Dan. 12:3). *“The wise”* are those who penetrate to the real essence of wisdom; *“They shall be resplendent”*, i.e. illumined with the radiance of the supernal Wisdom; *“As the splendor”*, this is the flashing of the Stream that goes forth from Eden (Gen. 11:10), this being alluded to as, *“The firmament”*. There are suspended the stars, the planets, the Sun and the Moon, and all the radiant lights.

The brightness of this firmament shines upon the Garden of Eden and in the midst of the Garden stands the Tree of Life whose branches spread over all forms and trees and spices in fitting vessels. All the beasts of the field and all the fowl of the air shelter beneath the branches of this Tree. The fruit of the Tree gives life to all. It is everlasting. The Other Side has no abode therein, but only the side of holiness. Blessed are they who taste thereof. They will live forever and ever, and it is they who are called *“The wise”*, and they are vouchsafed life in this world, as well as in the World to Come. (2a)

**468.** One who is accustomed to pain, bears it patiently. But if one is not accustomed to pain and has always lived at ease, when pain comes upon him he really feels it keenly and deserves to be pitied. (2b)

## SHEMOS

469. Wherever Israel went into captivity, the Divine Presence went with her. (2b)
470. R' Hiya said: The bread or any other blessing offered by an evil-eyed man is not worth partaking of or enjoying<sup>38</sup>. (3a)
471. R' Isaac said: Though a man should have a vigorous appetite and be a hearty eater, yet if he encounters an evil-eyed man, it would be better for him to take his own life than partake of his bread<sup>39</sup>. (3a)
472. There are three types of men who drive away the Divine Presence from the world making it impossible for the Holy One, blessed be He, to fix His abode in the universe and cause prayers to go unanswered.

One, is he who cohabits with a woman in the days of her separation. There is no impurity comparable with this. He defiles himself and all connected with him. A child born of such a union is shaped in impurity, imbibes the spirit of impurity and its whole life is founded on impurity.

Next, is he who lies with a heathen woman, for he profanes herewith the sacred sign of the Covenant<sup>40</sup> which constitutes the support of the sacred Name and the essence of faith. As soon as, "*The people committed whoredom*" with the daughters of Moab, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel<sup>41</sup>. The leaders of the people who did not endeavor to prevent them were the first to be punished<sup>42</sup>. In every generation it is the leaders who are made responsible for all the members of the community in regard to the profanation of the sign of the Covenant which is the "*Sun and shield*" (Ps. 84:12). As the Sun gives light to the world, so does the holy sign give light to the body. As the shield protects, so does the holy sign protect. He who keeps it in purity is guarded from evil. But he who transfers this sign of holiness into a strange domain breaks the commandment, "*You shall have no other*

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<sup>38</sup> See Baba Metziah 22a, Shach CM 358, Sif Koton 'X

<sup>39</sup> Surely, allegorically-speaking.

<sup>40</sup> The Bris Miloh.

<sup>41</sup> See Num. 25:1-3

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 4

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

*gods but Me*". For to deny the king's seal is equivalent to denying the king himself.

Next, is he who purposely prevents the seed from coming to fruition, for he destroys the King's workmanship and so causes the Holy One to depart from the world. This sin is the cause of war, famine and pestilence and it prevents the Divine Presence from finding any resting place in the world.

For these abominations the Spirit of Holiness weeps. Woe to him who causes this. It were better that he had never been born. (3a/b)

473. R' Hiya found an indication of the purity of the Israelite women in Egypt in the text, "*And he made the lave of brass, and the foot of it brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling at the door of the tent*" (Ex. 38:8). What was the merit of the women to have made them worthy of such honor that their looking-glasses should be used for the laver of the Tabernacle? The ritual ablutions on the one hand, and their eagerness to attract their husbands on the other. (3b-4a)
474. R' Hiya said: Whatever is in Heaven, the Holy One, blessed be He, has made a counterpart thereof on Earth. (5a)
475. According to the dictum of R' Judah, the Divine Presence never departed from the Western Wall of the Temple. (5b)
476. The reason why the Holy One did not reveal Himself fully by signs and wonders in Babylon was because the Israelites took for themselves foreign wives and profaned the sign of the Holy Covenant. (7a)
477. "*Sanctify yourselves and be holy*" (Levit. 11:44). When a person so sanctifies himself here Below, the Holy One adds His sanctification from Above. (11b)
478. Said R' Shimon: There is not a word in the Torah which does not contain sublime and precious mystical teachings. (12a)



## SHEMOS

- 479.** Said R' Judah: Man's fate depends in the last resort upon repentance and prayer, and especially prayer with tears. For there is no gate which tears cannot penetrate. (12b)
- 480.** The Divine Presence always hovers over Israel like a mother over her children, and pleads in her defense against her Accuser. (12b)
- 481.** R' Abba has said: There are many wicked parents who beget more good sons than righteous parents. A good son born of wicked parents is of special excellence, being pure out of impure, light out of darkness, and wisdom out of folly. (12b)
- 482.** R' Judah said: The Holy One, blessed be He, delights more in the prayer of the righteous than in any other thing whatsoever. Yet though it pleases Him better than all else, He does not always grant their requests or do all that they ask. He sometimes refuses to fulfill their wish. (15a)
- 483.** It was recounted by the disciples that on one occasion when there was a shortage of rain, R' Eleazar decreed that the congregation should fast for forty days. But no rain fell. Then R' Akiva prayed, and as he spoke the words, "You caused the wind to blow" the wind blew, and when he said, "and the rain to fall", the rain fell.

R' Eleazar was much chagrined at this. R' Akiva read his feelings in his looks, so he stood up and said to the congregation, "I will tell you a parable. R' Eleazar is like unto one who is the king's own friend and dear companion. When he goes to the palace to entreat some favor, it is not granted at once since the king delights in his friend's presence and so keeps him with him as long as possible. I, on the other hand, am like the king's servant, whose requests are quickly granted, the king only desiring to get rid of him at once and be no more troubled. Therefore he says, "Give the man what he wants at once so that he should not have to enter my chamber!" On hearing this, R' Eleazar was comforted. (15a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

484. R' Judah bar Shalom was once walking together with R' Abba. A voice from the grave cried out. Said R' Judah to him: Do the dead know of the sufferings of the living? He replied: If it were not for us, the dead, who intercede before the angel of the grave for the living, they would not remain alive for half a day. (16a/b)
485. Said R' Abba: That the prayers of the dead protect the living we learn from Caleb who went to Hebron to beg for the intercession of the Patriarchs<sup>43</sup>. (16b)
486. R' Tanhum said: Every nation has its own representative Above. When God elevates one He degrades another. When He gives power to this one, it is only on account of Israel, as it says, "*Her adversaries have become (her) masters*" (Lam. 1:5).

R' Isaac said: Israel singly is equivalent to all the other nations together as seventy is the number of Children of Israel when they came into Egypt; and whoever rules over Israel rules over the whole world.

R' Huna said: Why is Israel subjected to all the nations? In order that the world may be preserved through them, since they are on a par with the whole world. As God is One, so is Israel one, as it says, "*And who is like Your people, one<sup>44</sup> nation on Earth?*" (II Samuel 7:23). And as His Name is one and yet has seventy ramifications, so is Israel one, and yet divided into seventy.

R' Judah applied the words, "*Because of three things the Earth is disquieted...because of a servant when he reigns...and a maidservant who inherits (the place of) her mistress*" (Prov. 30:21-22), to Egypt and Ishmael (Islam)<sup>45</sup>. There is no nation so despised by the Holy One as Egypt, and yet he gave them dominion over Israel. The maidservant is Hagar who bore Ishmael who tormented Israel so cruelly in the past and still rules over her and persecutes her for her faith. In truth, the exile under Ishmael is the hardest of all exiles.

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<sup>43</sup> Num. 13:22

<sup>44</sup> Alternatively – "a unique".

<sup>45</sup> Soncino has this word in parentheses.

## SHEMOS

Once when going up to Jerusalem, R' Joshua saw an Arab and his son meet a Jew. The Arab said to his son: See! There is a Jew whom God has rejected. Go and insult him. Spit in his face seven times for he is of the seed of the exalted ones and I know that the seventy nations shall be ruled by them. The boy went and took hold of the Jew's beard, whereupon R' Joshua said: Mighty ones. Mighty ones. I call upon the Supernal Ones to come down Below! Even before he had finished, the Earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the Arabs. (16b-17a)

487. Said R' Isaac: The King (God) punishes principally and, first of all, the members of His own family in order that they may guard themselves from sin, more than outsiders, as it says, *"Only you have I known from among all the families of the Earth, therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities"* (Amos 3:2). (17b)
488. God punishes the students of Torah in order that they may not be separated from the Tree of Life even for a single moment. (17b)
489. First the gods of a nation are punished, and then the nation itself. (18b)
490. Said R' Tanchum: The seed of Levi is always joined to the Divine Presence – in Moses, Aaron, Miriam and in all his descendants. (19a)
491. R' Isaac said: We have to distinguish between the terms "sighing", "imploring" and "crying", all three of which are applied here to the Children of Israel.

Said R' Judah: In fact they only implored and cried, as the sighing mentioned in the verse refers to the Supernal Beings. What is the difference between imploring and crying?

Said R' Isaac: The former means prayer in actual words<sup>46</sup>, the latter, crying, is without words.

R' Judah said: Hence crying is more poignant than all other expressions of grief because it is entirely a matter of the heart, as it

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<sup>46</sup> See Ps. 39:13, 88:14, 30:3

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

says, *"If he (the orphan) cries unto Me, I will surely hear his cry"* (Ex. 22:20).

R' Berechiah said: When the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Samuel, *"I am remorseful that I have to set up Saul to be king"*, what did Samuel do? *"He cried to the Lord all night"* (I Samuel 15:2). He put aside everything and cried, as this finds the readiest access to the Holy One, blessed be He. Thus we read here, *"Now, therefore, behold the cry of the Children of Israel unto Me."* (Ex. 3:9). When one prays and weeps and cries so intensely that he is unable to find words to express his sorrow, his prayer is prayer in the truest sense for it is in the heart, and shall never return to him void.

Said R' Judah: Great is such crying in that it can affect a change in the Divine sentence of judgment.

R' Isaac said: Great is such crying in that it dominates the supernal attribute of Justice.

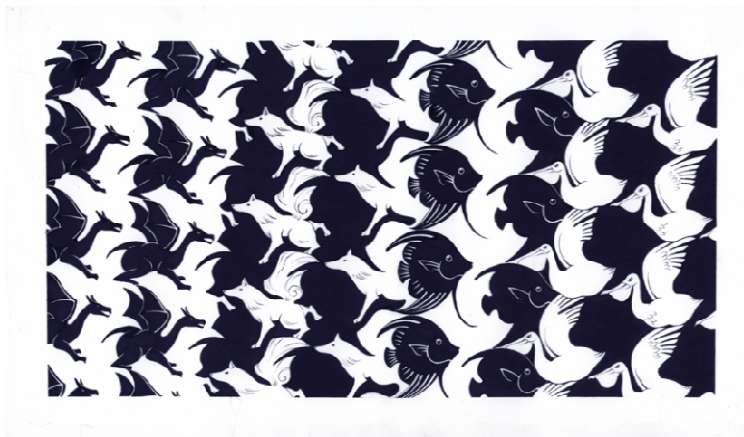
Said R' Jose: Great is such crying in that it dominates both this world and the World to Come, and makes man the heir of both, as it says, *"They cried unto the Lord due to their distress, and He delivered them out of their straits"* (Ps. 107:13). (19b-20a)

492. R' Abba was once walking in company with R' Isaac. On the way, they saw some lilies and R' Abba plucked one. R' Abba smelled the lily and said: What would the world be without smell? For I perceive that without smell, the soul would pine away. Therefore, we burn myrtle spices at the conclusion of the Sabbath. (20a)
493. R' Judah said: How are the righteous recognized? By contrast with the wicked! If it were not for the one, the other would not be known. (20b)
494. Said R' Jose: As a good shepherd keeps his flock in the open and will not let them stray into private ground, so does God keep Israel in the straight path and will not let them turn right or left. (20b)
495. As the shepherd tends with special care to the newly-born lambs and carries them in his bosom or gently leads them after their mother, and

## SHEMOS

is compassionate with them, so must Israel's shepherd (leader) be compassionate and not cruel. As the good shepherd saves the sheep from wolves and lions, so does the good shepherd of Israel save them from pagan nations, from judgment here Below and from judgment Above, and prepares them for the life in the World to Come. Just such a faithful shepherd was Moses. (21a)

496. Balaam was the counterpart of Moses. As the works of the one were from Above, so were the other's from Below. Moses wrought his works by means of the Holy Crown of the All-highest King, Balaam by means of the unholy crowns from Below. (21b)
497. Said R' Judah: As Moses excelled all prophets in Israel in respect to the superior, holy prophecy, so Balaam excelled all other pagan prophets and soothsayers in respect to the inferior, unholy prophecy. In any case, Moses was Above, Balaam Below, and there were numerous stages between them. (21b-22a)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### VO'EROH

### וְאֵרָא

- 498.** Humanity should base its life on justice and not depart from the way of righteousness. (22b)
- 499.** *“And I will take you to Me for a people and I will be to you a God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God”.* This is the first of all Commandments, the root of all precepts of the Law; the knowledge of God in a general way namely, that there is a Supernal Ruler of the universe and of all life, Creator of Heaven and Earth, and all their hosts. But this general knowledge of God must lead to a particular knowledge of Him<sup>47</sup>. (25a)
- 500.** One must fear the Lord even before one has an intellectual knowledge of Him in His revelational individual aspects. Thus, the ultimate and whole duty of Man is to know the Holy One, blessed be He, in a general and particular way. (Ray’a Mehemna 25a)
- 501.** As a result of a proper knowledge of God as the Creator and Lord, the two hundred and forty-eight organs of the human body become two hundred and forty-eight positive Commandments of the Law, and Man’s life becomes something complete and harmonious and, in

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<sup>47</sup> Taken from a section of another Kabbalistic work entitled *Ray’a Mehemna* (“Faithful Shepherd”, (i.e. Moses)), but inserted, along with many other selections from this work, into the text of the Zohar. The Chida writes in *Shem Hagedolim* in the name of the book *Chesed L’Avrohom* that *Ray’a Mehemna* was also written by R’ Shimon bar Yochai after he visited the “World of Souls” and consulted with the soul of the Faithful Shepherd himself.

## VO'EROH

particular, individual knowledge of God causes salvation and blessing to enter every day of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year (corresponding to the three hundred and sixty-five negative Commandments). (Ray'a Mehemna 25a)

502. R' Judah replied: A blind man is counted as dead. For as long as a person is alive, the Holy Name is not joined to his name (i.e., the God of so-and-so) (26a)
503. How careful should a man be not to sin in secret before the Holy One, blessed be He, imagining that no one can testify against him. The stones and sticks of a man's own house shall cry out against him. (28a)
504. A curse on those who say that the Holy One will not raise the dead because it seems to them an impossibility! Let those fools who are far from the Torah and from the Holy One think a little.

Aaron had in his hand a rod made of dry wood and the Holy One turned it to be a living creature for a short time, with spirit and body. Can He not also then, at the time when He will gladden the world, turn into a new creation those bodies which once had spirits and holy souls in them, who kept the Commandments and studied Torah day and night and which He had hidden for a time in the earth?<sup>48</sup>

Said R' Hiya: And what is more, from the words, "*Your dead ones will come to life*" (Isa. 26:19) it is evident that not only will there be a new creation, but that the very bodies which were dead will rise. One bone remains intact, not decaying in the earth and on Resurrection Day the Holy One will soften it and make it lie like leaven in dough and it will rise and expand on all sides. The whole body and all its members will be formed from it and then the Holy One will put spirit into it.

Said R' Eleazar: Assuredly so. And the bone will be softened by the dew as it says, "*Your dead ones shall come to life....for Your dew is like the dew which (revives) vegetation*" (Ibid.). (28a/b)

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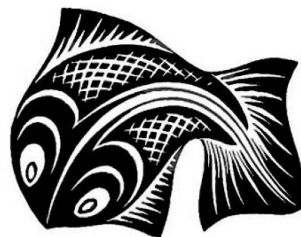
<sup>48</sup> I do not understand this reasoning. If one denies the concept of Resurrection as being "fantastic", would he similarly not deny the "proof" of Aaron's rod? Why is it easier to believe the story of the rod than that of Resurrection?

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

**505.** Woe, woe that Ishmael was born into the world and was circumcised! What did the Holy One do? He banished the children of Ishmael from the Heavenly communion and, instead, gave them a portion Below in the Holy Land because of their circumcision. And they are destined to rule over the Land a long time, so long as it is empty, just as their form of circumcision is empty and imperfect. They will prevent Israel from returning to their own Land until the merit of the children of Ishmael shall have become diminished.

The sons of Ishmael will fight mighty battles in the world and the sons of Edom will gather against them and make war against them, some on land, others on sea and some close to Jerusalem. One shall prevail over the other, but the Holy Land will not be delivered to the sons of Edom. Then a nation from the furthest ends of the Earth will rise against the wicked Rome and fight against her for three months. Many nations will gather there and fall into the hands of that people until all the sons of Edom will congregate against her from all the ends of the Earth.

Then the Holy One will rise against them as it says, *"A sacrifice of the Lord in Botzroh, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom"* (Isa. 34:6). He will, *"Grasp the ends of the Earth and shake the wicked from it"* (Job 38:13). He will wipe out the children of Ishmael from the Holy Land and crush all the powers and principalities of the nations in the supra-mundane world. Only one power will remain Above to rule over the nations of the world, namely the power representing Israel, as it is written, *"The Lord is your protective shade at your right hand"* (Ps. 121:5) (32a)





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- 506.** R' Judah exclaimed: How important it is for man to walk in the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, and keep the Commandments of the Torah that so he may be worthy of the World to Come and triumph over all accusations, both on Earth and in Heaven. For as there are Accusers of man here Below, so there are also Accusers Above. But those who keep the Commandments of the Torah, and walk in righteousness, in fear of the Lord, will never lack intercessors in Heaven. (32b)
- 507.** Satan has the right to accuse individuals, not humanity as a whole. For the judgment of the world is executed by the Holy One Himself. (33b)
- 508.** On New Year's Day, two Sides stand before the Holy One, blessed be He, for the reception of mankind. Those men of whom good deeds and repentance can be recorded are privileged to be inscribed in the roll of that Side which is life and which brings forth life. Whoever is on its Side is inscribed for life. But for those whose works are evil are assigned to the Other Side, which is death. Sometimes, however, it happens that the world is, as it were, exactly balanced between the two. Then if there is but one righteous person to turn the scale, the world is saved. But if there is one wicked one, then the whole world is condemned to death. (33b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 509.** It is wrong to isolate oneself and be separated from the corporate community, since one is then liable to be singled out and accused in the Upper Realm. (33b)
- 510.** Said R' Jose: Only when a thought, be it good or evil, is translated into action, does it bring about its due result Above, whether reward or punishment, saving only the intention of idolatry, of which it says, *"Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not seduced"* (Deut. 11:16). (35b)
- 511.** R' Jose replied: I was reflecting that the condition of mankind depends entirely on their leaders. When they are worthy, the world and all in it prosper. But when they are unworthy, woe to the world and woe to the people! (36b)
- 512.** Said R' Jose: When the head of the people is punished, the people escape punishment, for then the attribute of Justice can claim no power over them (having already been appeased). (36b)
- 513.** God is patient with the wicked and waits for their repentance. (38b)
- 514.** The rabbis have warned us to live only in a place which is the abode of men of pious deeds. Woe to him who fixes his dwelling among the wicked! He will surely be "seized" for their sins! Conversely, when one lives among pious people, one shares the reward of their goodness. (38b)
- 515.** The world is upheld only by the merit of the "breath" of little school children who have not yet tasted sin. (39a)

*The next several excerpts until the end of Sedras Bo are from Ray'a Mehemna.*

- 516.** *"And the people took their dough before it was leavened."* On the strength of this is founded the precept that the leaven should be

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burned on the Passover Eve. "Leaven" and "unleavened" symbolize the evil and the good inclinations in man.

It is obligatory for every Israelite to relate the story of the Exodus on the Passover night. He who does so fervently and joyously, telling the tale with a high heart, shall be found worthy to rejoice in the Divine Presence in the World to Come, for rejoicing brings forth rejoicing. The joy of Israel causes the Holy One Himself to be glad, so that He calls together all the Family Above and says to them, "Come you and hearken unto the praises which My children bring unto Me! Behold how they rejoice in My Redemption!" Then all the angels and supernal beings gather round and observe Israel, how she sings and rejoices because of her Lord's own Redemption - and seeing the rejoicings Below, the supernal beings also break into jubilation for that the Holy One possesses on Earth a people so holy, whose joy in the Redemption of their Lord is so great and so powerful. For all that terrestrial rejoicing increases the power of the Lord and His hosts in the regions Above, just as an Earthly king gains strength from the praises of his subjects, the fame of his glory being thus spread throughout the world.

Similarly, one should acknowledge and proclaim any wonder that God has wrought for him. This should he do, not in order that the Omniscient should become aware of all His wonderful acts, since to Him all things of the past, as well as of the future, are already known, but rather in order that the praises may ascend even to the highest spheres and awaken among the supernal beings a responsive outburst of praise and worshipful delight in the faithfulness of His people and in the invincible greatness of His glory, who is Himself rejoiced at the rejoicings of His people and His Heavenly hosts.

Conversely, with the confession of sin: the Holy One is aware of all man's sins and needs no reminder of them. Yet since Satan, the Supernal Adversary and Accuser, continually lies in wait, ever ready to bring man's sins before the Holy One, it is but a natural precaution to hasten on in advance of him, making full confession of one's sins, so

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that the Accuser, when he comes, may find himself anticipated and left without grounds for his denunciations, and so be discouraged and leave his intended victim alone. Then, should the sinner carry out his repentance fully, he will be fully exonerated, and all will be well. And if not, Satan will thus obtain a just opportunity to rise up against the impious one, saying, "Here is a man who has had the audacity to appear before You, and yet has rebelled against his Lord!" Therefore, man should at all times beware lest he falter in his fealty, and strive ever to be found a faithful servant before the Holy One, blessed be He.

Then follows the command that we should eat unleavened bread during Passover, it being a memorial, throughout the generations, of the true secret of Faith. For, as already stated elsewhere, Israel at that time emerged from the association with idolatry and entered into the Mystery of Faith. (40b-41a – from Ray'a Mehemna)

517. *"With bitter herbs they shall eat it...neither shall you break a bone thereof."* The bitter herbs signify the Divine Presence's exile with Israel in all their bitter afflictions in Egypt. Why were the bones of the Passover lamb not allowed to be broken? So that the dogs might drag them about and the Egyptians be thus made to realize the nothingness of that which they worshipped and so be put to shame, and the Holy One be glorified. (41b – from Ray'a Mehemna)
518. The **עם הארץ** (ordinary man) requires redemption from the power of the Evil Impulse, which is his lord and master. (41b – from Ray'a Mehemna)
519. In this world, the Evil Impulse is indeed the lord, because of the multitude of sins and evils which attack the body of man. (41b – from Ray'a Mehemna)
520. When there is a preponderance of meritorious works, the spirit ascends and becomes master of his animal nature. As for the intermediate person, a war is continually being waged between the principalities of justification and of condemnation to gain control of him. When the

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Side of condemnation sees that it cannot prevail against him, it tries to make him forget all his Torah. (41b – from Ray'a Mehemna)

- 521.** If he is unworthy and possesses no heritage of righteousness to assist him, four powers of evil shall be his companions when he enters into this world, namely Anger, Destruction, Depravity and Wrath. (41b – from Ray'a Mehemna)
- 522.** No ignorant man can be truly pious. (42a – from Ray'a Mehemna)
- 523.** It has been said<sup>49</sup>, *“Do not search the things which are too hard for you, and seek not the thing which is hidden from you”* (Ben Sira<sup>50</sup> 320-324). (42b – from Ray'a Mehemna)
- 524.** Very evil can be turned into good by repentance. (43a – from Ray'a Mehemna)
- 525.** A spiritual ignoramus can be redeemed from the exile of darkness and be included in the Redemption of Israel. But, if he does not repent, he will be blotted out from the Book of Life. (43a –from Ray'a Mehemna)



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<sup>49</sup> Here being applied to the incomprehensible nature of God.

<sup>50</sup> The Book of Ben Sira occupies a unique place in Rabbinic literature, for albeit this work was expressly excluded from the Canon, some forbidding its reading or merely retaining a copy at home, nevertheless, it is occasionally quoted in the Talmud and Midrash, as here.

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### *BESHALACH*

#### בשלה

526. שניין לדוד (Ps. 7:1). שניין (Shigayon) refers to a musical instrument which was used by all the prophets, except Moses who was independent of external aids to prophecy, in order to enter into an ecstatic mood before receiving the spirit of prophecy<sup>51</sup>. (45a)
527. R' Isaac was reminded of the verse, "*Fret not yourself because of the evildoers*" (Ps. 37:1). He said: '*Evildoers*', as opposed to '*sinners*' or '*wicked men*', are those who defile themselves and all who come into contact with them.

Said R' Judah: One must indeed beware of making friends (רעים) with the evildoers (מרעים) lest one should suffer for their deeds and be included in their judgment. Mark this. Were it not for that "mixed multitude" which joined and mingled with Israelites, the sin of the golden calf would never have been perpetrated and the Children of Israel would not have had to suffer for it as they did. No, but for that sin Israel would have been, then and forever, that which the Holy One had ordained for them to be, namely, pure as the angels and free from all evil, free from death and free from the dominion of Earthly powers. But that sin brought upon the Earth death and subjection and through it the tablets were broken and many thousands were slain. All this came from their association with the "mixed multitude". It was on their

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<sup>51</sup> cf. I Samuel 10:5; II Kings 3:15

## BESHALACH

account that they are called here not "Children of Israel" nor "Israel" nor "my people", but simply "the people". (45b)

- 528.** R' Judah answered: The "mixed multitude"<sup>52</sup> were not Egyptians, but members of other peoples living in Egypt. They were accepted as proselytes on the authority of Moses, for which reason it says in a later passage, "*Go descend, for your people who you have brought out of Egypt have become corrupt*" (Ex. 32:7). (45b-46a)
- 529.** Torah must be studied by day and by night. As the day is not complete without the night, so the study of Torah is not complete unless it is carried on by night as well as by day. The word "night" is commonly taken to include the evening hours before midnight, but real night only begins with the actual stroke of midnight, for at that moment the Holy One, blessed be He, enters the Garden of Eden in order to have joyous communion with the righteous. For this reason, it behooves the pious man to rise also at that time. (46a)
- 530.** Israel does not turn to the Almighty when they are at ease, but only when they are "in trouble". When He chastises them, then "they pour out prayer". (47a)
- 531.** R' Abba said: Blessed are the Israelites that of all the nations, the Holy One singled them out for fellowship with Him and them, out of The Sabbath is equal in significance to the whole Torah. He who keeps the Sabbath keeps, as it were, the whole Torah. (47a)
- 532.** Every word that one speaks, whether it be good or bad, causes a vibration in the Higher Spheres. He who disturbs the Sabbath joy by uttering profane words causes a blemish in the holy day. When one has been invited to the king's banquet, he would commit a great offense against the king if he were to neglect him in order to converse with some other person. The Sabbath is such a banquet. The weekdays must be devoted to all needful occupations, with their corresponding

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<sup>52</sup> ערב רב - from where the term riff-raff is derived.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

vibrations Above. On the Sabbath, however, the vibration must be caused entirely by religious acts and words, by the sanctification of the day. (47b)

533. The Priests who ministered in the Sanctuary (were to) unite Israel with God. (49b)
534. Sometimes, the title is "*Of David, a Psalm*" and sometimes "*A Psalm of David*". What is the difference? "*Of David, a Psalm*" signifies that David sang concerning the Community of Israel. "*A Psalm of David*" signifies that he sang concerning himself. (50a)
535. The bond of Faith dominates all<sup>53</sup>. (52b)
536. R' Shimon added that it is always for the sake of the Patriarchs that that Lord redeems Israel, as it is written, "*And I shall remember My Covenant with Jacob, and also My Covenant with Isaac, and also My Covenant with Abraham, and the Land I shall remember*" (Levit. 26:42); the "land" representing King David, who completes a Chariot with the Patriarchs. (53a)
537. Whoever sings the Song of the Sea (אז ישיר) daily with true devotion will be worthy to sing it at the Redemption that is to be, for it refers both to the past world and to the Future World. It contains confirmations of faith and mysteries relating to the days of the Messiah. (54b)
538. The true worship of the Holy One, blessed be He, consists of loving Him Above all and in all, as it is written, "*You shall love the Lord your God*" (Deut. 6:5). (55b)
539. R' Jesse replied: Man can and must exalt Him in the sense of uniting in his mind all the attributes in the Holy Name, for this is the most supreme expression of worship<sup>54</sup>. (55b)

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<sup>53</sup> That is, all other bonds.

<sup>54</sup> Unification of God's Name and His Attributes is a central theme in the Zohar and repeated often.



## BESHALACH

- 540.** He who lifts his voice in weeping and lamentation over the destruction of the Temple shall be worthy of being numbered among those of whom it says, *"They shall sing altogether"* and enjoy the privilege of beholding the Holy One when He shall inhabit His House once more. (55b)
- 541.** He who engages in the battle of the Torah and struggles to penetrate into her mysteries will wrest from his struggles an abundance of peace. All other wars involve strife and destruction, but the war of the Torah is one of peace and love. (56a)
- 542.** A Priest who does not know how to unify the Holy Name cannot perform proper service, for on the achievement of that unity hangs both celestial and terrestrial worship. The Priest must, therefore, strive to concentrate heart and mind on the attainment of this unification, so that those Above and those Below may be blessed. And if one comes to unify the Holy Name, but without proper concentration of mind and devotion of heart, to the end that the supernal and terrestrial hosts should be blessed thereby, then his prayer is rejected and all beings denounce him and he is numbered with those of whom the Holy One said, *"When you come to see My countenance (פְּנִים, literally countenances), who has required this from our hand, to tread My court?"*  
All the "countenances" of the King are hidden in the depths of darkness. But, for those who know how perfectly to unite the Holy Name, all the walls of darkness are burst asunder. The diverse countenances of the King are made manifest, and shine upon all, bringing blessing to Heavenly and Earthly beings. (57a)
- 543.** Said R' Hiya: There is nothing which can break the power of the heathen nations save the power of Torah, in the study of which Israel is absorbed. (58a)
- 544.** Contrariwise, when Israel neglects Torah, the power of heathendom and the nations rule over Israel and issue tyrannous decrees against them, and Israel is scattered among the nations. (58a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

545. Said R' Eleazar: It is indeed so. As long as the voices of the Israelites are heard in the synagogues and in the houses of study they are powerful; *"The voice is the voice of Jacob"*, but if not then, *"The hands are the hands of Esau"*. (58b)
546. R' Jose discoursed on the verse, *"I have seen all the works that are done under the Sun and, behold, all is vanity and breaking of spirit."* (Eccl. 1:14). How could Solomon, the wisest of men, say that all human actions are vanity? Can this be said of acts of righteousness and loving-kindness of which it is written, *"And the product of righteousness shall be peace"* (Isa. 32:17). However, *"all is vanity"* refers to works which are done *under the Sun*, while *"the work of righteousness"* is *above the Sun*. (59a)
547. *"The place which You have made for Your dwelling-place, Lord, for the Sanctuary, Lord, which Your Hands prepared."* This implies the necessity of building a Sanctuary Below corresponding to the Sanctuary Above wherein the Holy One is daily served and worshipped.

Now, prayer itself has the character of service, and is called so. A synagogue should be a handsome structure, beautifully decorated, for it is an Earthly copy of a Heavenly prototype. The Temple Below had its counterpart in the Temple Above and everything there, holy vessels and holy ministers, corresponded to something Above. The same was true of the Tabernacle which Moses erected in the desert. And a synagogue must have the same object. It must be a true house of prayer. A sanctuary must have windows, as Daniel had in his upper chamber where he prayed<sup>55</sup> corresponding to the *"windows"* in Heaven, as it is written, *"My beloved...He looks through the windows, peering through the lattices"* (Song of Songs 2:9).

We might think that it is more proper to pray in the open air in order to allow the spirit a free ascent. This, however, is not so! There

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<sup>55</sup> See Dan. 6:2.

## BESHALACH

must be a house to correspond to the "House" Above. Besides, prayer and spirit must issue forth from a narrow, limited space, in a straight line towards Jerusalem without deviating right or left. This is symbolized by the sound of the Shofar which is thrust forth in a straight line from a narrow opening and breaks through the firmament in order to stir up the Spirit Above. It is true, we are told that, "*And Isaac went to meditate in the field*" (Gen. 24:63), but there are special reasons for this and, besides, the field where he prayed was not an ordinary field. (59b-60a, from Ray'a Mehemna)

- 548.** In Scripture, "water" stands as a symbol for Torah. The "tree" is (also) a symbol of Torah which is a "*Tree of life to those who grasp it*" (Prov. 3:18) and the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are one. The "tree" is a direct symbol of the Holy One. (60a/b)
- 549.** He who guards the sign of the Covenant<sup>56</sup> rises eventually to the perception of the Holy King. (60b)
- 550.** The holy impress (circumcision) must be guarded from four things: intercourse with a menstruous woman, a bondwoman, a heathen woman, and a harlot. (60b)
- 551.** Most human beings appear before the Holy One in body and in soul, but the poor man presents himself before the Throne of the Most High in soul only, and the Holy One is nearer to the soul than the body. (61a)
- 552.** Even when he has a sufficiency of food, the man of faith ought to pray for "daily bread" in order that through him there may be each day an increase of blessing in Heaven. This is the meaning of the words, "*Blessed be the Lord by day.*" For this reason it is not right to cook food on one day for the next so that one day should not interfere with another in regard to blessings from Above<sup>57</sup>. (62a)

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<sup>56</sup> A warning against sexual promiscuity and the like.

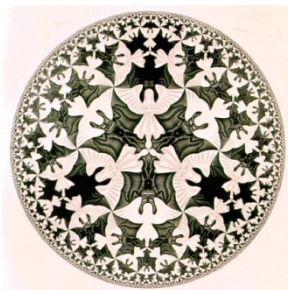
<sup>57</sup> I am unfamiliar with any such Halacha.

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553. Whoever prays before the Holy King must do so from the depths of his soul so that his heart may be wholly turned to God and his whole mind be concentrated upon his prayer. (63b)
554. The table must be prepared on Sabbath night so that when the blessings descend from Above they may find something upon which to rest, as it were, for “no blessing rests on an empty table”. Those who are aware of this mystery of the union of the Holy One with the Divine Presence on Sabbath night consider, therefore, this time the most appropriate one for their own marital union. (63b)
555. What is the meaning of the word “Sabbath”? The day in which all the other days rest. It is the day which comprises the other days and from which they derive blessing. (63b)
556. *“You shall keep the Sabbath for it is holy unto you”* (Ex. 31:13). It is holy to you, but not to the other nations. *“It is a sign between me and the Children of Israel”* (Ibid. v. 17) – it is Israel’s eternal heritage. (63b)
557. When one adorns himself with the supernal Holy Crown (i.e. celebrates the Sabbath), he must take great care not to utter any word which might profane the Sabbath. Similarly, he must guard his hands and feet so as not to walk beyond the permissible limit of two thousand cubits. (63b-64a)
558. R’ Hiya replied: A strong hammer is known by the sparks it produces (i.e. a sharp mind is recognized by the problems it raises). (64a)
559. Amalek was the first nation who feared not to proclaim war against Israel as it says, *“And he did not fear God”* (Deut. 25:18). While the other nations were filled with fear and trembling before Israel at the time of the Exodus, as it says, *“The peoples heard and were agitated; trembling took hold of the inhabitants of Peleshes”* (Ex. 15:14), in fact, apart from Amalek, there was no nation that was not awestruck before the mighty works of the Holy One, blessed be He. (65a)

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560. Said R' Shimon: Let us not think lightly of this war with Amalek. Verily, from the Creation of the World until then, and since then until the coming of the Messiah, there has been and will be no war like that, nor can even the war of Gog and Magog be compared with it. This is not because of the mighty armies taking part in it, but because it was launched against all the attributes of the Holy One, blessed be He. (65b)
561. When a father performs the act of circumcision on his son, revealing the impress of the sign of the Holy Covenant, the sacrificial act is, as it were, an altar of propitiation. (66b)
562. R' Jose said: How are we to understand the words, "*And they saw the God of Israel*" (Ex. 24:10)? Who can see the Holy One? Is it not written, "*No man can see Me and live*"? It means that a rainbow appeared above them in radiant colors resplendent with the beauty of His grace. Therefore, the saying that he who gazes at a rainbow, gazes, as it were, at the Divine Presence. For the same reason, it is not right to look at the fingers of the Priests when they spread out their hands to bless the people (the Divine Presence "showing Herself through the lattice", i.e. through the Priests' fingers). (66b)
563. "*The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.*" R' Judah said: There never was a generation of men, nor ever will be, in this world without evil seed and The Holy One, blessed be He, carries on His war against it. Of such it is written, "*The sinners will cease from the Earth, and the wicked will be no more. Bless You Lord, O my soul, Hallelujah!*" (Ps. 104:35). (67a)



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### YISRO

### יתרו

- 564.** When one lifts up his hands to Heaven, he must be careful that his intention should be to pray or bless or supplicate. For if he lifts them idle (i.e. for cursing) those powers that brood over the “spreading of the hands” will curse him with two hundred and forty-eight curses. The hand must be lifted up to Heaven only as an expression of prayer or of blessing. (67a)
- 565.** Said R’ Abba: We have frequently affirmed that whatever the Holy One has made, whether it be Above or Below has a purpose. (68b)
- 566.** It is wrong to despise anything in the world, how much more sinful must it be to think lightly of any word or act of the Holy One, blessed be He. (68b)
- 567.** One must beware of despising anyone, since the words of an ordinary person may be of great consequence, as is says of Moses that he *“Heeded the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said”* (Ex. 18:24). (68b-69a)
- 568.** Pharaoh had as his counselors three sages: Jethro, Balaam and Job. Jethro was the minister of worship. Balaam was an arch-sorcerer, in word and act. Job displayed pre-eminently the sense of religious awe and fear. (69a)

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- 569.** The character of man is revealed in the hair, the forehead, the eyes, the lips, the features of the face, the lines of the hands, and even the ears<sup>58</sup>. (70b)
- 570.** What then is man? Does he consist solely of skin, flesh, bones and sinews? No. The essence of man is his soul. The skin, flesh, bones and sinews are but an outward covering, the mere garments, but they are not the man. When man departs from this world, he divests himself of all these garments. (76a)
- 571.** When the faces of men are serene, and they are in the normal state, their shapes and features reveal to the wise the inner thoughts and propensities of the mind. So by the lines of the hands and of the fingers it is possible to discern hidden facts of one's personality. They are the shining stars which reveal the varieties of human types and their relationship to the Upper treasures. (76a)
- 572.** *"Moreover you shall provide (literally behold) out of all the people, etc."* Said R' Shimon: It does not say "you shall choose" but "you shall behold". This means that by means of the gift of inner sight of those characteristics which we have mentioned. All are indicated in this verse, "you shall look" refers to the hair; "of all the people" to the forehead' "for able men" to the face; "God-fearing" to the eyes; "men of truth" to the lips; and "hating covetousness" to the hands. All these are the signs by which to recognize men; signs, that is, to those on whom the spirit of wisdom rests.

And yet Moses had no need of these signs, for we read, *"And Moses chose able men from among all Israel"* (v. 25). He chose them by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for we read, *"When they have a matter, one comes to me"* (v. 16). The "he" is in the singular instead of "they" in the plural to indicate that it refers to the Holy Spirit. So there

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<sup>58</sup> At this point, the Zohar goes into a discussion of the "mysteries of human physiognomy" describing various types of personalities which can be discerned based on facial features such as type of hair, shape of the forehead, etc. An additional discourse on palmistry appears several pages hence in the original, but was omitted in the Soncino translation. See also Droschos Haramban, Toras Hashem Temima p. 162 (Chavel edition).

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was no necessity for him to use the gift of inner sight in order to find out who were the right persons. He knew at once whom to choose through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

Similarly Solomon, in all the legal cases brought before him could give his decisions without the aid of any witnesses because the Holy Spirit was present at his throne and everyone coming near to it was overcome with fear and trembling. There was an invisible figure hidden in the throne and when anyone uttered a false plea it made a sound by which Solomon knew at once that the person was not telling the truth.

The Messiah will discern persons by their odor, for of him it says, *"His scent will be in the fear of the Lord and he shall not judge by what his eyes see nor decide by what his ears hear."* (Isa. 11:3).

These three judged without witnesses and without warning. All others must judge in accordance with the Torah and must decide by the word of witnesses. The wise who are adept in physiognomic lore must warn men and provide healing for their souls. Blessed are they in this world and in the World to Come. (78a)

573. Every person must converse with his fellows according to the sex and class to which they belong. This accords with the Scriptural verse, *"Thus shall you say to the House of Jacob, and tell the Children of Israel."* (80a)
574. If men but knew the wisdom of all that the Holy One, blessed be He, has planted in the Earth, and the power of all that is to be found in the world, they would proclaim the power of their Lord in His great wisdom. But the Holy One has purposely hidden this wisdom from men in order that they should not turn from His Way by trusting in that wisdom alone, forgetting Him. (80a/b)
575. *"You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians and how I bare you on eagle's wings."* What do eagles' wings denote? According to R' Judah, the "eagles" are a symbol of mercy, as it says, *"As an eagle stirs up her nest, fluttering over her young, spreading abroad her wings, taking them,*



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*bearing them on her wings (so the Lord)"* (Deut. 32:11). As the eagle watches lovingly over its own young, but is cruel towards others, so does the Holy One manifest His loving mercy to Israel and His severe judgment to the heathen nations. (80b)

576. We have been taught that the Holy One, blessed be He, gave six hundred and thirteen counsels to man in order that he might be perfect in attachment to his Lord, for the Holy King desires only his good, both in this world and in the World to Come, but more *especially* in the World to Come, since whatever good the Holy One bestows upon man in this world is taken from the sum of good which he is entitled to receive in the World to Come. Why is this? Because, as we have been taught, the World to Come is, as it were, God's own possession. This is not to say, of course, that this present world is not His also but, it has been said, it is like unto an antechamber in comparison with the hall itself<sup>59</sup>. (82b)
577. Said R' Isaac: Why was the Torah given in fire and darkness? In order to show that he who is constantly and diligently occupied with the study of it will be saved from the fire of Gehenna and from the darkness of exile in heathen lands. (83b)
578. The deliverance from Egypt is mentioned fifty times in the Pentateuch in such expressions as, "*I have brought you out of the Land of Egypt*", "*I have brought you out with a strong hand*", etc. (83b-84a)
579. R' Isaac replied: It is well known that when a person is expecting some great good fortune or misfortune to befall him, before the event happens he is in a state of great nervous tension and can hardly control himself, but once the best or the worst is known, he regains his equanimity. (84b)
580. King Solomon was the fifteenth in descent from Abraham, the pedigree being Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Perez, Hezron, Ram,

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<sup>59</sup> cf. Pirkei Avos 4:21.

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Aminadab, Nachshon, Shalmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David, Solomon. Zedekiah was the fifteenth from Solomon, his pedigree being Rehoboam, Abiah, Asa, Jehoshafat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotha, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Zedekiah. (85a)

581. Israel's Exodus from Egypt is mentioned fifty times in the Torah. Fifty days passed from the Exodus to the Revelation on Sinai, and fifty years had to pass for the liberation of slaves. (85b)
582. Said R' Jose: The engraving and painting of all forms is permitted, except the human figure. Said R' Isaac: The reason is because when a human figure is represented in sculpture or painting, it is not only the body which is fashioned in the image of the person but, as it were, the wholeness of the man is being reproduced, his inner form, namely his spirit, as well as his outer bodily form. (86a)
583. Woe unto him against whom a poor man complains to his Master! For the poor are nearest to the King. (86b)
584. *"When he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am gracious"* (Ex. 22:26). Prayers of others are sometimes accepted and sometimes rejected, but the poor man's prayer is always answered. And why? Because the King dwells in broken vessels, *"To this man I will look, even to him who is poor and of a contrite spirit"* (Isa. 66:2). *"The Lord is near to those who are of a broken heart"* (Ps. 34:19). *"A broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise"* (Ibid. 51:19). Thus, we have learned that whoever wrongs a poor man, wrongs the שכינה (God's Divine Presence). (86b)
585. Wherever the word "prayer" (תפילה) is mentioned, it signifies something precious, something which ascends to a supernal sphere, to the תפלה (phylactery) of the head worn by the King. (86b)
586. R' Isaac said: One must not err in regard to the meaning of the words of the Torah, and not derive any doctrine from them which he has not

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learned (from books) or heard from his teachers. He who gives his own interpretations of Scripture not derived from these sources transgresses the commandment, *"You shall not make unto yourself any graven image..."* (87a)

- 587.** The Torah consists of His Holy Name. In fact, every word written therein consists of and contains that Holy Name. (87a)
- 588.** There is no woman from among the heathen nations who is free from taint. Therefore, the section concerning the captive woman is immediately followed by that of the rebellious son to indicate that children born of such a union are far from good, the impurity of the idolatry inherited by the mother being difficult to remove. All the more so if she has already been married, as the taint of her husband cleaves to her. (87b)
- 589.** It is prohibited to say the Grace after meals over an empty table, because the supernal blessing cannot rest on an empty place. It is, therefore, necessary to put a loaf or two on the table before saying grace or at least the remnants of the former meal in order that the blessing should not, as it were, be uttered "in emptiness". (87b)
- 590.** R' Shimon said: It is a sin to mention the Name of the Holy One in vain, in emptiness. A man who does that would have been better off not to have been born. According to R' Eleazar, this also means that one should not utter the Holy Name by itself but only after a preceding word, as in the Torah it only occurs for the first time after the two words: **ברא** **בראשית** (*"In the beginning God created"*). (87b-88a)
- 591.** One should utter the Holy Name only within a blessing or a prayer. He who takes the Name in vain, neither in a benediction nor in a prayer, will be punished when his soul will leave him. (88a)
- 592.** Said R' Judah: One must regale oneself on the Sabbath with three meals in order that this day may be one of satisfaction and refreshment. (88a)

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593. The Sabbath is equal in importance to the whole Torah, and whosoever observes the Sabbath, fulfills the whole Torah. (89a)
594. The mystics sanctify themselves on Sabbath night in the holiness of their Lord with deep contemplation and concentration, and bring good and holy children into the world. (89b)
595. Said R' Shimon: The world belongs only to those who occupy themselves with the Torah and know its mysteries. (89b)
596. We have a dictum that the first five Commandments include, by implication, the other five as well. In other words, in the first five, the second five are engraved, five within five. How?

Take the first commandment, *"I am the Lord your God"*. Does it not include the first of the second five? Indeed it does, for the murderer diminishes the likeness and image of his Master, man having been created *"in the image of God"*. It is also written, *"And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man upon it"* (Ezekiel 1:26). Said R' Hiya: It is written, *"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man"* (Gen. 9:6). He who shed the blood of a fellow-man is thus considered as diminishing the Divine archetype of man as well. Thus the first commandment, *"I am the Lord your God"* contains the motive for the sixth, *"You shall not murder"*.

The second commandment, *"You shall have no other gods"* contains the motive for the seventh, *"You shall not commit adultery"*, for the adulterer deceitfully lies against the Name of the Holy One which is impressed upon man, a sin comprising many other sins and entailing corresponding punishments. He who is unfaithful in this, is unfaithful towards the King, as it is written, *"They betrayed the Lord, for they have begotten alien children."* (Hosea 5:7). One is the result of the other.

The third commandment, *"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain"*, corresponds to the eighth commandment, *"You shall*

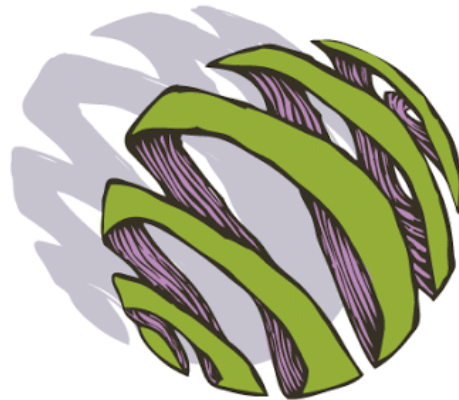
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*not steal*". For a thief is certainly inclined to swear falsely, as it is written, *"Whoever is partner with a thief hates his own soul, he will hear an oath, but will not testify"* (Prov. 29:24).

The fourth commandment, *"Remember the Sabbath Day"* corresponds to the ninth, *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor"* for, as R' Jose said, the Sabbath is called a witness to God's creative activity and man is required to testify to the fact that, *"In six days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, etc."* Hence, R' Jose said: God has *"given truth to Jacob"* (Micah 7:20) thus requiring Israel to keep the Sabbath. He who bears false witness against his neighbor, lies against the Sabbath, the witness of truth. He who lies against the Sabbath, lies against the whole Torah.

The fifth commandment, *"Honor your father and your mother"* implies the tenth, *"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife"* for whoever has a son born of adultery is *"honored"* by him on false pretences. Further, it is written in the fifth commandment, *"That your days may be long upon the Land which the Lord your God gives you"*, is as much as to say, *"What He gives you is yours, but do not covet what is not yours"*.

Thus, the first five Commandments imply the second five. (90a/b)



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#### משפטים

597. *“And these are the judgments which You shall set before them.”* R’ Shimon here introduced the subject of transmigration of souls saying: Onkelos translates the above words as follows: ‘These are the judgments which You shall *order* before them.’ In other words, “These are the orders of the metempsychosis, the judgment of the souls by which each of them receives its appropriate punishment.” Associates, the time has now arrived to reveal the diverse hidden and secret mysteries in regard to the transmigration of souls. (94a)
598. When a human being is born into the world he is given a soul (נפש). If he is more fortunate, he will be endowed with a spirit (רוח). Should he possess still greater potential merit he is given a (different/another<sup>60</sup>) soul (נשמה). If the newly created being deserves still more, the soul which is put into his bodily form derives through a process of emanation (אצילות). If his merit is still greater, he will be endowed with a (yet different/another/additional) spirit (נשמה). But, if he should acquire still greater merit, the Holy Name (יקוק) is granted to him in its fullness. (94b)
599. Truly much good and excellent advice is to be found in all the words of the Torah, for they are all true and lead to further truth and are

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<sup>60</sup> The Soncino translation redundantly reads “given a soul”.

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comprehended as such by the wise who know that path and walk therein.

When the Holy One, blessed be He, came to create the world, it pleased Him to form all the souls which were destined to be allotted to the children of men and each was shaped before him in the very outline of the body she was afterwards to inhabit. He examined each one and saw that some of them would corrupt their ways in the world. When the time of each arrived, the Holy One summoned it saying, "Go, descend into such and such a place, into such and such a body."

But often it chanced that the soul would reply, "Lord, of the world, I am satisfied to be here in this world and desire not to leave it for some other place where I shall be enslaved and become soiled." Then would the Holy One respond, "From the very day of your Creation, you have had no other destiny than to go into that world". At this the soul, seeing that it must obey, would descend against its will and enter into this world. (96b)

- 600.** How careful should one be not to walk in a crooked way in this world! For if he shall have proved himself worthy in this world, having guarded his soul with all care, then the Holy One, blessed be He, will be well-pleased with him and will praise him daily to His celestial Family saying, "Behold, the holy son whom I have in that Lower World! See what acts he performed, how upright are his ways!" And when such a soul leaves this world, pure, bright, and unsullied, the Holy One illumines her daily with innumerable radiances and proclaims concerning her, "This is the soul of my son so-and-so. Let her be kept for the body which she has left." (97a)
- 601.** At a man's birth, the Holy One provides him with a soul, so also does He provide him with an "other" soul especially for the Sabbath. (98a)
- 602.** How many human beings live in confusion of mind, beholding not the way of truth whose dwelling is in the Torah, the Torah which calls them day by day to herself in love but, alas, they do not even turn their heads!

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It is indeed as I<sup>61</sup> have said, that the Torah lets out a word and emerges for a little from her sheath and then hides herself again. But she does this only for those who understand and obey her. She is like a beautiful and stately damsel who is hidden in a secluded chamber of a palace and who has a lover of whom no one knows but she. Out of his love for her, he constantly passes by her gate, turning his eyes towards all sides to find her. She, knowing that he is always haunting the palace, what does she do? She opens a little door in her hidden palace, discloses for a moment her face to her lover, then swiftly hides it again. None but he notices it. But his heart and soul and all that is in him are drawn to her knowing as he does that she has revealed herself to him for a moment because she loves him.

It is the same with the Torah which reveals her hidden secrets only to those who love her. She knows that he who is wise of heart daily haunts the gates of her house. What does she do? She shows her face to him from her palace making a sign of love to him and straightaway returns to her hiding place again. No one understands her message save he alone and he is drawn to her with heart and soul and all his being. Thus the Torah reveals herself momentarily in love to her lovers in order to awaken fresh love in them. (99a)

- 603.** When the soul and spirit unite, they shine with a celestial light and in their union they are designated “lamp”, as it says, “*The lamp of the Lord is the soul of man*” (Prov. 20:27). נֵר (lamp) being the abbreviation of נִשְׁמָה-רוּחַ (soul-spirit). Soul and spirit, the union of the Masculine and the Feminine bring forth light. But, if separate, they do not give light. (99b)
- 604.** There is no pain comparable with the pain of the body which is in a state of frustration<sup>62</sup>. (101a)

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<sup>61</sup> An unnamed rabbi. Much of the Zohar comprises discourses by anonymous rabbis and unnamed persons.

<sup>62</sup> Disappointment and depression are the results of unfulfilled expectations.



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- 605.** After a woman has been twice widowed, no one should marry her again, for the Angel of Death has taken possession of her.<sup>63</sup> (102a)
- 606.** He who marries a widow is comparable with one who ventures to brave the ocean during a storm without a rudder and without sails, and knows not whether he will cross safely or sink into the depths. (102a)
- 607.** He who marries a widow "*Knows not that it is with the peril of his life*"<sup>64</sup> for he knows not whether she is predestined to be his real spouse. However, if the widow does not wish to marry again, even when the man who wishes to marry her is meant to be her ideal mate, the Holy One does not condemn her for that. He prepares another wife for the man whom she had refused and she is not brought before the Heavenly tribunal for her refusal, even when she has no children, because the commandment concerning procreation is not obligatory for women. (102b)
- 608.** When a man divorces his wife he causes, as it were, a defect in the stone of the Heavenly altar. (102b-103a)
- 609.** If that woman, having been divorced, did not marry again, even if she should have misconducted herself with many men, the husband, if he wishes, may take her back, but not if she had been legally married to another man. (103a)
- 610.** The Holy One does not let any creature remain unrewarded. (106a)
- 611.** Repentance annuls all decrees and judgments, and breaks many an iron chain, and there is nothing that can stand against it. (106a)
- 612.** He is full of mercy towards all His works, as it is written, "*His mercies are (evident) on all His works*" (Ps. 145:9). His mercies extend even to animals and birds, still more to human beings who know how to praise their Lord. As David expressed it, "*Many are Your mercies, O Lord,*

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<sup>63</sup> See Shulchon Aruch Even Haezer 9:1.

<sup>64</sup> Maybe Prov. 7:23? I am not sure which verse was translated here. Soncino's reference to 7:28 seems incorrect. This passage contradicts what we learn in the Talmud.

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*preserve me as is Your practice"* (Ps. 119:156). Now, if His tender mercies are vouchsafed to sinners, how much more to righteous men! Who is it that needs healing? He who is sick. And who is sick if not the sinner?

Therefore, when a sinner turns to the Lord for healing and mercy, He stretches out His right hand to receive him. When God draws a man to Himself, He draws him with His right hand, but when He pushes him away, He does so with His left hand<sup>65</sup>. And even as the left hand pushes away, the right draws near, for the Holy One, blessed be He, does not withhold His tender mercy from sinners.

Observe how the Scripture says first, *"And he went disobediently in the way of his heart"* and immediately afterwards, *"I have seen his ways and will heal him. I will lead him also and impart consolations unto him and to his mourners"* (Isa. 57:17-18). This shows that even when sinners commit sin purposely, walking according to the desires of their own hearts, and heeding not the warnings of others, even for such, when they repent and begin to walk in the way of righteousness, is healing prepared. (105b-106a)

- 613.** Is not a sinner dead, even though he is alive? (106b)
- 614.** The Holy One grants the sinner grace to repent and strength to accomplish his return to righteousness. *"He imparts repentance to him and consolation to his mourners"* (נחומים) in the double sense of "repentance" and "consolation"), and the man himself is truly and perfectly alive. (106b)
- 615.** It is possible to commit sins which are offenses both against God and man, also one can commit sins which are offenses against man but not against the Holy One<sup>66</sup>, and there are also sins which are committed against the Holy One only. (106b)
- 616.** Every man naturally uses the language of his occupation. (107a)

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<sup>65</sup> cf. Sanhedrin 107b.

<sup>66</sup> I do not know to what the Zohar is referring. Are not all sins against one's fellow man also an offense against God? See also Sanhedrin 27a.

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- 617.** Why did David commit the sin? In order to give an opening to sinners so that they might be able to say, "King David sinned, but when he repented the Holy One forgave him. If he was forgiven, there is still greater hope that common folk such as we shall receive forgiveness." (107b)
- 618.** Members of the human body can receive foreign particles into themselves without real damage, except the heart which cannot receive even a hair without being damaged. (108a)
- 619.** A person who has had a bad dream must wear a sad and sorrowful demeanor for he stands under the attribute of אֱלֹהִים and the sacrifice of the attribute of Justice must express itself through sadness and self-abasement. Such sadness is in itself sufficient fulfillment of the dream and the judgment will not exercise its sway over such a one since he has brought the fitting sacrifice to the attribute of Justice. (108a)
- 620.** The Holy One, blessed be He, despises a proud and arrogant heart. (108a)
- 621.** The Holy One, blessed be He, suffers not any man who has emasculated himself in this world to appear before Him, just as, in a similar fashion, no castrated animal was a permitted sacrifice<sup>67</sup>. It is prohibited throughout all generations to castrate any creature which the Holy One has created. (108b-109a)
- 622.** Solomon reflected and said: I consider the sad fate of these hapless oppressed ones who have been "made", how they shed tears before the Holy One. They complain before Him and moan saying, "When a person commits a sin, he must assuredly die. But, Sovereign of the Universe, when a child is but one day old, shall he be judged?" These are "the tears of the oppressed ones who have no comforter."

There are many different kinds among them, but they all shed tears. Here is, for instance, a child born in incest. As soon as he emerges

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<sup>67</sup> Levit. 22:24

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into the world he is separated from the Community of the holy people and the unfortunate bastard laments and sheds tears before the Holy One and complains, "Lord of the World! If my parents have sinned, wherein is my guilt? I have ever striven to do only good works before You."

But the greatest grief of all emanates from those "oppressed ones" that are but little sucklings who have been removed from their mother's breasts. These can indeed cause the whole world to wonder and say, "The Holy One's judgments are forever righteous and all His paths are ways of truth." But why is it necessary that these poor little ones, who are blameless and without sin, should die? Where is now the true and righteous judgment of the Lord of the world? If they must die because of their parents' sins, then they certainly "have no comforter".

However, the actual fact is that the tears of these "oppressed ones" intercede for and protect the living and because of their innocence and the power of their intercession, a place is eventually prepared for them such as even the perfectly righteous cannot attain to or occupy. For the Holy One does, in truth, love them with a special and particular love. He unites Himself with them and prepares for them a supernal place very near to Himself. It is concerning such that it is written, "*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings have You established strength*". What is it that they accomplish there and why did they go there? "*Because of Your enemies, that You might silence the enemy and the avenger*" (Ps. 8:3).

And there is also another place prepared for sinners who repent. (113a/b)

623. Had not the tablets been broken, the world would not have suffered as it subsequently did, and the Israelites would have been in the likeness of the supernal angels Above. (114a)
624. We have been taught that because Israel is designated "holiness" no one is allowed to apply to his neighbor an insulting epithet or bestow upon him a degrading nickname. The punishment for such an offense

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is indeed great. It is written, *"Keep your tongue from evil"*. *"From evil"*, for slander and malicious speech cause disease to enter into the world.

Said R' Jose: He who offends his neighbor by giving him an insulting nickname or by addressing him in abusive terms will himself eventually suffer for offenses which he has not committed.

In this connection R' Hiya also said in the name of R' Hezekiah: He who calls his neighbor "wicked" will be thrown into the very jaws of Gehenna. The only people whom one may legitimately call "wicked" are those who speak impudently and blasphemously against the Torah. (122a)

625. R' Abba also said that the words, *"Execute judgment in the morning"* (Jer. 21:12) mean that judges should sit in judgment, *"In the morning"*, that is, before they have had anything to eat or drink, since he who executes judgment after eating and drinking is not a true judge, as it is written, *"You shall not eat with the blood"* (Levit. 19:26). This means that a judge who eats before sitting in judgment is, as it were, guilty of shedding his neighbor's blood. For indeed, he gives the "blood" of his neighbor to someone else. Now, this is merely in reference to money matters, how much more then in criminal cases when it is a question of life and death should the judges beware of eating and drinking before executing judgment! (122a)

626. When one observes the ordinances of the Torah and diligently studies it, it is as though he diligently studied the Divine Name. For the whole Torah is an enfolding of the one Divine Name, the most exalted Name, the Name that comprehends all other names. Hence, if one diminishes it, even by a single letter, it is as though he made a gap in the Divine Name. According to our teaching, the words, *"And make not mention of the name of other gods"* signify, *"You shall not add to the Torah nor diminish from it"*.

R' Hiya said, *"The name of other gods"* signifies profane books which do not issue from the Side of the Torah and, hence, we are forbidden to study them. *"Neither let it be heard out of your mouth"*,

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that is, we may not even mention them nor receive from them, especially concerning the Torah. (124a)

- 627.** Religious faith is closely bound up with the three festivals. (124a)
- 628.** Kissing expresses the cleaving of spirit to spirit. Therefore, the mouth is the medium for kissing for it is the organ of the spirit (breath). Hence, he who dies by the “kiss of God” (such as Moses and others) is so united with another Spirit which never separates from him. Therefore, the Community of Israel prays, “Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth”, that His Spirit may be united with mine and never separate from it. (124b)
- 629.** It is set forth in the mysteries of King Solomon’s book, that he who eats a composite of flesh and milk, or drinks milk shortly after eating meat, will appear for a period of forty days to the vision of the accusing angels as a slaughtered goat<sup>68</sup>, with myriads of impure powers surrounding him. He causes unholy judgments to be awakened in the world. And should he beget a son during those forty days, the latter will imbibe his soul and the breath of his spirit from the Other Side.

It says, “*You shall sanctify yourself and you shall be holy*” (Levit. 11:44). This signifies that he who endeavors to be holy is assisted from Above, and contrariwise, he who defiles himself is drawn on to defilement by the unholy powers, as it is written in the preceding verse (43), “*You shall not make yourselves unclean...that you shall be defiled*”. This is an impurity which is exceedingly gross, and which cannot be done away with by means of purification as can other defilements. Besides, such a person, having come to look, even in the outer aspect<sup>69</sup> seeming like a goat, as we have said, goes in constant fear of wild animals, for the human image has disappeared from both his inner and his outer aspects.

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<sup>68</sup> The Soncino translation has “in the aspect of a slaughtered goat”.

<sup>69</sup> The Soncino translation has “even in outer seeming, like a goat”, which seems to me to be either a typographical error or an incomprehensible archaic usage.

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R' Jesse used, at one time, to allow the eating of chicken with cheese or with milk. But R' Shimon said to him: You must not permit this, lest you thereby open the door to evil powers. Does one not say to a Nazarite, "Go away. Go away. Depart and come not near the vineyard"? I say to you, you must not do this thing! If you allow such prohibited minglings of foods it is as though you gave wine to a Nazarite. It is written, "*You shall not eat any abomination*" (Deut. 14:3), where the word "any" includes every kind and sort of food which is forbidden. There is a tradition that Daniel, Hananniah, Mishal and Azariah were delivered from their trials only because they had not defiled themselves with forbidden food.

Said R' Judah: It is written, "*And Daniel resolved in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's food*" (Dan. 1:8), and there is a tradition that the wicked Nebuchadnezzar used, apart from the other strange dishes for which he had a partiality, to eat flesh with milk, and cheese with meat. Because Daniel refrained from partaking of such food, when he was thrown into the lion's den, he attained fully to the image of the Lord, his perfected human form not changing to any other, so that the lions were struck with awe before him and did him no harm. On the other hand, when the wicked Nebuchadnezzar was deprived of his kingdom and he dwelt with the beasts of the field, his human countenance was taken away from him, and from that day he did not bear the impress of a man, so that all the beasts of the field considered him as one of themselves, and would readily have devoured him, had it not been that it was decreed from Heaven that he should become an object of derision to all men, just as he in his time had, "*Scoffed at kings*" (Habakkuk 1:10).

It is written concerning Daniel and his companions that "*At the end of ten days they appeared better and healthier than did the children who ate the king's food.*" (Dan. 1:15). This was because the image of their Lord was not removed from them, whereas from those others it was. What was the cause of this? The fact that they did not pollute

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themselves with the abomination of the prohibited food. Blessed are the Israelites who are called to be a holy people! (125a/b)





## TERUMAH

# TERUMAH

## תרומה

**630.** He who aspires to piety and fellowship with the Holy One, blessed be He, must not be lax or remiss in his devotion, but must be ready and willing to bring sacrifices in accordance with his strength. (128a)

**631.** In the book of sorcery from which Ashmedai taught King Solomon, it is written that he who desires to remove from himself the spirit of impurity and to subdue that spirit, must be prepared to pay in return for fulfillment of his wishes whatever is demanded. For the spirit of the impurity tempts the heart of man with many allurements in order to take up its abode with him.

But the spirit of holiness is not so. It demands a full price and strenuous effort, purification of one's self and one's dwelling, and devotion of heart and soul. And even so, one will be lucky to win it to take up its abode with him. Therefore, one must beware and walk straightly according to the paths and ways of righteousness, turning neither to the right or left for otherwise, even if it had entered into a man, it will straightaway depart from him and, indeed, it will be hard to recall it again. (128a)

**632.** How may one recognize a person with whom the Holy One is pleased and in whom He has His abode? When we observe that one endeavors to serve the Holy One in joy, with his heart, soul and will, then we can

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be quite sure that the Divine Presence has Her abode in him. Such a man is worth to be well-paid for his teaching and companionship.

Therefore, the ancients said, "*Buy yourself a companion* (i.e. a teacher)" (Sayings of the Fathers 1:6). That is, buy him for a good price, in order to merit the Divine Presence.

Therefore, one must also pursue and run after the sinner and "buy" him for a good price in order that the filth of sin may be purged away from him and the spirit of impurity, the emanation of the Other Side, be subdued. He who succeeds in redeeming such a sinner can justly consider himself the "creator" of the renewed and quickened soul, and such an act is the greatest praise (of God) imaginable. It exalts the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, more than any other circumstance or deed imaginable. (128b)

- 633.** He who seeks a sinner takes him by the hand and induces him to give up his evil way; such a one is elevated as none other can be. Concerning such a man it is written, "*My Covenant was with him: life and peace.*" He will be worthy to see his children's children. He is worthy to enjoy this world and the World to Come and none of the lords of judgment shall retain any power whatsoever over him to chastise him, either in this world or in the World to Come. He will pass through twelve gates (of the firmament) and none will hinder him. Concerning such a one it is written, "*His offspring shall be mighty upon Earth, the generation of the upright shall be blessed...his righteousness endures forever. A light shines for the righteous in the darkness.*" (Ps. 112:2-4). (128b)
- 634.** If only the sons of man knew and perceived what rewards follow the endeavors of the righteous to save sinners, they would assuredly run after them with the same ardor with which they run after life itself. A poor man's benefactor gains many good things, many supernal treasures, because he helps him to exist. But even he cannot be compared to him who endeavors to save the soul of a sinner. For the latter causes the breaking of the power of the Other Side, of the "other

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gods". He is the cause of the Holy One's exaltation on His Throne of Glory. He gives the sinner a new soul. Happy indeed is his lot! (129a)

635. Man must be humble in this world in regard to his knowledge of Torah. Only in the Future World is pride of learning permitted. (129a)
636. The Kedusha (קְדוּשָׁה) which comes at the end (in the prayer U'voh L'tzion (וּבֹא לְצִיּוֹן) "and upon coming to Zion" is (in part) in Aramaic and this may be recited even by an individual, that is privately, but the Kedusha proper, which is in Hebrew, must only be recited in a congregation of ten persons or more, because the Divine Presence unites Herself with the holy tongue and all sanctifications with which the Divine Presence is connected can be uttered only in the presence of at least ten persons, for it is written, "*And I shall be sanctified among the Children of Israel*" (Levit. 22:32)<sup>70</sup>. The term "*Children of Israel*" further implies that such sanctification must be in the holy tongue, which is Israel's, the other nations speaking other languages. (129b)
637. One should respond in a loud voice and with a firm spirit, "Amen, May His Great Name be blessed!" (in the Kaddish) in order that the power of the Other Side may be quelled and the Holy One be exalted in His glory Above all things. (129b)
638. Although the Evening Prayer is not legally obligatory, yet it has protective influence against the terrors of the night and against the fear of Gehenna. For at night the wicked receive a punishment double that which is executed upon them by day. Therefore, the Israelites introduce the Evening Prayer for the weekdays with the verses, "*And He is merciful, he forgives iniquity and destroys not. Many a time he turns his anger away and does not stir up all His wrath*" (Ps. 78:38). This is recited because of the fear of Gehenna.

But on the Sabbath when there is neither fear of the punishment of Gehenna nor any judgment, one may not recite these verses lest he

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<sup>70</sup> This is very odd. Is not the Kaddish in Aramaic and yet it can only be recited with a Minyon? See also SA OC 59, Rama OC 132:1 and the Taz and Groh there.

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thus awaken the evil spirits causing them to appear and become more active. To counter the fear of the Accuser and slanderer of souls, we conclude the **השכיבנו** prayer (“Cause us, O Lord, to lie down in peace”) with the words, “Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who guards Your people Israel forever. Amen”. To counter the fear of the many devils and Accusers which are present in the night and have power to injure anyone who leaves his house at that time, we say, “Guard our going out and our coming in unto life and unto peace.” From the fear of all these things we deliver in trust our bodies, souls and spirits to Heaven Above, to the Supernal Kingdom which has dominion over all of them. Therefore we recite every night the Evening Prayers, performing all this to counteract the mysterious influences of the evil spirits now that there are no sacrifices to keep them at bay. (130a)

639. Here is a mystery which is entrusted to “those who know the measures” of things spiritual. He who must set out on a journey in the morning should rise at the break of day and at a certain, specially-ordained moment, turn and look towards the east. He will then behold some kind of letters which break through the surface of the sky, some ascending and some descending. These are flashed forth from those letters which the Heavens and the Earth were created. If the watcher is cognizant of the mystery of the letters which form the mystic Holy Name of forty-two letters, and if he should in this hour be mindful of them with devout intent, with a loving heart, then will he behold in the luminous Heaven six *Yuds* (י), three upon the right Side and three upon the left. There will also be three *Vauvs* (ו) which ascend and descend and sparkle the firmament. These are the number of the initial letters of the words of the Priestly Blessing.

He should then say his morning prayers and set forth upon his journey, because, verily, the Divine Presence Herself goes before him. Happy is his lot! (130b)

640. There were six Grades in the divine revelation to the prophets: **מראה** (appearance), **חזון** (vision), **חזיון** (revelation), **חזות** (aspect), “word” and

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“burden”. The first five aspects are all like unto the vision of one who beholds a reflection of light from behind a wall, and some of them are as the vision of one who sees the light of the Sun through a lantern. But “burden” signifies that the light came with great difficulty and was barely revealed. (130b)

641. Happy is the holy people whose Lord seeks them and beckons them to come to Him. Because of that honoring and favor, the holy people must unite and come to the Synagogue. And he who comes first unites himself with the Divine Presence in one bond. Indeed, blessed is he who is found in the Synagogue, for he stands in the Grade of Righteousness along with the very Divine Presence Herself. This the inner meaning of the words, *“Those who search for Me early will find Me”* (Prov. 8:17). He indeed reaches a high degree.

But, it may be objected, we have been taught that when the Holy One, blessed be He, enters a Synagogue and finds there less than the ten requisite male persons, He is angry. How, then, can you say that the one who comes first is united with the Divine Presence and is in the Grade of Righteousness? The following parable will explain.

A king issued an order to the citizens of his capital, to meet him, one and all, at a certain place and at a certain time. While the rest were still making ready, one hastened to present himself at the appointed place. Then the king came and found him waiting. He asked him where the rest of the citizens were. The man answered, “My lord, king, I, as you see, have arrived first, but my fellow-townsmen are upon the road and will soon be here, as well, according to your majesty’s command”. This pleased the king and he entered into conversation with the man and became quite friendly with him. In the meantime, the others arrived and the king received them graciously and sent them away in peace. Now, had no man been swift and prompt to obey the command of his lord, and to inform him of the near approach of his neighbors, would not the king have been very angry?

Similarly, when the Divine Presence come and finds in the Synagogue one person who has arrived there before anyone else, it is to

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Her even as though all were indeed present, for the Holy Divine Presence joins company with him and together they wait for the others to come, that the prayers may be started. She becomes closely acquainted with him and promotes him to the Grade of Righteousness. But if no one had come in time, she would have said, *“Why, when I came, was there no man?”* (Isa. 50:2). Note that it does not say, “there were not *ten men*”, but “no man”, meaning, “there was no one man waiting to unite himself with Me and become My companion and friend, to be a “man of God” in the Grade of Righteousness. Moreover, if one day the favored man is missing, She is greatly concerned and makes inquiries about him, as it is written, *“Who among you fears the Lord, listening to the voice of His servant...?”* (Isa. 50:10). (131a/b)

642. Woe unto him who engages in conversation of a secular nature in the Synagogue. Woe unto him for he has not part in the God of Israel since by his lack of awe before the Divine Presence, he as much as denies the reality thereof, scorning the influence of the power which comes from Above. (131b)
643. The Song of the Sea must be recited with special devoutness. (132a)
644. The *שיר ושבחה* hymn enumerates thirteen aspects of praise: *הלל וזמרה עז וממשלה נצח גדולה וגבורה תהילה ותפארת קדושה ומלכות* (song and praise, hymn and psalm, strength and dominion, victory, power and greatness, adoration and glory, holiness and sovereignty)<sup>71</sup>. The worshipper must concentrate his entire mind upon these thirteen attributes and be careful not to disturb their sacred unity by conversing between the lines of the hymn. (132a)

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<sup>71</sup> Two additional terms are also added: *ברכות והודאות* to complete fifteen praises to correspond with the fifteen steps in the Beis Hamikdash, and the number of chapters beginning with the words *תהלים* in *שיר המעלות*. In addition, there are fifteen words in the conclusion of this prayer beginning with *א-ל מלך גדול*, fifteen words from *והאופנים* until *ממקומו*, fifteen terms beginning with the letter *ו* from *ויציב* through *ויפה*, fifteen words in *צור ישראל* until the Brochah, and probably others. These calculations are in accordance with Nusach Ashkenaz. Rabbi Bruce Goldberg suggests that the significance of fifteen may be connected with God's Name *יה*. 'One ascends to Heaven from Earth with each step, as with each word of praise in Yishtabach' (Professor Avraham Apatow).

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645. Gold symbolizes New Year's Day; silver symbolizes the Day of Atonement; brass is symbolic of the days of the Sacrifices of the Feast of Tabernacles; and blue (תכלת) corresponds to Passover. All colors seen in dreams are of good omen, except blue. Red-purple (ארגמן) is connected with Pentecost, symbolizing the giving of the written Torah. Scarlet (תולעת שני) is connected with the fifteenth of Av, the day on which the daughters of Israel used to walk forth in silken dresses. (135a)
646. Six symbolic elements have been enumerated; the rest symbolize the Ten Days of Repentance (from New Year to the Day of Atonement): fine linen, goats' hair, rams, skins dyed red, seal (Tachash) skins, acacia wood, oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the incense, beryls and set jewels. These are nine, corresponding to nine days of Repentance, and the Day of Atonement completes it and makes ten days. (135a)
647. The congregation responds: Blessed is the Lord who is blessed forever and ever. The whole congregation must recite this every day, but on the Sabbath eve it must be recited with special devotion and gladness in order that the Sabbath be fitly blessed by the holy people. (135b)
648. Sabbath eve is, to the pious, the night of conjugal unions, when they are thus crowned with new souls and new additional holy spirits. For being in a state of supernal holy tranquility, they may then beget holy children. (136a)
649. It is incumbent upon the wise to recite certain verses calculated to arouse that supernal holy spirit of the Sabbath coronation as, for instance, *"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty for the captives, etc."* (Isa. 61:1); or *"Wherever the spirit was to go, they went, there was their spirit to go. And the wheels (אופנים) were lifted up over against them, for the*

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*spirit of the living creature (חיה) was in the wheels" (Ezekiel 1:20), in order that the act of procreation may be affected in a spirit of Sabbath holiness, through the influence of the supernal Sabbath spirit. (136b)*

- 650.** When the Sabbath day itself lightens, a spirit of tranquil joy ascends through all worlds. This is the significance of the Psalm recited on Sabbath morning, *"The Heavens tell the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork."* (136b)
- 651.** The Men of the Great Synagogue have ordered that this Psalm of David should be the first one to be sung on the Sabbath day, then *"Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous"* (Ps. 33), then, *"Of David, when he changed his behavior towards Abimelech"* (Ps. 34), then, *"A prayer of Moses, the Man of God"* (Ps. 90), then, *"A psalm. Sing unto the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things. His right hand and His holy arm has wrought salvation for him"* (Ps. 98), then, *"A song. A psalm for/to the Sabbath day. It is good to praise the Lord, to sing unto Your name, O most High. To proclaim Your loving kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness in the nights"* (Ps. 92). (137b-138a)
- 652.** It has been established by the Companions that this hymn of praise (Ps. 92 – *ליום השבת - מזמור שיר ליום השבת*) was sung by the first man (Adam) after he had been driven out of the Garden of Eden when the Sabbath drew close to the Holy One and interceded for the created being. Then he sang this hymn in honor of the Sabbath which had delivered him. It is a hymn of praise sung by the World Below to the World Above, to a World which altogether is "Sabbath", the sphere of the "King who is the peace". It is a hymn of the Sabbath Below which is like night and sings to the Sabbath Above which is like day. (138a)
- 653.** The Sabbath service continues with the prayer, *"The soul of all living shall bless Your Name, O Lord our God"*. (138a)
- 654.** The Amida is recited quietly, as one would speak confidently with a king. (138b)



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655. Hyacinth (purple-blue) which use for the fringes also denotes Judgment or the Throne from which the judgment concerning capital offenses is proclaimed. Therefore, all colors seen in dreams are of good omen with the exception of purple-blue which denotes that the soul of the dreamer is being judged and the body is in danger of extermination. Much ardent prayer for mercy is needed to avert this portent. (138b-139a)
656. Because the fringes are made of a material of this (blue) color, when the morning light begins to shine on them, they become greenish-blue like a leek and from that moment the time of the recitation of the Shema begins. For this reason, capital cases may not be tried at night because that color, blue, reigns and has the power to snatch away souls without Judgment; such Judgment does not rule at that time. When morning comes and the Right Hand is roused, the brightness appears and reaches the dark blue, and then it becomes connected with another Throne. From this moment on it is time to recite the Shema. (139a)
657. The Tolaas Shani (worm of deep scarlet) symbolizes Israel. (139a)
658. There are twenty-five Hebrew words in the Shema corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew Alphabet along with the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings, which all form one whole sum and one mystery. When the Israelites proclaim the Unity expressed in the twenty-five letters of the Shema and in the twenty-four letters of the response (ברוך שם ונו) and each person in the congregation is doing this with devoutness, then all those letters unite as one and ascend as one unity. (139b)
659. The Torah can be viewed from forty-nine aspects. So it is necessary to concentrate heart and mind on both the twenty-five and the twenty-four letters and to raise them with the whole force of intention to the forty-nine gates. Through concentration on this, one will concentrate on the Unity, for our Master has taught us that the "שמע" and "ברוך

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”שם” are the summary of the whole Torah. Happy is the lot of he who concentrates, for surely these contain the Torah in its entirety, Above and Below. It is the mystery of the complete Man, Male and Female, and is the secret of the whole Faith. (139b)

- 660.** All souls of members of other nations who live in the Holy Land, when they leave this world, are not accepted there, but are thrust out and are forced to roam about and go through many wanderings until they leave the Holy Land behind them and reach, instead, those impure regions where they belong. But all Israelites souls that leave this world from the Holy Land ascend from there. The souls of those Israelites who have departed from this world while still outside the confines of the Holy Land wander hither and thither and roam about until they reach their appointed places. (141a)
- 661.** He whose soul leaves him in the Holy Land, if his body is buried upon the day of his death, is in no way dominated by the spirit of impurity. For at night, the impure spirit is given permission to rule. (141a)
- 662.** As for him whose soul left him outside the precincts of the Holy Land, his body is defiled by that impure spirit which remains in it until it returns to the dust. And if such a body is brought into the Holy Land to be buried, to it applies the text, *“But you entered and defiled My Land and made My heritage into an abomination”* (Jer. 2:7), that is, *“into My Land over which the spirit of impurity has no power or dominion, you have brought your body wherein that very impure spirit has entrenched itself to be buried in the hallowed soil! You defile My Land! However, the Holy One, blessed be He, provides the Land with a means of purging from this defilement. When such a body decomposes, the Holy One causes a wind to blow from Above which thrusts the impure spirit outside, for He has compassion on His Land.* (141b)
- 663.** Three names has the soul of man: נפש, רוח, נשמה. They are all comprised one within the other, yet they have three distinct abodes

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(after death). The נשמה ascends aloft to the fountainhead, the רוח enters the Garden of Eden, and the נפש finds rest in the grave. As long as the bones of their human habitation remain intact in the grave, the נפש remains there also, though unwillingly. (141b-142a)

664. On New Year's Day, when the world is judged and the Throne of Judgment stands by the Supernal King, every soul (נפש) hovers about and intercedes for the living. On the night following the giving of judgment, they roam about endeavoring to discover what decisions have been made concerning the fate of men in the coming year. Sometimes they communicate their knowledge to the living in the form of a vision or dream. (142a)
665. On the last night of the Feast of Tabernacles, the final edicts are issued from the King, and the shadow is removed from those persons who are shortly to die. (142b)
666. *"Those who trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion"*, immovable and without fear. (143a)
667. R' Jose spoke on these words, *"The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's"* (Song of Songs 1:1). Said he: This song King Solomon poured forth when the Temple was erected and all the worlds, Above and Below, had reach their perfect consummation. (143a)
668. When Moses set up the Tabernacle (משכן) in the wilderness, another such was raised in the Heavenly Spheres. (143a)
669. When the First Temple was completed, another Temple was erected at the same time which was the center for all the worlds. It shed radiance upon all things and gave light to all spheres. Then the world was firmly established and all the supernal casements were opened to pour forth light. All the worlds experienced such joy as had never been known to them before and the celestial and terrestrial beings alike

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broke forth in song. The song which they sang was the "Song of Songs". (143a)

670. This song is superior to all the hymns of praise which had ever been sung before. It comprises the whole Torah. It is holy of holies. Why so? Because all its words are infused with love and joy. On the day when this song was revealed, the Divine Presence descended to Earth. (143b)
671. This is the song wherein is to be found the summary of the whole Torah, of the whole work of Creation, of the mystery of the Patriarchs, of the whole story of the Egyptian exile and the Exodus there from, and the Song of the Sea. It is the quintessence of the Decalogue, of the Sinaitic Covenant, of the significance of Israel's wanderings through the desert, until their arrival in the Promised Land, and the building of the Temple. It contains the crowning of the Holy Name with love and joy, the prophecy of Israel's exile among the nations, or their redemption, of the Resurrection of the Dead, and of all else until that Day which is "Sabbath to the Lord". All that was, is and shall be is contained in it. Indeed, even that which will take place on the "Seventh Day" which will be the "Lord's Sabbath" is indicated in this song.

Therefore, we are taught that he who recites a verse from the Song of Songs as a mere drinking song causes the Torah to dress in sackcloth and to complain before the Holy One, blessed be He, "Your children have turned me into an amusement for a drinking bout". Yes, assuredly the Torah says this. Therefore it behooves the faithful to be wary and to guard every word of the Song of Songs like a crown on their heads.

It may be asked, 'why, then, is the Song of Songs placed among the Hagiographa (which is not as sacred as are the other two parts of Scripture)? The answer is because it is the Hymn of Praise sung by the Community of Israel at the time when she is crowned Above. Therefore, no other hymn is so pleasing to the Holy One as this. (144a)

672. Regarding one who sees grapes in a dream: if they are white, it is a good omen. But, if they are black in color then, if the dream occurred at a time when grapes are in season, they are of good significance. But, if

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not, prayer is needed to avert the omen. One who dreams that he has eaten black grapes can be certain that he will enter the World to Come. (144a)

673. We have been taught that everything that the Holy One created, both Above and Below, He created in the mystery of Male and Female, and there are an infinity of grades in the supernal spheres, each differing from the other. Those grades which are of the same kind, God framed and united in one "body", in the mystery of the primordial Man. (144b)
674. No other love is like unto the ecstasy of the moment when spirit (רוח) cleaves to spirit in a kiss, more especially a kiss on the mouth which is the well of spirit (breath) and its medium. When mouth meets mouth, spirits unite the one with the other, and become one – one love. (146a-b)
675. *"And purple-blue"*. Said R' Isaac: This color is obtained from a fish of the Lake of Genessareth which is in the territory of Zebulun. This color had to appear in the Tabernacle for the following reason. It is written, *"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters"* (Gen. 1:6). Now, the sea was dyed that purple-blue color which symbolizes the Throne of Judgment. (149b)
676. The Angel of Death is indeed good. Why so? Because since all men know that one day they must die, many turn to repentance from fear of him before the Lord. Many fear the King because the lash looms before their eyes. Then is the lash indeed beneficial, making men good and virtuous and upright. (149b)
677. See how great is the mercy of the Holy One towards His creatures! The most wicked sinner, if he has intended repentance, but dies without carrying out his resolve, is, it is true, punished for having gone out of this world without having repented. But his good intention is not lost. (150a)

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- 678.** No good thought is ever lost from the remembrance of the Holy King. Therefore, blessed is he who nourishes good thoughts towards his Lord, for even if he cannot put them into practice, the Holy One takes the will for the deed. This is the case with good thoughts. With evil thoughts, however, the will is not taken for the deed, save in the case of idolatry. (150b)
- 679.** Said R' Judah: Why are sinners punished by the fire of Gehenna? Because the fire of Gehenna, which burns day and night, corresponds to the hot passion of sinfulness in man. (150b)
- 680.** There are certain sinners who pollute themselves over and over again by their own sins and are never purified. They die without repentance, having sinned themselves and caused others to sin, being stiff-necked and never showing contrition before the Lord while in this world. These are they who are condemned to remain forever in this place of "boiling filth" and never leave it. (150b)
- 681.** The fire of Gehenna never ceases to burn those souls who have never kept the Sabbath. (151a)
- 682.** Said R' Jose: For Sabbath is of equal importance with the whole Torah. The Torah is fire, therefore those who have broken it are doomed to be eternally burnt by the fire of Gehenna! (151a)
- 683.** All sinners, as long as their bodies in the graves are intact with all their limbs, are judged body and soul together, each in its own way. But as soon as the body has decayed, the punishing of the soul ceases. Those souls which are destined to leave Gehenna now leave it. Those souls that are to have rest now find it. And those souls which are destined to become dust under the feet of the righteous become dust. Each according to its deserts.

How excellent a thing it is, therefore, both for the righteous, as well as for sinners, when their bodies are in close contact with the earth so that decay can set in quickly and their punishment may not be

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prolonged through the continued existence of the body. For there is not one of the righteous who can escape the judgment of the grave, for the angel appointed over the graves stands over the body and punishes it daily.

And if the righteous have to undergo this judgment of the grave, how much more so the wicked!

But after the body decays, judgment ceases in both cases. The only exceptions are those saints who are the pillars of the world, and who merit that their souls, immediately after death, should ascend forthwith to the regions appointed for them. They, however, are few.

It is the Destroying Angel who brings death to all people, except those who die in the Holy Land to whom death comes by the Angel of Mercy who holds sway there. (151a)

- 684.** The four pairs, the Patriarchs and their wives, who lie in Hebron, are asleep and not dead. Their bodies are all intact, just as when they lived on Earth. They know the hidden mysteries more than any living being. They were hidden there at the gates of Paradise. (151b)
- 685.** When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He did so by means of the secret power of the letters. The letters were shaken about before Him and He created the world by the tracing of the Holy Name. The letters presented themselves for participation in the world's creation in a variety of permutations<sup>72</sup>. (151b)
- 686.** In the book of R' Hamnuna the Ancient<sup>73</sup> it is written concerning the two letters ך and ם that they were not engraved upon the precious stones, those stones of perfection (on the High Priest's ephod), and the names of the twelve tribes inscribed on those stones do not contain these two letters because together they form the word םך (sin). (152a)

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<sup>72</sup> This idea forms the conceptual basis of another famous Kabbalistic work, the Sefer Yetzira, which describes how God created the universe and life by utterances using the inherent "creative potencies" of the letters and vowels of the Hebrew Alphabet. Such a method was used to create the famous Golems of history.

<sup>73</sup> This mysterious work is frequently referred to throughout the Zohar.

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687. The sight of the purple-blue<sup>74</sup> (תכלת) reminds a man that he must keep the Commandments of the Lord. So it was with the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness. They who looked upon it were filled with awe and fear of the Holy One and kept themselves clear from sin. Therefore, they were healed in a moment.

And who was it that instilled in them fear of the Holy One? The instrument of punishment – that Serpent at which they so fixedly gazed.

The same is true of the “the thread of blue” that they were bidden to put upon the fringe (ציצית) of their garments concerning which it is written, *“That you may look upon it and remember all the Commandments of the Lord”* (Num. 15:39). Therefore it was ordained that this color should be in the Tabernacle. (152b)

688. R' Isaac began: It is written, *“When you have eaten and are satiated, then you shall bless the Lord your God”* (Deut. 8:10). How blessed are the Israelites whom the Holy One has befriended above all nations and drawn near to Himself! It is for their sake that He nourished all nations. For had it not been for them, He would not have supplied the world with food. And now, when Israel is in exile, the Gentiles receive a double portion. When Israel dwelt in the Holy Land, the Holy One sent down food to them from a supernal region, the surplus of which was given to the heathen nations. But now it is just the reverse.

He deals with them like a king with his servants. So long as the servants are obedient and loyal, they are permitted to sit and eat with the king, and the remnants are thrown to the dogs. But when they are disobedient and forget their loyal service, the king gives the food to the dogs and leaves them only the bones. The same is true of Israel. While they did the Will of their Lord, they ate from the King's table which He Himself had prepared for them, and they, out of the fullness of their joy gave to the nations their surplus.

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<sup>74</sup> I believe this is not a valid translation of תכלת which was actually a sky- or light-blue color.



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But when Israel ceased to live in accordance with the commands of their Lord, they went into captivity and had to be content with that which the Gentiles left over. So it says, *“Thus shall the Children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, where I will drive them.”* (Ezekiel 4:13).

Woe to the king’s son who is forced to wait at the servants’ table to be fed upon the remnants. (152b)

**689.** R’ Jesse said to R’ Hiya: It hardly accords with the dignity of a king that another person should eat with him at the same table. The king should sit alone at his table and his ministers by themselves at another table, somewhat lower. (152b/153a)

**690.** R’ Hiya began to discourse on the text, *“When you have eaten and are satiated, then you shall bless the Lord your God”* (Deut. 8:10). Said he: should one then bless the Lord only after he has filled his belly? No, even if he eats but a morsel and counts it as a meal, that is called eating to satisfaction, for it is written, *“You open Your Hand and satisfy the wish (will) of every living thing”* (Ps. 145:16). It is not written “you satisfy with a substantial meal”, but “wish” or “the intention”. So it is not the quantity of food but the intention of the eater that “satisfies”. Therefore, it is necessary that, at all times, when we eat, we should offer up our thanks in order that there may be joy Above.

R’ Hezekiah said: From these words it is possible to deduce the rules that an intoxicated person is allowed to say the grace after meals<sup>75</sup>. With prayers, it is otherwise, for prayers ascend very high to the realm where there is neither eating nor drinking and, therefore, prayers are best said on an empty stomach<sup>76</sup>. (153b)

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<sup>75</sup> The Birkas Hamozone (Grace after meals) is a Torah commandment. Unless one is extremely drunk, he is obliged to say the Grace. See SA OC 185:4.

<sup>76</sup> See SA OC 89:3-5. The Magen Avrohom, Sif Koton 14 quotes R’ Chaim Vital that (although the Halacha is that one can eat up to Alos Hashachar (morning star)) one who rises after midnight should not eat – based on the Zohar. See also Birkei Yosef 89:2.

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- 691.** One's table can purify him of all his sins. Blessed is the man whose table exhibits these two qualities: words of Torah which ascend to the Holy One, and food for the poor. (154a)
- 692.** No man ever, except Moses<sup>77</sup>, was found worthy of combining the two functions of king and prophet. (154a)
- 693.** Where there is no vineyard, there are no grapes. Where there is no tree, there can be no fruit<sup>78</sup>. (154b)
- 694.** As a rule, the Evil Inclination is only present where there is much eating and drinking. (154b)
- 695.** For the ritual washing of the hands before the meal, the vessel containing the water is taken in the right hand and poured onto the left, not from the left to right<sup>79</sup>. (154b)
- 696.** When one has eaten and is satisfied, it is necessary to give the scraps and the dregs to the Other Side and particles left upon the hands after a meal must be washed away so that the Other Side may receive its due. Therefore, the washing of the hands after a meal is an imperative duty and the water must be poured away. Hence, no blessing is to be made over the washing of the hands after the meal since there can be no benediction in connection with that Side. (154b)
- 697.** It is written, *"But as for me, my prayer is directed unto You, O Lord, in an acceptable time (time of good will); O God, in the Your abundant kindness answer me with the truth of Your salvation"* (וְאֲנִי תְפִילַתִּי לְךָ)

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<sup>77</sup> Moses was considered a king.

<sup>78</sup> I am sure that there is a deeper meaning here than the benign literal meaning, but it escapes me.

<sup>79</sup> See SA OC 4:10 and Be'er Hagolah giving the Zohar (Vayeishev)/Miketz as the source. The Halacha is the opposite of that stated here, surely with regard to washing one's hands upon rising in the morning. One is to first pick the vessel up with his right hand, transfer it to his left and twice pour the water onto the right hand. The vessel is then transferred to the right hand and the left hand is then washed. The Beis Yosef Siman 4 notes the apparent contradiction between the Zohar in weekly portions Vayeishev/Miketz and the Zohar here in Terumah. Although he first suggests that the former source is referring to the morning washing and latter the washing for bread, he concludes by stating that both sources refer to the same situation. He resolves this internal conflict by implementing the procedure of transferring the cup from right to left as above, thus seemingly satisfying both sources in the Zohar.

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(Ps. 69:14). We are taught that the time when the congregation is occupied with prayer is called the “time of good will”. This is certainly the case, for the congregation in this way prepares the supports for this time, so that it becomes a “time of good will”, propitious for the offering of petitions. (156a)

- 698.** *“As for me, my prayer is unto You, O Lord”*. This prayer is recited during the Sabbath Afternoon Prayer and not on weekdays because the Afternoon Prayer on weekdays is the time when severe judgment is in the ascendant and is not a “time of good will”. On Sabbath, Anger is absent and all the attributes are harmoniously united. Judgment, though it is aroused, is mitigated by Mercy. (156a)
- 699.** It was at the time of the Sabbath Afternoon Prayer that Moses passed away from the world. That was a time of good will Above and of sorrow Below. The gates of the house of study were closed at the time of the Sabbath Afternoon Prayer until the end of the Sabbath to show that with the passing away of Moses, the Faithful Shepherd, the study of Torah, for the time being, ceased. (156a).
- 700.** For this reason are the gates of all the Houses of Study closed at this hour in perpetual memory of that sad occasion<sup>80</sup>. It is necessary for worshippers to repeat the “justification of the (Divine) judgment” contained in the verse, *“Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, Your judgments are like the great deep (waters)”* (Ps. 36:7).

There were three who passed away from this world at the time of the Sabbath afternoon service: Moses, the supreme, faithful prophet; Joseph the righteous; and King David. Therefore three “justifications of the judgment” are recited at this time. The first<sup>81</sup> refers to Joseph the righteous and is contained in the words, “Your righteousness is like a

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<sup>80</sup> See Tosefos to Menochos 30a. See Tur OC 292 regarding this as the reason why we say the three verses beginning with צדקתך צדק at Shabbos Mincha. The Ramoh (SA OC 292:2) states that one should not קובע מדרש (lit. “fix Medrosh” (learning?)) between Shabbos Mincha and Ma'ariv of Motzoei Shabbos.

<sup>81</sup> The order of these verses is reversed in Nusach Ashkenaz, so that God's Name, יְיָ, in the last verse is immediately followed by ויתגדל ויתקדש of Kaddish.

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mighty mountain, your judgments are a great deep” for Joseph singly was comparable to the high mountains and to the mighty deep<sup>82</sup>. Then comes Moses, the faithful prophet to whom refer the words, “*And Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens, You who have done great things*” (Ps. 71:19), because he grasped both Sides, the Right and the Left. Then comes King David, to whom refer the words, “*Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness and Your Torah is truth*” (Ibid. 119:142) for “*everlasting*” refers to David<sup>83</sup>.

Thus all was gathered in at that time, both the Written and Oral Torahs, and therefore, at that time, the gates of the Torah were closed, and the gates of the whole world were also closed. When Joseph the righteous died, all the wells and springs (were) dried up, and the captivity (of Egypt) commenced for all the tribes. Then the celestial beings recited the verse, “*Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, etc.*”

On the death of Moses, the Sun in its splendor was darkened and the Written Torah was locked up and that light of the luminous mirror. The Moon withdrew its light when King David died and the Oral Torah ceased to shine. Since that time, the lights of the Torah have remained hidden, controversy has increased over the Mishnah, the wise men dispute, and all the great thinkers are in confusion so that the joy of Torah has been lost to succeeding generations.

When a great man dies, the scholars proclaim a fast. Seeing then that the joy of the Written and Oral Torahs was gathered in this hour, is it not fitting that the gates of Torah should close then? This, then, is the reason why we repeat the three “justifications of judgment” as explained. (156a/b)

- 701.** The man who gives himself up with ardor and diligence to the study of Torah for her own sake will find in her a strong protection in time of need. (156b)

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<sup>82</sup> cf. Gen. 49:25-6.

<sup>83</sup> cf. II Samuel 7:16.

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- 702.** R' Jose began: It is written, "*When you have eaten and are satiated, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good Land which He has given you*" (Deut. 8:10). It is evident from this verse that the grace after meals is a duty in the Land of Israel. But, where do we know that it is a duty in other lands as well?

Now, when the Holy One created the world, He divided it into two parts. One part that should be habitable and the other a desert; the former on one Side and the latter on the other.

Then he redivided the habitable part in such a manner that it formed a circle, the center of which is the Holy Land. The center of the Holy Land is Jerusalem and, again, the center of Jerusalem is the Holy of Holies to which all the abundance of nourishment and all good things for the whole inhabited world flow in from Above. There is no place in this inhabited world that is not nourished and sustained from that source. The desert land He also divided. There is no desert in the world so terrible and sinister as that where for forty long years Israel wandered. (157a)

- 703.** Although Israel lives at present outside the Holy Land, yet it is owing to the power and worth of that Land that the world is supplied with food and subsistence. It is concerning this that it is written, "*You shall bless the Lord your God for the good Land which He has given you*" (Deut. 8:10). Truly, "the good Land" since for its sake there is sufficient nourishment for the whole world.

When one sits at his table and partakes of its plenty with joyous thanksgiving he should, at the same time, let his mind dwell with sadness upon the holiness of the Land and of the Temple of the King which has been destroyed. Because of his sadness there, at the table, in the midst of his feasting, God regards him as restorer of the House of the Holy One and all the ruins of the Holy Temple. Happy is his lot! (157b)

- 704.** The cup of benediction (the cup of wine taken immediately after Grace has been recited at the conclusion of a meal) is only partaken of when

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there are (at least) three persons present at the table<sup>84</sup> because it is blessed through the mystery of the three Patriarchs.

The cup must first be lifted by both hands in order that it should be placed between the Right and Left Grades but afterwards it is left in the right alone, because it is blessed from that Side.

Ten things have been enumerated in connection with the Cup of Benediction, which is quite appropriate, since there are ten aspects of it, as the Companions have pointed out.

It is necessary to look at the cup while reciting the benediction because it is written, *"The eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it"* (i.e. the Holy Land, Deut. 11:12). Therefore, one's thoughts must not be allowed to stray from the cup, but the eyes must be firmly fixed upon it. (157b)

705. When grace is recited, the table must not be empty, since "no blessing can rest on an empty table"<sup>85</sup>. (157b)
706. The word שבע consists of שב (name) and ע (seventy) indicating the combination of this Name and the other seventy from where it derives blessing. At the recitation of the שבע, therefore, one must concentrate attention on this union of all the Divine Names. (160b)
707. At the time of the recitation of the שבע, one must be prepared to proclaim the unity of the Divine Name and to accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. On the head of him who thus recites the שבע, to accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, the Divine Presence rests – a witness to testify of him before the Holy King that twice daily does he declare the Unity of the Name and, thus, consciously, unite the Above and the Below. Therefore is the letter ע of the שבע written large and the ט of אחד (one) which when put together make the word עט - a witness before the Holy King. (160b)

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<sup>84</sup> SA OC 182:1 states that there is a divergence of opinions here and some rule that even if a person eats alone he can say Grace over a cup of wine.

<sup>85</sup> Another oft-repeated statement in the Zohar. This idea is reflected in the Halacha. One should have at least a morsel of bread on the table when the grace after meals is recited. See SA OC 180.

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- 708.** Upon the head of the man who unifies the Name of the Holy One Above and Below, the Divine Presence descends to rest and bless him with seven blessings and to proclaim concerning him, *"You are my servant, Israel, in whom I am glorified"* (Isa. 49:3). (160b-161a)
- 709.** The Torah preceded the Creation of the World by two thousand years. So when He resolved to create the world, He looked into the Torah, into its creative word, and fashioned the world correspondingly. For all the worlds and all the actions of all the world are contained in the Torah. Therefore, did the Holy One, blessed be He, look into it and create the world. (161a)
- 710.** God looked at his plan this way. It is written in the Torah, *"In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth"*. He looked at this expression and created the Heavens and Earth. In the Torah it is written, *"Let there be light"*. He looked at these words and created light. And in this manner the whole world was created.

When the world was all thus created, nothing was yet established properly until He had resolved to create man in order that he might study Torah. For his sake the world should be firmly and properly established.

Thus it is he who concentrates his mind on and deeply penetrates into the Torah who sustains the world. For the Holy One looked into the Torah and created the world, so man looks into the Torah and keeps the world alive. Hence the Torah is the cause of the world's creation and also the power which maintains its existence. Blessed is he who is devoted to the Torah for he is the preserver of the world.

When the Holy One resolved to create man, there appeared before His Mind potential man in form and condition as he was to be in this world. And not alone he, but all human beings, before they enter this world stand before Him in the same way in that treasure-house of souls where they are dressed in a semblance of their Earthly forms. There they wait entry into this world.

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When their time has arrived, they descend into this world and the Holy One calls upon a certain emissary appointed over all the souls to go down. He says to him, "Go and bring Me such and such a spirit." At that instant, that soul appears clad in the form of this world and is led forward by the angel so that the Holy King may look upon it.

Then does the Holy One warn that soul that when it shall have reached the Earthly regions it is to remember the Torah and devote itself to it so that it may know Him and the Mystery of Faith. For better were it for a man that he should never be born than not to know Him. Therefore, it is presented before the Holy King, that afterwards it may know Him in this world and be devoted to the Holy One in the Mystery of the Faith.

Concerning this it is written, "*You have been shown to know*", that is, shown by the angel to the Holy One, in order to know, to understand, to penetrate, in this world, the Mystery of the Faith, the mystery of Torah.

And he who, having come into this world, does not study Torah to know Him, better were it for him that he had never been born, since the only aim and object of the Holy One in sending man into this world is that he may know and understand that **אלוקים** is **יקוק**.

This is the sum of the whole Mystery of Faith, of the whole Torah, of all that is Above and Below, of the Written and Oral Torah. All together form one unity.

The essence of the Mystery of Faith is to know that this is a complete Name. This knowledge that **יקוק** is one with **אלוקים** is indeed the synthesis of the whole Torah, both of the Written and of the Oral. For "Torah" stands for both, the former being symbolic of **יקוק** and the latter **אלוקים**. The Torah is the Mystery of the Holy Name.

It is therefore called by two names, one of which is general and the other particular. The general is complemented by the particular and the particular by the general, both combining to form one synthesis. In the Torah, we find the synthesis of the Above and the Below, for the one Name **יקוק** is Above, while the other **אלוקים** is Below. One indicates



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the Higher World, the other the Lower. Therefore it is written, "You have been shown to know that יְקוּם is אֱלֹהִים". This is the essence of all things, and it is necessary that man should perceive it in this world. (161a-162a)

711. R' Jose said: According to one authority, the Evening Prayer is obligatory<sup>86</sup> and it certainly is so, for the recital of the Shema is obligatory in the evening. The unity of the Holy One is proclaimed at night as it is during the day. The attribute of the night is included in that of the day and that of the day in the night, and one union is thus attained. (162a)
712. R' Hiya began, *"Moreover you shall make the Tabernacle with ten curtains"* (Ex. 26:1). Here again we have a symbolism for the Unity for the Tabernacle was made up of many parts, and yet it says, (v. 6) *"and the Tabernacle shall be one"*. Now, as the human body possesses many organs, higher and lower, some internal and not visible, others external and visible, and yet they all form one body, so also was it with the Tabernacle. All its individual parts were formed in the pattern of that Above. When they were all properly fitted together, *"the Tabernacle was one"*. Of the Commandments of the Torah, the same is true. They are each and all members and limbs in the mystery Above, and when they all unite as one whole, they all ascend into the one mystery. (162b)
713. R' Isaac happened to be in the company of R' Eleazar, and said to him: Verily, the love of man to the Holy One arises primarily out of the emotions of the heart, for the heart is the source of the awakening of love. This being so, why does it say also, *"with all your soul"* as though there were two sources from where love could emanate, the heart and the soul? If the heart is the source, why mention the soul?
- R' Eleazar replied: There are indeed two sources, yet they are united as one, for heart, soul, and possessions are united as one, though the heart remains intrinsically the center and basis of all. *"With all your*

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<sup>86</sup> Berochos 27b

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heart” means with the good and the evil inclinations, each of which is called “heart”. “With all your soul”, the “all” includes all aspects of the soul, viz., נפש, רוח, and נשמה. As to “with all your possessions”, these also have various aspects, each one different from the other. True love to the Holy One, blessed be He, consists in just this, that we give over to Him all our emotional, intellectual, and material faculties and possessions, and love Him.

Should it be asked, ‘How can one love Him with the Evil Inclination? Is not the Evil Inclination the Seducer, preventing man from approaching the Holy One to serve him? How, then, can man use the Evil Inclination as an instrument of love to God?’ The answer lies in this, that there can be no greater service done to the Holy One than to bring into subjection the “Evil Inclination” by the power of love to the Holy One, blessed be He. For, when it is subdued and its power broken by man in this way, then he becomes a true lover of the Holy One, since he has learned how to make the “Evil Inclination” itself serve the Holy One.

Here is a mystery entrusted to the masters of esoteric lore. All that the Holy One has made, both Above and Below, is for the purpose of manifesting His Glory and to make all things serve Him. Now, would a master permit his servant to work against him, and to continually lay plans to counteract His Will? It is the Will of the Holy One that men should worship Him and walk in the way of truth that they may be rewarded with many benefits. How, then, can an evil servant come and counteract the Will of his Master by tempting man to walk in an evil way, seducing him from the good way and causing him to disobey the Will of his Lord? But, indeed, the “Evil Inclination” also does through this the Will of its Lord.

It is as if a king had an only son whom he dearly loved, and just for that reason he warned him not to be enticed by bad women, saying that anyone defiled might not enter his palace. The son promised his father to do his will in love. Outside the palace, however, there lived a beautiful harlot. After a while the King thought, “I will see how far my

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son is devoted to me". So he sent the woman and commanded her, saying, "Entice my son, for I wish to test his obedience to my will". So she used every blandishment to lure him into her embraces. But the son, being good, obeyed the commandment of his father. He refused her allurements and thrust her from him. Then did the father rejoice exceedingly, and, bringing him in to the innermost chamber of the palace, bestowed upon him gifts from his best treasures, and showed him every honor. And who was the cause of this joy? The harlot! Is she to be praised or blamed for it? To be praised, surely, on all accounts, for on the one hand she fulfilled the king's command and carried out his plans for him, and on the other hand she caused the son to receive all the good gifts and deepened the king's love to his son.

Therefore, it is written, "*And the Lord saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good*", where the word "very" refers to the Angel of Death (i.e. the evil inclination). Similarly, if it were not for this Accuser, the righteous would not possess the supernal treasures in the World to Come. Happy, therefore, are they who, coming into conflict with the Tempter, prevail against him, for through him will they attain bliss, and all the good and desirable possessions of the World to Come; concerning which it is written, "*No eye has ever seen...He has prepared for he who waits for Him*" (Isa. 64:3). Happy are those, too, who have not come across him, for those sinners who encounter him allow themselves to be enticed by him.

What profit is it, then, to the Tempter when the sinner obeys him? Even if it profit him nothing, yet he is certainly doing the Will of His Master and, moreover, it gains him strength. He is not content until he has killed his victim, for then he gains strength and is satisfied, just as the Angel of Life gains strength when one walks in the right way.

May the Lord preserve us from becoming victims of the Tempter. Blessed are they who prevail against him, and thus become inheritors of the World to Come and continually gain strength for the Holy King. Concerning such it is written, "*Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, those whose hearts focus on the paths (to Zion)*" (Ps. 84:6). They are

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blessed in this world, and shall be blessed in the World to Come. (162b-163b)

714. Said R' Eleazar: Verily, I behold the face of the Divine Presence. For to see the righteous and saintly of one's generation is to see the very face of the Divine Presence. And why are these called the face of the Divine Presence? Because in them is the Divine Presence hidden. She is hidden in them and they reveal Her. For they who are the friends of the Divine Presence and are near to Her, are regarded as Her "face". (163b)
715. King David showed his son Solomon, as a model, the celestial prototype of the Temple. (164a)
716. Whenever the righteous are on a journey, the Holy One guards them continually, as it is written, "*The Lord shall protect your going and your coming in, from now and forever*" (Ps. 121:8). (164a)
717. Is it not written, "*For you are the fewest of all peoples*" (Deut. 7:7)? Truly, "of all peoples" taken together, but not fewer than any individual people, for there is no nation in the world as numerous and mighty as Israel. But see how numerous the Ishmaelites and the Edomites! That is so, but it must not be forgotten that all other peoples are intermixed with one another, unlike Israel, which is a pure and unadulterated race, "a holy people unto the Lord", chosen by Him. (164a)
718. When the Holy One enters the synagogue and the people are united in prayer and sing together praises to the King, He is honored and glorified. The Holy King is strengthened to ascend in glory and beauty. On the other hand, "in the want of people is the confusion of the prince"; that is to say, when He enters a synagogue and finds that no congregation has come to pray and praise, all the celestial hosts are degraded from the high estate to which they were raised by the glorification of that King. For when the Israelites worship the Supernal King with prayer and praise, all the celestial hosts join them and sing

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in unison with them, and are strengthened by that holy exercise, that the Holy One may be exalted from Above and Below in harmony. But when Israel does not assemble to worship the Lord, they lose this dignity, since they do not ascend and cannot praise their Master in the fitting manner. (164a/b)

**719.** Beyond the firmament knowledge cannot penetrate. Man must close his mouth and not seek to reflect upon it. He who does so reflect is turned backwards, for it passes our knowledge. (164b)

**720.** When the High Priest was to stand before Him in the Sanctuary, he had to enter that holy place with joy and all things about him were to express joy. Therefore is it written, "*Serve the Lord with joy, come before Him with joyous singing*" (Ps. 100:2). For in His service there is no room for sadness.

It may be asked, "What if a man is deep in sorrow and tribulation, and has no heart to rejoice? His trouble forces him to seek compassion from the Heavenly King. Is he to refrain from prayer because of his sorrow? What can he do? He cannot help being heavy-hearted."

The answer is that, "All gates have been closed since the destruction of the Temple, but the gates of tears have not been closed". Tears are the expression of sadness and sorrow. Those celestial beings who are appointed over those gates of tears break down all the iron locks and bars and let the tears pass through. So the prayers of those sorrowful ones penetrate through to the Holy King and that Place is grieved by the man's sorrow, as it is written, "*In all their afflictions He<sup>87</sup> is afflicted*" (Isa. 63:9). Thus, the prayer of the sorrowing does not return to him void, but the Holy One takes pity on him.

Blessed is the man who in his prayers sheds tears before the Holy One. This is true even on the Sabbath, which must be a day of joy<sup>88</sup>. (165a/b)

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<sup>87</sup> This is in accordance with way the word is read (לר) and not as it is written (לא).

<sup>88</sup> Is this the Halacha? May one cry when praying on Shabbos?

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721. If one fasts because of a sorrow, it delivers him from that punishment which had been decreed for him. (165b)
722. He who endeavors with unceasing diligence to keep the Torah, strives after the possession of abundant life, life in this world and in the World to Come. He is preserved from all evil hap, no harm can come to him. And if this is true of him who endeavors to keep the Commandments, how more true it must be of him who actually performs them! (165b)
723. The way of life by which man enters into the World to Come consists in the reproofs and instructions which he receives in order that he may learn to keep away from the evil path and walk in the good way. (166a)
724. What is the difference between אָנוּשׁ and אָדָם? אָנוּשׁ (derived from אָנַשׁ or to be sick) indicates that he had not the same strength as Adam. Concerning this it is written, *“What is אָנוּשׁ (man) that You should make him great?”* (Job 7:17). A weakening of the body, but a strengthening of the soul was the heritage left by Seth to his son Enoch, a good heritage for his acceptance. The latter passed on a like heritage to his son. (168a)
725. The guilt of Adam was not healed until the time when Israel stood at Mount Sinai and received the Torah. (168a)
726. It is not obligatory for women to say the Grace after meals<sup>89</sup>. (168b)
727. Just as at every celebration of the Covenant of circumcision a beautiful chair must be prepared for the “man of zeal” (Elijah the Prophet), since he is present there, so also at every wedding the canopy must be beautifully decorated in honor of the Celestial Bride. For as Below, so as Above. As the bride here Below is blessed with seven benedictions, so is her prototype (the Divine Presence). A woman who is married is

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<sup>89</sup> See SA OC 186:1, “Women are required to recite the Birkas Hamazone. There is only doubt whether they are obligated from the Torah...or from the rabbis...” See also Berochos 20b.

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called "bride" only after the seven benedictions have been pronounced; and only then can there be conjugal union. (169a)

728. Most benedictions are pronounced over wine. Why is this? Because wine symbolizes joy; the wine which is ever guarded in the grapes. (169b)
729. The seventh benediction is the synthesis of them all, and from it all the universe is blessed, because it comprises what is Above and what is Below. It is the epitome of the Ten Creative Words and, therefore, ten aspects of joy are found in this benediction, "Blessed art Thou...Who created joy and gladness, bridegroom and bride, mirth and exultation, love and brotherhood, peace and fellowship" in order that the bride may be the perfection of all. Blessed are the Israelites who are worthy to represent Below what is Above. Concerning them it is written, "*And who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on Earth?*" (II Samuel 7:23). (169b)
730. It is written, "*And all your children shall be taught by the Lord*" (Isa. 54:13). Does God teach all the children of the Israelites the Torah? Yes, indeed, for when these little ones learn, the Divine Presence comes and lends to each of them power and energy to study. For without the help of the Holy One, the strain on these babes would be too great. (169b)
731. R' Shimon said: Prophecy at times is lodged in the mouths of children, so that they prophesize even more than the prophets of old. (170a)
732. It has been stated (Levit. Rabba 8) that, "Marriage unions are as difficult for the Holy One as was the dividing of the Red Sea." As at the dividing of the Red Sea those who stood on the one side of the sea were drowned, and the others were saved, so in marriages also there is weeping for some and singing for others. He allows one man to die and gives his wife to another man, and at times a bad man gets a good wife. These happenings are great mysteries. (170b)

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733. Chiefs, leaders, and ministers have been set over all the stars and constellations of the firmament. Their duty is to serve the world, each one according to his appointed station. And even the tiniest grass-blade on Earth has its appointed star in heaven. Each star, too, has over it a being appointed who ministers before the Holy One as its representative, each according to his order. All the stars in the firmament keep watch over this world. They are appointed to minister to every individual object in this world, to each object - a star. Herbs and trees, grass and wild plants, cannot flourish and grow except from the influence of the stars who stand above them and gaze upon them face to face, each according to his fashion. (171b)
734. Certain illnesses of men, as jaundice, can be cured through the patient's gazing upon shining steel, which held before his eyes and rapidly moved from side to side so that, like a comet's tail, it sends flashes of light into the face, thus healing the disease. (171b)
735. Spirits rule over the toe- and finger-nails of men when the nail-pairings are thrown away instead of being burnt. For these nail-pairings are used by the sorcerers for their divinations. All those who throw away their nail-pairings or use them for witchcraft while this star<sup>90</sup> is in the ascendant, cause death, and increase the power of sorcery. (172b)
736. When the days of the Messiah will draw near, noxious beasts and diseases will rage in the world. Evil events will occur and Israel will be in great tribulation. But when they are thus oppressed in the darkness of exile, the Holy One will cause the day to break for them, *"And the Kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom... shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High."* (Dan. 12:27). The reign of the heathen nations will be terminated and Israel shall rule over them. There will be fulfillment of the words, *"Moreover, the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun"* (Isa. 30:26). (172b)

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<sup>90</sup> Referring to a star known by the ancient astrologers and sorcerers and which was important for their calculations and predictions.



## TERUMAH

737. The “Star of Jacob” will shine for forty days and forty nights and the Messiah will be revealed. All the nations of the world shall gather around him. Then will the verse be fulfilled which says, *“And on that day the root of Jesse which stands as an ensign for the peoples, to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his resting place shall be glorious”* (Isa. 11:10). (172b)
738. All human beings experience a foretaste of death in the midst of their sleep. (173a)
739. Holiness cannot be mixed with impurity, any more than the Israelites can be mingled with the heathen nations. (173a)
740. All angels are formed of fire, and fire cannot receive impurity. (173a)
741. Moses did not die. But is it not written, *“And Moses died there”*? The truth is, however, that although the departure of the righteous is always designated as “death”, this is only in reference to us. For over him who has attained completeness and is a model of holy faith, death has no power. So he does not, in fact, die. (174a)
742. R’ Judah said: Woe to mankind that they neglect the worship of their Lord, though He perpetually lavishes upon them His Providential care, setting before them the precious treasure of Torah, which they neglect.

There are, as we have learned, three cardinal duties which a man must fulfill towards his son, namely, circumcision, redemption of the first-born, and the finding of a wife. All three God performs for Israel. Circumcision, as it is written, *“And the Lord shall circumcise your heart”* (Deut. 30:6); redemption, as it is written, *“And the Lord your God redeemed you”* (Deut. 15:15); and the finding of a wife, as it is written, *“He created them male and female. And God blessed them and God said to them ‘Be fruitful and multiply’”* (Gen. 1:27-28). Moreover, he carried his children on His wings<sup>91</sup>.

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<sup>91</sup> See Ex. 19:4

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Said R' Jose: All these benefits which He gave to Israel were great, but the Torah is the greatest of all. For there is nothing which so ennobles a man, either in this world or in the World to Come, as the Torah, concerning which it is written, *"By me kings reign, and princes decree justice"* (Prov. 8:15). (174b)

743. Rav Huna began thus: We have been taught that in an earlier time, before Jacob appeared, illness was unknown. Mankind was perfectly healthy until their time arrived and they passed away without any previous sickness. When Jacob came he prayed to God saying, "Lord of the world! May it please You to grant that a man should first fall ill for two or three days, and then be gathered to his people in order that he may have time to put his affairs in order and repent of his sins". The Holy One replied, "It shall be so, and you shall be the pledge and the sign thereof." Therefore it is written concerning him, *"And it came to pass after these things, that Joseph was told, 'Behold, your father is ill'"* (Gen. 48:1), this being something new to the world.

From the death of Jacob until the time of King Hezekiah, no man ever recovered from an illness. Of Hezekiah it is written, *"In those days was Hezekiah became deathly ill"* (Isa. 38:1) followed by, *"Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall and prayed to the Lord"* (v. 2). He said to Him, "May it be Your pleasure that men should be enabled to recover from their maladies, so that they may praise Your Name and acknowledge You and turn to You with perfect repentance, and thus be found worthy before You."

The Holy One replied, "So be it! And you shall be the first sign thereof." So Hezekiah experienced something which no human being had previously experienced, concerning which it is written, *"A composition by Hezekiah, King of Judah, he was sick, and recuperated from his illness"* (Ibid. v. 9) (174b)

744. Said R' Isaac: We have been taught that the words, *"The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness"* (Levit. 18:7) have an esoteric reference to super-mundane

## TERUMAH

relationships in addition to their obvious significance. Woe to him who “uncovers their nakedness” (by probing too deeply into the hidden mysteries of the inner aspects of the Divine Essence and the relationship of one to another). (176a)

745. R' Isaac once said: In bygone times, a person used to say to his neighbor, “Speak to me on a certain portion of Torah and I will pay you for it”. But in our days, even if one person says to another, “study Torah and I will reward you with money for doing so” no one inclines his ears to listen and none desire knowledge except a few saints. (176a)
746. R' Shimon related: Once there was a man who dwelt among the mountains and was a complete stranger to the ways of the townsfolk. He sowed wheat, but knew no better than to consume it in its natural condition. One day he went down into a city and there a loaf of good bread was placed before him. He asked what it was and was informed that it was bread and was meant to be eaten. He ate it and liked it. “What is it made of?” he asked. They told him “Wheat”. Later he was given fine cake kneaded in oil. He tasted it and again asked, “And this, of what is it made?” The reply was made as before, “Of wheat”. Finally, he was treated to some royal confectionery flavored with oil and honey. Once more he asked his question and obtained the same reply. Then he said, “I have all these at my command because I eat the essential constituent of all, namely wheat.” Thus, through his untutored taste he remained a stranger to all these delicious flavors and their enjoyment was lost to him.

And so it is with those who stop short at the general principles of knowledge because they are ignorant of the delights which may be derived from the further investigation and application of those principles. (176a)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### TEZAVEH

### תצוה

747. How is one to discern whether a person is one whose acquaintance is to be cultivated or shunned? By his temper. For by his demeanor when roused to anger can his character be discerned. If he guards his holy soul when he is intensely angry, in order that it may not be uprooted from its place and supplanted by the Other Side, then he is indeed, a servant of his Lord, complete and holy. But one who in his ire cares nothing for the welfare of his soul, uprooting it and letting it be replaced by the impure domination, such a man is a rebel against his Lord, one with whom we should shun contact of any kind, for he is one who, as it is written, *"Tears his soul apart in his anger"* (Job 18:4). He tears and uproots his soul in his heedless rage and allows a "strange god" to usurp its place within him and to take possession of him in his stead. (182a)
748. It is prohibited to look at the face of a person in his anger. What about the anger of students of Torah? That anger is good in all aspects, since, as we have been taught, the Torah is fire and it is she who kindles that holy anger in her devotees, as it is written, *"Is not my word like a fire? says the Lord"* (Jer. 23:29). The anger of scholars is for offences against the Torah, it is in her honor, it is for the sake of the Holy One's glory and majesty. Therefore it says, *"For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, he is a zealous God"* (Deut. 4:24).

## TETZAVEH

But if a person becomes angry over purely secular matters, this is no service to God. No sin that one commits is so literally idolatry as this, since it actually sets up an idol in the very heart of him who is angered. Unto such a man one is forbidden to speak or draw close. (182b)

- 749. R' Judah replied: Anger, in contradistinction to sins which pollute only the body, pollutes also the soul and, in fact, the whole being. Therefore, one must beware of (angry) men. (182b)
- 750. We have to count the Omer standing. (183a)
- 751. The counting of the days of the Omer is not obligatory for women. (183a)
- 752. All mysteries and all glorious sanctifications are centered in the mystery of seven. (184a)
- 753. It is not the Will of the Holy One to destroy His handiwork. (184a)
- 754. Jerusalem is the center of the inhabited world. (184b)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### *KI SISOH*

### כִּי תִשָּׂא

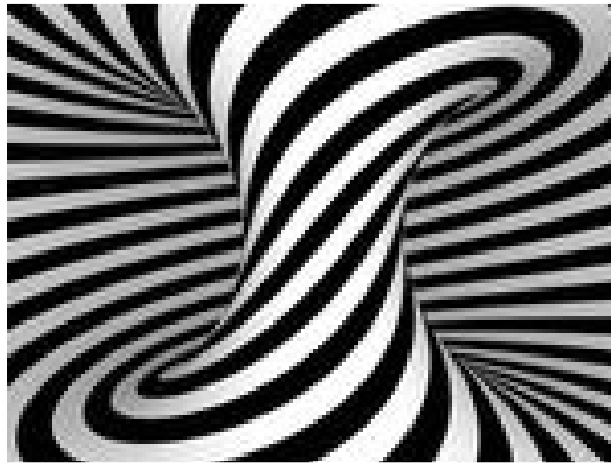
755. No blessing from Above can rest on anything that is counted<sup>92</sup>. (187b)
756. No people in the world despises Israel so utterly, spitting in their faces with the utmost contempt, as do the sons of Edom, who say to them, "You are all impure like a menstruant". (188b)
757. R' Jose replied: What is it that enables Israel to endure their exile for so long? It is those promises which the Holy One has given them. When they go to the synagogues and houses of study and see all those consolations, all those comforting and sure hopes, they rejoice in their hearts and are able to endure all that comes upon them. Otherwise, they would not be able. Said R' Hiya: True! And all depends on repentance. (188b)
758. Said R' Jose: There will assuredly be many, as there have been in all generations, who will wish neither the long exile nor the future reward. They will break loose from the precepts of the Torah and be absorbed in the other nations! (189a)
759. R' Abba once said that Companions who love not one another pass away from the world before their time. (190b)

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<sup>92</sup> A comment frequently found in the Zohar, and found in the Talmud. See Taanis 8b and Baba Metzia 42a.

## KI SISOH

- 760.** The “mixed multitude” consisted entirely on one people all the members of which spoke one language, namely all the sorcerers of Egypt and all its magicians. (191a)
- 761.** ‘Hiding from view’ is an essential adjunct to all magical processes, for in their lore it is taught that anything which is to be made a public show of must first be covered up and hidden away. Conversely, what has to be hidden afterwards must first be shown to view. (192b)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

# VAYAKHEL

## ויקהל

762. It is the way of a serpent to lie in wait on the crossroads, lying in ambush. (194b-195a)
763. When Joshua said to Moses, *"There is a noise in the camp"*, at that moment, the first two tablets of stone became too heavy for Moses' hands, and he dropped them, and they broke. The reason was that the letters of the Tablets of stone flew away. (195a-b)
764. R' Shimon said: I swear to you that the majority of people do not die before their time, but only those who know not how to take heed to themselves. For at that time when a dead body is taken from the house to the place of burial, the Angel of Death haunts the abodes of the women. Why the women? Because that has been his habit since the time that he seduced Eve, through whom he brought death upon the world.

Hence, when he takes a man's life, and the males are accompanying the dead body, he mingles himself on the way among the women and he has then the power to take the life of the sons of men. He looks on the way at the faces of those who come within his sight, from the time they carry the dead body out from his house to the place of burial and until they return to their homes. It is on their account that he brings about the untimely death of many people.



## VAYAKHEL

Regarding this it is written, *“But there is that that is swept away without Justice”* (Prov. 13:23). For he, the Angel of Death, ascends and brings accusations and recounts man’s sins before the Holy One, blessed be He, so that the man is brought to judgment for those sins, and is removed from the world before his time.

What is the remedy against this? When the dead body is carried to the place of burial, one should turn his face in another direction and leave the women behind him. Should the latter pass in front, he should turn around so as not to face them. Similarly, when they return from the place of burial, he should not return by the way where the women are standing and he should not look at them at all, but should turn a different way<sup>93</sup>.

It is because the sons of men do not know this and do not observe this that the majority of people are brought up for judgment before their time. (196b)

765. It was not without cause that the ancients ordained the blowing of the Shofar at the time when the dead body is taken from the house to the place of burial. This was not instituted merely for the honor of the dead. Rather its purpose is to protect the living against the Angel of Death, so that he should not be able to indict them on High, and as a warning to us to guard ourselves against him. (196b)
766. R’ Judah discoursed on the verse *“Surely, you should break your bread with the hungry...?”* (Isa. 58:7). Happy is the lot of him who happens to meet with a poor man, as the poor man is a present that God has sent him. Whoever receives that present with a cheerful countenance, happy is his portion. See now. Whoever displays compassion on a poor man and revitalizes his soul, the Holy One counts it to him as though he had created his soul. (198a)

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<sup>93</sup> See SA YD 359. The Beis Yosef brings this Zohar as the source for discouraging (lit. preventing) women from going to the cemetery. However, the Orech Mishor on Darkei Moshe HaAruch points out that from this Zohar we see that women did in fact go to funerals, thus questioning the ruling of the Beis Yosef who says they should be prevented from going altogether. The problem was not that they should or should not go, he says, rather that one should not look at them there.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

767. It is incumbent upon the host to spread a tablecloth for the poor man for the bread and other food offered. It is the proper thing to cut the bread into slices for the poor man so that he should not feel ashamed, and that there should be no stinting. (198a)
768. A city with all its inhabitants depends on its existence on the care of the people's shepherd and leader. If the latter is a good shepherd, it is well with him, well with the city and well with the people. But if he is an evil shepherd, woe to him, woe to the city and woe to the people! (198a)
769. When one wills to serve his Master, his desire is first generated in the heart. From there, the desire is diffused through all members of the body. (198b)
770. The Holy One, blessed be He, has predestined every unique phenomenon that has ever happened in the world from the time the world was created. (199a)
771. It has been affirmed that in quitting this world a man must endure seven ordeals. The first is the judgment of Heaven when the spirit leaves the body. The second is when his actions and utterances march in front of him and make proclamation concerning him. The third is when he is placed in the grave. The fourth is the ordeal of the grave itself. The fifth consists in his being consumed by the worms. The sixth is the suffering of Gehenna. The seventh ordeal is that his spirit is condemned to roam to and fro in the world, and is not able to find a resting place until his appointed tasks have been completed. Hence, it behooves man continually to review his actions and to repent before his Master. (199b)
772. Said R' Hiya: When God created the world, He did so for no other purpose than that Israel should one day come and receive the Torah. It was by means of the Torah that the world was created, and it is on the Torah that the world is established. (200a)

## VAYAKHEL

773. תְּרוּמָה (the portion given to the Priests) is meant to be resolved into תְּרֵי (two) and מֵאָה (hundred), indicating two out of a hundred. (200a)
774. Prayer offered with concentrated devotion by one who fears his Master produces great effects on High. First come the songs and hymns chanted by the angels on High, and the series of hymns recited by Israel here below. (200b)
775. When the worshippers reach גֹּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל (Who has redeemed Israel) the whole assembly must stand up.<sup>94</sup> (200b)
776. It behooves a man to concentrate his thoughts during the first three benedictions of the Shemone Esrei and to focus his mind on these great effects and the on the ordering of the prayer. His mouth, his heart, and his thoughts must all work in unison. (200b)
777. A man of discernment (גִּבּוֹן) is of a higher degree than a wise man (חָכָם). A wise man knows for himself as much as is required, but the man of discernment apprehends the whole, knowing both his own point of view and that of others. (201a)
778. Prayer is spiritual worship. Deep mysteries are attached to it.....prayer cleaves the ethereal spheres, cleaves the firmament, opens doors and ascends on high (201a)
779. The Divine Presence descends while Israel enters the Synagogue to offer praise to their Master in song and hymn. It behooves, then, every man, after equipping himself with the emblems of holiness (the fringes and the phylacteries) to attune his heart and his inner being for that act of worship and say his prayers with devotion. For the words that he utters ascend on high for scrutiny of angelic supervisors. (201b)
780. If the prayer be fitly uttered he, together with all the other (angelic) chieftains, kisses that utterance and carries it aloft into the supernal

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<sup>94</sup> It is our custom to stand up already by the recitation of תהילות לא-ל עליון.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

firmament where other chieftains are awaiting it. When kissing the utterance of prayer they say, "Happy are you, O Israel, who know how to crown your Master with holy crowns. Happy is the mouth from which issued this utterance, this crown". Then the letters of the Divine Name that abide in the ethereal space soar upwards.

That Divine Name is formed of twelve letters, and is the one by which Elijah flew to the ethereal regions until he reached heaven. This is indicated in the words that Obadiah spoke to Elijah saying, "...*that the spirit of the Lord (YHVH) will carry you...*" For it was that Name by which Elijah flew upwards, and it is that Name that rules the ethereal space. The letters, then, of the Name fly upwards with the prayer-utterance, in company with the chief who holds the keys of the ether, and all the other chiefs, until Heaven is reached where the prayer is taken in charge by another chief to carry it still higher. (201b)

- 781.** The prayer of persons in deep sorrow and anguish, if uttered with due devotion, ascends into that region and is taken up by the chief who kisses it and pronounces over it the words, "The Holy One, blessed be He, be merciful towards you and be filled with compassion on your behalf." (201b)
- 782.** A prayer that is heard by the ears of man is not listened to on High, and so remains unheard by anyone save by him who overheard it at first. Hence it behooves a man to be careful not to let others hear his prayer. Similarly, in the reading of the Torah, while one reads, the other standing by him should be silent<sup>95</sup>. For if two read together Faith is diminished, because voice and utterance are only one. For only a single voice and a single recital must be heard. (202a)
- 783.** Happy is the portion of the man who knows the proper way in which to order his prayer. (202b)
- 784.** There are certain precepts that are bound up, not with action, but with the words of prayer. These are in number six. The first is, "*To fear the*

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<sup>95</sup> It is our custom for the Oleh to whisper his portion in parallel with the Reader.

## VAYAKHEL

*glorious and awful Name*" (Deut. 28:58). The second is, *"To love Him"* (Ibid. 10:12). The third is to bless Him. The fourth is to proclaim His unity. The fifth enjoins the Priests to bless the people, and the sixth bids man to surrender his soul to Him. These six precepts are bound up with the words of prayer just as other precepts that are connected with the action of prayer, such as those of the fringes and phylacteries. (202b)

- 785.** These are the six precepts that are bound up with our daily prayers, and that comprise in a way the six hundred precepts of the Torah. If you ask, what of the thirteen left over (there being 613 Commandments)? these are a category apart designed to draw upon us the thirteen attributes of mercy that comprise all the precepts. These are the six precepts by which prayer is embroidered. Happy is the portion of whomever concentrates his heart and will on them, and realizes them every day (202b-230a)
- 786.** A man possesses a certain נפש that attracts to itself the special spirit on the eve of the Sabbath, so that that spirit takes up its abode and resides within it the whole of the Sabbath. (204b)
- 787.** The נפש of every Israelite is decorated on the Sabbath day; that decoration consisting of the special spirit within them. But at the conclusion of the Sabbath that spirit departs, and then woe to the נפש that is thus bereft. It has lost the Heavenly crown and the holy energy it thereby possessed. (204b)
- 788.** One should not go out alone either on the night of the fourth day of the week<sup>96</sup> or on the night of the Sabbath, and that at these times one must be on one's guard. The fourth night of the week we have to be on our guard against them (malignant spirits and the evil accusers of men) for the reason that at the creation of the lights the Moon was cursed and its light diminished. Thus bands of malignant roving spirits were allowed

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<sup>96</sup> I am unfamiliar with any such Halacha.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

to exercise power that night. On Sabbath night while the spirits scatter themselves in order to retire into the cavern of the abyss where they are powerless to harm, a solitary man must be on his guard against them, since, although they are deprived of power, now and then they show themselves, and a solitary wayfarer must be on his guard. (205a)

- 789.** Once the holy people enter the precincts of the synagogue on the Sabbath, it is forbidden for them to concern themselves with anything, even the requirements of the synagogue, save words of thanksgiving and prayer and the study of Torah. Whoever directs his mind to other and worldly matters profanes the Sabbath and, thus, has no portion among the people of Israel. (205b)
- 790.** The verse-divisions, the tonal accents, the Massoretic readings, and all the minutiae of the text with their profound mysteries were all delivered to Moses on Sinai. (205b)
- 791.** In the reading of the Law, only one voice should be heard at a time. (206a)
- 792.** Both on the Sabbath and on other days when the Torah is publicly read, the holy people must have a Throne prepared in the form of a reading-desk with an ascent of six steps and no more<sup>97</sup> conforming with the passage saying, "*And there were six steps to the throne*" (II Chron. 9:18) and having one step above on which to place the Torah that it may be seen by the whole congregation.

As soon as the Torah is placed thereon, the whole congregation below should assume an attitude of awe and fear, of trembling and quaking, as though they were at that moment standing beneath Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, and should give ear and listen attentively. For it is not permitted then to open one's mouth, even for discussing the Torah, still less other subjects. All must be in awe and fear as though they were speechless. So Scripture says, "*And when he (Ezra)*

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<sup>97</sup> I am unfamiliar with any such Halacha.

## VAYAKHEL

*opened it (the scroll) up, all the people stood up” (Neh. 8:5); also, “And the ears of all the people were attentive unto the Torah” (Ibid. 8:3).*

**R’ Shimon said: When the Torah is taken out to be read before the congregation, the mercy-gates of Heaven are opened and the attribute of Love is stirred up, and each one should then recite the following prayer<sup>98</sup>:**

**Blessed be the Name of the Master of the universe, blessed be Your crown and Your place. May Your favor accompany Your people Israel for evermore and manifest to Your people the redemption of Your right hand in Your Sanctuary so as to make us enjoy Your goodly light. Accept our prayer in mercy. May it be Your Will to prolong our life in goodness and may I, Your servant, be counted among the righteous so that You have mercy upon me and guard me, all that is mine, and all that are of Your people Israel. You are He Who nourishes and sustains all. You are the ruler over all. You are the ruler over all kings and the kingdom is Yours. I am the servant of the Holy One, blessed be He, and bow down before Him and before His glorious Torah at all times. Not in man do I put my trust nor do I rely upon angels, but God of Heaven who is the God of truth and whose Torah is truth and whose prophets are true prophets. In Him do I put my trust and to His holy and glorious Name do I sing praises. May it be Your will to open my heart to Your Torah and grant me male children, such as will do Your Will. May You fulfill the desires of my heart and that of Your people Israel for whatever is good, for life and for peace. Amen. (206a)**

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<sup>98</sup> This is the famous **ברוך שמה** prayer which is now popularly recited when the Aron Kodesh is opened before a Torah reading. This is the only full-length prayer that I have found in the Zohar. Historically, this prayer is a relatively late addition to our prayer service not being commonly recited in neither Ashkenazi nor Sephardic communities until a few centuries ago. It probably crept in when awareness of the Zohar and Kabbalistic writings become more widely known. The Sefer **שרשי מנהג אשכנז** Volume I, extensively discusses this prayer and its history. The author of this book enumerates no less than thirteen different objections to its recitation. Among these are: it was never said by our forefathers and the rabbis of earlier generations, nor by Chazal by whose rulings we live; it is not mentioned neither in the Shulchon Aruch nor the Rama; it is from the Toras Hanister (the Hidden or Esoteric Torah) which is not meant for the masses and not meant to be recited publicly; it contains phrases which could be misinterpreted and are theologically problematic; it may actually not have been written by Rashbi himself; not everyone has the right to say of himself that he is a “Servant of God”; it is of the form of a request that may not be made on Shabbos; there is a danger that it may be said hurriedly and without proper intent and respect; and most people do not understand its (Aramaic) language. Nevertheless, the Mishneh Brura rules that **ברוך שמה** should be recited.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 793.** As the holy tongue stands alone, so its message must be delivered by one only. For two reading simultaneously in the Torah would be a lessening of Divine Faith and a lessening of the glory of the Torah. (Similarly, in reciting the Translation only one voice should be heard.) All should be silent, only one reading, just as at Sinai, as we are told, *“God spoke all these words, saying”* (Ex. 20:1). (206a)
- 794.** It behooves the reader to concentrate on the words he reads and realize that he is the messenger of his Master, charged with the duty of communicating these words to the whole congregation, he being in the place of Heaven to them. Hence, whoever would go up to read in the Torah should have rehearsed his reading at home or else not read at all. (206b)
- 795.** It is forbidden for the reader to break off anywhere save where Moses indicated a pause. Neither may he in reading the portion of one week add part of the portion of another week. (206b)
- 796.** Happy is the portion of whoever completes the reading of the weekly section<sup>99</sup> of each and every Sabbath in the proper manner and in accordance with the divisions fixed on High. (206b)
- 797.** When the Sabbath begins to come to a close, Israel must draw it out as long as possible. For it is a great and exalted day, and the Divine Presence has been our guest on that day. So we must make every effort to detain the celestial guest as long as possible. At the conclusion of the Sabbath, we commence prayers by reciting: ...*וְהוּא רַחוּם יִכַּפֵּר עֵוֹן*. (207a)
- 798.** At the conclusion of the Sabbath, we must inhale the odor of sweet spices in order to restore our soul and counteract the effect of the loss of the superior spirit that has left it. The best odor for this purpose is

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<sup>99</sup> The Soncino edition points out the following. The text of the Zohar implies that there are 53 divisions (Sedras) to the Torah whereas the traditional division is of 54 sections. Some say that the sections Nitzavim and Vayelech are counted as one by the Zohar while others say that V'zos Habrochah is here excluded as it does not belong to any Sabbath.



## VAYAKHEL

that of the myrtle, as it is the myrtle which sustains the holy place from which souls issue. (208b)

- 799.** There is, in each Heaven<sup>100</sup>, a chieftain who is in charge of a part of the world and a part of the Earth, except the Land of Israel, which is not under the rule of any Heaven or any other power but that of the Holy One, blessed be He, alone. (209a)
- 800.** As long as Israel was in the Holy Land, they averted all the evil diseases and afflictions of the world by means of the Temple Service and the sacrifices. (212a)
- 801.** When the holy and pious depart this world, their bodies are placed in an ark. Of Joseph we find it written, "*And he was layed in a coffin (בארון) in Egypt*"<sup>101</sup> (Gen. 50:26). Because he kept unimpaired the symbol of the Holy Covenant and, therefore, he merited to be put in the ark. R' Abba wept and said: Woe unto mankind that they are unaware of this disgrace! Alas, for their offense, in that everyone who wishes is placed in an ark! For this privilege should be reserved for those who are conscious that never in their lives have they transgressed against the sign of the Covenant. To put anyone else into an ark is to desecrate it. (214b)
- 802.** There is no sin so grievous in the sight of the Holy One as the sin of perverting and impairing the sign of the Holy Covenant. He who commits such an offense is excluded from the sight of the Divine Presence. (214b)
- 803.** "*The path of the righteous*" is the path of truth, the path the Holy One, blessed by He, delights in. (215a)

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<sup>100</sup> The Gemara (Chagiga 12b) indicates that there are seven Heavens each with its own particular function and purpose

<sup>101</sup> These are the concluding words of the Book of Bereishis.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 804.** What is the difference between “path” (אורח) and “way” (דרך)? A “path” is newly opened and still little trodden, whereas a “way” is a well-worn track, already traversed by many feet. (215a)
- 805.** R' Shimon discoursed on the verse, *“You shall not eat with the blood. Neither shall you practice divination nor soothsaying”* (Levit. 19:26): The esoteric teaching of this verse is that if one eats before he has prayed “for his blood”, as it were, it is as though he were practicing divination and soothsaying. For in the night man’s soul mounts up into Heaven to gaze upon the mystery of the Divine Glory, each one according to it merits, and the body is thus left deriving its life-force solely from the blood. And although alive, the man has then a foretaste of death. For when man awakens from his sleep, he is not in a state of purity, because, as explained elsewhere, the Other Side has sway wherever the soul is absent.

He must purify himself with water and, although he may have been engaged in studying Torah, even then the soul does not resume its former place and sway, and he is still sustained by the blood life-force alone, the force called נפש (soul) which permeates the blood.

It is only when he worships his Master in prayer that the blood-force resumes its normal position so that the soul regains its control in its own sphere. It is thus that man attains his proper and perfect condition with its vital force Beneath and the soul Above.

Hence, if one prays before he eats he puts himself in the proper condition. But if he eats before he prays for his blood to resume its proper sphere, it is as though he were practicing divination and soothsaying, seeing that it is the way of the Diviner to elevate the Other Side and to degrade the Side of Holiness.

The term מנחש (Diviner) is related to נחש (serpent). The Diviner is so called because he gives himself over to the Serpent in order to obtain from him power and strength. Such a man is like one serving other gods and so likewise is he who eats before prayer, worshipping

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the blood life-force instead of worshipping the Almighty in order to fortify the Side of the soul, the Side of Holiness.

Happy is your portion, O exalted saints, in that through prayer man's body and soul are edified so that he becomes complete.

Prayer works a fourfold process of up-building which is in essence one. First, it builds up he who prays; secondly, it builds up this world; thirdly, the up-building of the Upper World with all the Heavenly hosts and, fourthly, the process of up-building is wrought on the Divine Name. (215b)

- 806.** *"The Lord is One"*. The recitation of this phrase is to make our thoughts range throughout all the Grades of which up to the Infinite (אין סוף) Grade in love and fear. This is the method of avowing the unity of God practiced by Rav Hamnuna the Venerable, who learned it from his father, who had it from his master and so on until it came from the mouth of Elijah. And it is the correct and proper method.

The same Rav Hamnuna further said that to concentrate the whole idea of unification in the term אחד (one) is still a better way. It is for this reason that we dwell long over the enunciation of the word אחד, during which we affect the fusion into one of the Upper and Lower Worlds. As we have learned, "one" alludes to Above, Below and the four quarters of the universe, these being the supernal Chariot, so that all are embraced in a single unity reaching out to the אין סוף.

After the recital of ...שמע ישראל... we have to recite the section containing mention of the Exodus from Egypt (Num. 15:37-41) for the reason that the Divine Presence was in the Egyptian exile and as long as She is in exile there is no union between the Upper and the Lower Worlds. But the Redemption from Egypt, attended by all those signs, set Her free. (216b)

- 807.** The Divine Presence appeared neither during the First Temple nor during the Second Temple. (216b)

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- 808.** We have, in the recital of that redemption, to repeat four times the term “truth” (אמת) before we reach the portion beginning with “עזרת” “...אבותינו, a prayer which is a firm support for all Israel. Then, in the course of the recital, “עזרת אבותינו” term “אמת” recurs again four times<sup>102</sup>, whereby we fortify, confirm and corroborate, as it were, the same four redemptions with the seal and signet of the King. (216b-217a)
- 809.** R’ Shimon further discoursed citing the verse, “*And they made the ציץ (headplate), the holy crown, of pure gold, etc.*” (Ex. 39:30). Why was the plate called ציץ (literally gaze or peep)? Because it was a reflector, mirroring the character of any man gazing at it. For in that plate were graven the letters of the Divine Name. When a righteous man appeared before it the letters so engraved bulged out and rose luminous from their sockets, from which a light shone on the man’s face with a faint sparkling. For a moment, the Priest would notice the reflection of the letters on the man’s face. But when he looked more closely, he would see nothing more than a faint light, like the reflection of shining gold.
- But the first momentary glimpse that the Priest caught was a sign to him that that man was pleasing to the Holy One, blessed be He, and that he was destined for the World to Come, inasmuch as that light was illumination from on High and a mark of Divine favor.
- On the other hand, if one’s face failed to show any such sacred sign when he stood before the plate, then the Priest knew that that man was an evildoer and in need of atonement and intercession. (217b)
- 810.** As the members of the body must follow the eyes, which are the leaders of the body, so kings, members of the Sanhedrin and other rulers, lead the way for the people to follow. (218a)
- 811.** Whoever pronounces the after-meal benediction must do so devoutly, and in a joyful mood, unmingled with an tinge of sadness inasmuch as in giving thanks he is giving of his own to someone else. Thus, as he

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<sup>102</sup> In Nusach Ashkenaz, אמת is recited but twice in the paragraph beginning with עזרת אבותינו.

## VAYAKHEL

gives thanks joyfully and unstintingly, so will sustenance be given to him joyfully and unstintingly. (218a)

- 812.** Our sages have said that the arrogant and shameless have no portion in this world nor in the World to Come. All the arrogant of Israel, when they gazed on the פֶּתֶלֶת (plate) became contrite of heart and looked inwardly into their own deeds. For the פֶּתֶלֶת possessed miraculous powers, and thus was a means of making all who looked on it feel ashamed of their misdeeds. In this way the פֶּתֶלֶת secured atonement for the arrogant and the insolent.

The letters of the Divine Name engraved on it stood out shining and flashing. Whoever looked at that flashing had to cast down his eyes in fear and became contrite of heart. Thus the פֶּתֶלֶת affected atonement.

Of similar potency was the Incense. For whoever smelled the smoke of the pillar that ascended from the "smoke-raiser" (one of the ingredients of the Incense) became cleansed of heart and intent on worshipping his Master. The taint of evil spirit disappeared from him, leaving him to serve with a single heart his Father in Heaven. The Incense thus possessed the potency of breaking completely the evil spirit in man. As the פֶּתֶלֶת possessed miraculous powers, so did the Incense. (218b)

- 813.** For there is nothing so beloved by the Holy One, blessed be He, as the Incense. It is able to banish sorcery and all evil influences from the house. Seeing that, by means of their odor and fumes, perfumes prepared by men possess the virtue to counteract the ill effects of evil things, how much more so the Incense!

It is a firmly established ordinance of the Holy One, blessed be He, that whoever reflects on and recites daily the section of the Incense will be saved from all evil things and sorceries in the world, from all mishaps and evil imaginings, from evil decrees and from death. No harm will befall him that day, as the Other Side has no power over him. But it must be read with devotion.

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R' Shimon remarked: Were people to know how precious the offering of the Incense is to the Holy One, blessed be He, they would take every word of the passage where it is enjoined and make it into a crown for their heads, as it were, a crown of gold. And whoever studies it ought to reflect deeply on the way it was carried out. Through the reciting of it daily with devotion one merits a portion in this world and of the World to Come. He keeps death away from himself and from the world, from the Evil Sides, from punishments of Gehenna, and from strange powers.

When the pillar of smoke ascended from the burning Incense, the Priest used to see the mystical letters of the Divine Name ascending on High in that pillar. Then numerous holy legions would surround the pillar on all sides until rose in the midst of light and gladness to the region where it diffused joy and knitted together the Upper World and the Lower World in complete unity, thereby achieving atonement for the evil spirit of man and for idolatry, which is of the Other Side. (218b/219a)

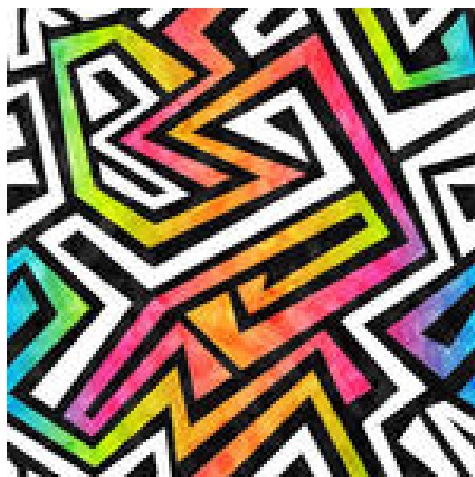
- 814.** The altar was placed in the innermost part of the Tabernacle for it was the repository of blessings and was, therefore, hidden from the eye of man. (219a)
- 815.** It is forbidden to burn Incense anywhere save on coals of fire taken with the censer from this altar. (219a)
- 816.** The one who is accustomed to reciting the Incense-ordinance twice a day<sup>103</sup>, in the morning and the evening, corresponding to the precept, *"And Aaron shall burn thereon Incense of sweet spices, every morning... at dusk, he shall burn it"* (Ex. 30:7-8) will assuredly keep chastisement away for himself. (219a)

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<sup>103</sup> On weekdays, the Ashkenazi custom outside of Israel is to recite the section פִּיטוּם הַקְטוֹרֶת only once, before the saying of the פְּסוּקֵי דְזִמְרָה while in Israel some repeat it at the end of the Shacharis. Could it be that this curious redundant recitation of this section may be due to the fact that the Ashkenazi practice is not to recite it prior to Mincha, as do the Sephardim, thus requiring the saying of this section a second time in the morning?

## VAYAKHEL

- 817.** Observe the difference between prayer and the Incense-offering. Prayer has been instituted to take the place of the sacrifices that Israel used to offer. But none of the sacrifices had the same value as the Incense. There is, further, this difference between the two. Prayer repairs damage which has been done, but Incense does more – it strengthens, it binds together, it is the greatest light-bringer. It was the Incense that removed the evil taint (זדון) and purified the Tabernacle so that the whole was illumined, renewed and knitted together into a combined whole. Hence, the Incense-recital must always precede our daily prayer as a means of removing the evil taint from the world, inasmuch as it acts as a daily therapeutic like the offering itself, in which God delights. (219a)
- 818.** The offering of the Incense used to precede all other services and, hence, its recital should be a prelude to our service of hymns and praises. (219b)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### PIKUDEI

### פקודי

- 819.** When God commanded Moses to make the Tabernacle, Moses stood bewildered not knowing how to proceed until God showed him an actual representation of it. (221a)
- 820.** For blessing does not rest upon what is counted, but only what is beyond number. (221b)
- 821.** Just as in the human eye there are three concentric layers surrounding a central point which forms the focus of vision, so is the world's vision focused in the central point, consisting of the Holy of Holies and the Ark and the Mercy Seat. (222b)
- 822.** Although several parts of the world completed themselves one by one, the world, in its entirety, was only completed and firmly established when the Seventh Day came, for then did the Holy One knit together the world into a complete whole. (222b)
- 823.** R' Jesse said: We have been taught that whoever devotes himself to the study of Torah in this world and is able to appoint set times for it, must do so in "faithfulness", must direct his mind toward the Holy One, blessed be He, and must study for Heaven's sake. (223a)
- 824.** Happy are those righteous who have no portion in this world but only in the World to Come. (224a)



## PIKUDEI

- 825.** When the Priest spreads his hands at the time he blesses the people, the Divine Presence comes and hovers over him and endows him with power. When blessing, the Priest raises his right hand above the left, so as to cause the Right to prevail over the Left. (225a)
- 826.** When the Priest spreads out his hands and begins to pronounce the blessing over the people, the celestial benedictions flowing from the celestial source at once kindle the lamps, all faces are illumined, and the Community of Israel is adorned with celestial crowns. All those blessings flow down from on High to Below. (225a)
- 827.** R' Isaac put the following question to R' Shimon: Seeing that, as we have learned, no blessing dwells in whatever is numbered or measured, why were all things connected with the Tabernacle made to be numbered?
- R' Shimon replied: Wherever holiness abides, there, if the act of numbering proceeds from the Side of Holiness, blessing will abide continuously, and not pass away. This we learn from the tithe which is a cause of blessing, the reason being that the act of counting is performed for a sacred purpose. How much more so, then, should that be with the Tabernacle, which was a sacred edifice and derived from the Side of Holiness! But it is not so with worldly matters, such as are not derived from the Side of Holiness as no blessing rests upon them if they are numbered. For then the Other Side, that is, the Evil Eye, may obtain dominion over them, and wherever the Evil Eye rules, there blessing cannot reach. Contrariwise, in holy affairs, through measuring and numbering, blessings continuously increase. (225a)
- 828.** The blue employed in the work of the Tabernacle symbolized the mystery of the Upper World. The blue and purple together symbolized the knitting together of the Upper World and the Lower. (226b)
- 829.** One may not greet his friend before he has recited his prayer. (226b)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 830.** In all the names of the tribes, the letters ה and ט are not found for the reason that the tribes were without sin (הט) (230a)
- 831.** With regard to the אורים and תומים which were to be put in the breastplate<sup>104</sup>, we have learned that they were called אורים (lights) because their words gave a clear and direct answer to the questions directed to them; and תומים (from תם - perfect or complete) because their words were fulfilled to perfection<sup>105</sup>. (230a)
- 832.** R' Shimon replied: The nearer a thing comes to the realm of the hidden and undisclosed, the less is it made mention of. So, contrariwise, what is nearer the realm of things revealed is to that degree more often mentioned; whereby the undisclosed is all the more covered. On the same principle, the Divine Name Sublime, the essence of the hidden and the unrevealed is never uttered; a name denoting the revealed being substituted for it. Thus, the Name signifying the unrevealed is יקוק, but that signifying the revealed is א-דני. The former is the way the Divine Name is written, the latter is the way it is read. Thus it is throughout the Torah which contains two Sides: a disclosed and an undisclosed. And these two aspects are found in all things, both in this world and in the Upper World. (230b)
- 833.** For the Holy One, blessed be He, found delight in all those who come near to Him and sanctify His Name openly. (231a)
- 834.** The pomegranate is a symbol of plenty on account of its multitude of seeds. (231a)
- 835.** At the creation of Adam, the Holy One, blessed be He, made male and female together, female in the back and the male in the front. Then he sawed them apart and tricked out the woman and brought her to Adam. When they were thus brought face to face, love was multiplied in the world and they brought forth offspring, a thing that was not yet before.

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<sup>104</sup> See Ex. 28:30

<sup>105</sup> Yoma 73.

## PIKUDEI

But when Adam and his wife sinned and the serpent<sup>106</sup> had intercourse with Eve and injected into her his venom, she bore Cain whose image was in part derived from on High and in part from the venom of the unclean and Low Side. Hence it was the Serpent who brought death into the world, in that it was his side that was the cause of it.

- 836.** It is the way of the serpent to lie in wait to slay, and thus the one that sprang from him followed the same course. (231a)
- 837.** In the act of slaying Abel, Cain bit him repeatedly after the manner of the serpent, until he caused his soul to quit him. (231a/b)
- 838.** Had not Cain been, in part, the offspring of the Unclean Side he would not have behaved so toward his brother. Adam, therefore, having seen Abel slain and Cain banished said to himself, *"Why henceforth should I bear children?"* He then separated himself from his wife for a hundred and thirty years during which period unclean female spirits conceived from him and bore spirits and demons<sup>107</sup>, the so-called, *"Plagues of the children of men"* (II Samuel 7:14). After that, Adam became jealous, rejoined his wife and begat Seth, as we read, *"And (he) begot a son in his own likeness and image; and he called his name Seth"* (Gen. 5:3), emphatically, *"In his own likeness, after his image"* which did not happen before, that is, with the offspring born before that time. For previously intercourse with Adam was of another kind, but now the Holy One, blessed be He, brought Eve all beautified into the presence of Adam and they joined together face-to-face. (231b)
- 839.** David was king in this world and will be king in the time to come. (232b)
- 840.** David declared, *"I am small and despised, yet have I not forgotten Your precepts"*. It behooves, indeed, every man to follow this example and to humble himself in every respect so as to become a vessel in which the Holy One, blessed be He, may find delight. (233a)

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<sup>106</sup> I am uncertain as whether or not to capitalize serpent in these sections.

<sup>107</sup> Eruvin 18.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 841.** Whenever one sees a camel in his dream, it signifies that death was decreed upon him, but he was delivered. (236a)
- 842.** Some sorcerers succeed in their art and others do not succeed although they use the same practices, since the success of sorcery depends upon the man himself. We have an example in Balaam who was the very man for such arts. He, as tradition tells us, was blind in one eye<sup>108</sup> and looked askance with the other. (237a)
- 843.** Said R' Shimon: Now I am about to reveal to you a mystery which is only permitted to be revealed to the superior saints.

The Holy One, blessed be He, has conferred power upon the place which is from where the unclean spirit may have dominion over the world in many ways and may be enabled to inflict harm. We thus dare not treat him lightly, but we have to be on our guard against him lest he indict us, even in our holy actions. We have, therefore, a secret device, namely to assign him a little space within our holy performances, since it is out of the source of holiness that he derives his power. Hence we are required to enclose inside the תפלין a hair of a calf with one end jutting out and exposed to sight.

This hair is incapable of communicating defilement since it is smaller than a barley grain. Now, when the unclean spirit beholds this hair that is within the supremely holy, and thus finds that he has a portion therein, he will abstain from assailing the wearer and will be powerless to inflict evil on him, whether on High or Below. Whereas, if nothing is given him within what is holy, he brings accusations saying that and that man who at the moment makes himself holy has done such and such a deed on such and such a day, and these and these are the sins he committed, so that the man will thus be brought to judgment and be punished.

The Israelites, who were aware of this secret, used to adopt a similar device when they began to sanctify themselves on the Day of

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<sup>108</sup> Rashi, Num. 24:15

## PIKUDEI

Atonement<sup>109</sup>. They at once made provision for assigning the unclean spirit his portion so that he should not accuse them nor bring to notice the sins of Israel. (237b)

844. Every man's prayer is scrutinized as to whether it is recited with the proper concentration on Divine unification. If it is found to be so, the man receives blessings from the fount of blessings. (238a/b)
845. What Israel achieves through prayer, the Priests achieved through the Temple Service. (239b)
846. The Community of Israel cannot rise from the dust so long as the sinners from among Israel exist in the world. (240a)
847. *"The house that you may build for Me"*, alludes to the Temple. (241a)
848. The difference between "tabernacle" and "house" may be illustrated thus. In regard to the former, we have to imagine a king who comes to visit his friend without bringing with him all his retinue, but only a few attendants so as not to put his friend to trouble. But a "house" is a place where he comes to abide accompanied by his full retinue. The Temple, then, was designed as an ever-enduring resting-place for all legions, all the symbols, all the solemn works, on the model of the celestial Temple. But the Tabernacle was the same, only on a small scale. (241a)
849. Though all nations rose against them, God did not leave them in their hands. If they did fall, they were to rise again. So at the Future Time when the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise her from the dust of the exile, the Community of Israel will say, *"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, though I am fallen, I shall arise."* (241b)



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<sup>109</sup> I do not know to what is referred to here.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

# VAYIKROH

## וִיקְרוּ

- 850.** If one invites another to eat, it is while the food is spread before him, not after he has eaten<sup>110</sup>. (2b)
- 851.** The male without his female is bereft of all His praises and is not included in the category of "Man" nor is he worthy to be blessed. (5a)
- 852.** A man who is not married is defective. (5b)
- 853.** There is not a word in the Torah which Moses spoke on his own authority. (7a)
- 854.** R' Judah said, "*Serve the Lord with gladness*" (Ps. 100:2). We have learned that all service of God must be performed with gladness and zest, otherwise it is not perfect. Now, how is this possible in the case of the offering which is brought as a sign of man's repentance for transgressing the precepts of the Torah? With what face can such a one stand before God? Surely only with a contrite spirit and sorrowful heart. Where, then, is the joy and shouting?

The truth is, however, that this was provided by the Priests and Levites. Rejoicing was carried out by the Priest because he is far from chastisement and must ever show a more joyful countenance than the rest of the people. The singing, again, was carried out by the Levites,

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<sup>110</sup> See Ahavas Chesed of the Chofetz Chaim "Hachnosas Orchim", Chapter 2.

## VAYIKROH

whose function it was. So the Priest stood by him and found suitable words to unify in joy the Holy Name, while the Levites broke out in song. (8a/b)

855. Before praying, one should fix his mind on the Holy of Holies, which is the Holy Name. (8b)
856. *"If his oblation be a burnt-offering from the herd."* R' Jose asked: Why should there be three kinds of burnt-offering – from the herd, from the flock and from the fowl? Why is one not sufficient? The reason is if a person can afford he brings an ox, and if he cannot afford an ox he brings a sheep, and if he cannot afford a sheep, he brings a fowl. R' Jose said: God does not demand of a man more than he can perform.(8b)

R' Eleazar said: His offering was to correspond with his sin. A rich man puffed up with his wealth was to bring an ox because his thoughts were likely to be the most sinful. A man of moderate means brought a sheep because he was not so prone to sin, while a poor man who was the most timid of them all, brought the smallest offering of all. And the offering of each was appraised by God at its true value.

R' Eleazar asked R' Shimon his father the following question: We have learned that famine comes to the world for three sins which are found only among the rich because they are puffed up with their wealth, but not amongst the poor. How is this fair then, that God should slay the poor (by famine) and not the rich, for now they will sin still more? He replied: This is a good question, and the Companions have answered as follows. Of all the sons of Man, none are as near to the Supreme King as those vessels which He uses, to wit, *"A broken and contrite heart"* (Ps. 51:18), *"He who is of humble and contrite spirit"* (Isa. 57:15). Now, when there is a famine and the poor are punished and suffer, and they weep and cry before the King, and God draws them nearer than ever, as it is written, *"For He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted"* (Ps. 22:25), God then visits the sins for which famine has come on the world. Woe, then, to the sinners who

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have caused this, when the King bestirs himself to take note of the voice of the poor. Heaven protect us from them and their vengeance, for so it is written, *"I will surely hear his cry"* (Ex. 22:23), *"And my wrath shall wax hot, etc."* (Ibid.).

The offering of the poor man is a small one because his heart is downcast and, therefore, even if he harbors sinful thoughts, he is forgiven because he is sufficiently punished by his own distress and that of his household.

A rich man once brought an offering of two pigeons to the Priest. On seeing them, the Priest said, *"This is not an offering for you"*, and the man went home very sad. His people asked him why he was so sad, and he said, *"Because the Priest would not take my offering"*. *"What was it?"* they asked. *"Two pigeons"*, he replied. They said, *"That is an offering for a poor man, not for you. You must bring a proper one."* *"What is that?"* he asked. They replied, *"An ox"*. *"Is the mere thought of sin then so serious?"* he said. *"I vow that I will let no thought of sin enter my heart."* From that day, he would spend his days in business, go to bed at night, and upon waking he would call his brethren, and they taught him the Torah. He would study it until daybreak. Because he studied, they called him, *"the transformed Judah"*. One day, R' Jesse found him dividing his money – half for the poor and half for merchandise to shop overseas, and after he had finished, he sat down and studied the Torah. (8b-9a)

857. The study of Torah does not require luxuries or merchandise, but only labor, day and night. (9a)
858. Offerings are brought on the baking- or frying-pan and heated in the same way as he heated his flesh and blood with his evil passions and set all his limbs on fire. The essence of the offering is that it is analogous to the sin. One should offer to God his desires and passions, for this is more acceptable than all. Blessed are the righteous that they bring this offering every day. Yet withal, the actual offering is better because it brings blessings on all the worlds. (9b)



## VAYIKROH

- 859.** In the Book of Rav Hamnuna the Elder it is explained that all the inhabited world is circular like a ball, so that some are above and some below. The strange appearances of certain races are due to the nature of the air, but they live as long as other men. Further, there is a part of the world where it is light when another part is dark, so that some have night while others have day. There is a place where it is always day and where there is no night save for a very short time. This explanation is found in the books of the ancients and in the Book of Adam<sup>111</sup> and confirmed in Scriptures. (10a)
- 860.** R' Nehorai the Elder once went on a sea voyage. The ship was wrecked in a storm and all in it were drowned. He, however, by some miracle, went down to the bottom of the sea and found there an inhabited land where he saw strange human beings of diminutive size. They were reciting prayers, but he could not tell what they said. By another miracle, he then came up again. He said, "Blessed are the righteous who study Torah and know the most profound mysteries. Woe to those who argue with them and do not accept their word." From that day, whenever he came into the house of study and heard the Torah being expounded, he would weep. When they asked him why he wept, he would say, "Because I was skeptical about the words of the Rabbis, and now I fear me for the judgment of the Other World." (10a)
- 861.** R' Jose said: How greatly should men take heed not to sin before their Master, for every day a herald goes forth proclaiming, "Turn your hearts to the Holy King. Be on guard against sin. Arouse the Holy Soul which He has given you from the Celestial Holy Place." (13a)
- 862.** R' Eleazar said: One should review his actions and rectify them before his Master and confess his sins because God is called merciful and gracious, and He receives those who return to Him. (13b)

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<sup>111</sup> Another mysterious book frequently mentioned in the Zohar. This account is found in the other editions of the Zohar in Bereshis on the verse *And God said there shall be a firmament in the waters*. There the Zohar concludes with the following. "The world exists only due to peace. God is called Peace (שלום), He is Peace, His Name is Peace, and all is connected by Peace."

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

**863.** R' Jose said: It is written, *"For this is as the waters of Noah unto me"* (Isa. 54:9). Why have we here the expression *"Waters of Noah"* and not *"Waters of the Flood"*? The reason is that when mankind is sinful and there is a righteous man in the world, God speaks with him in order that he may pray for mankind and obtain forgiveness for them. God first promises to save him alone and destroy the rest.

Now the proper thing for a righteous man to do at such a time is to forget himself and espouse the cause of the whole world in order to appease God's wrath against them, as Moses did when Israel sinned. When God, however, said to Noah, *"The end of all flesh is come before Me"*, Noah replied, *"And what will You do with me?"* to which God replied, *"I will establish My Covenant with you, make an ark of gopher wood"*. Thus, Noah did not pray for the world and the waters came down and destroyed mankind. Therefore they are called *"the waters of Noah"*. (14b-15a)

**864.** It is the one of the signs of a saintly and virtuous man that the rainbow does not appear in his days and the world does not require this sign while he is alive. Such a one is he who prays for the world and shields it, like R' Shimon bar Yochai, in whose days the world never required the sign of the rainbow, for he was himself a sign. For if ever punishment was decreed against the world, he could annul it! (15a)

**865.** Said R' Eleazar: A punishing decree is kept in suspense for thirty days and God does not carry it out before making it known to the righteous, as it is written, *"For the Lord God will do nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants, the prophets"* (Amos 3:7). (15a)

**866.** In the Book of Rav Hamnuna the Elder we find: Prayer and the sound of the Shofar (שופר) which are produced by a virtuous man with his heart and soul, mount Above, and the Accusers Above are thrust away before it and cannot face it. Happy are the righteous who know how to be truly devout before their Master and establish the world on this day

## VAYIKROH

with the sound of the Shofar. Hence it is written, "*Blessed is the people who know the sound of the Shofar*" (Ps. 89:15).

On this day, the congregation must look for a man without blame who knows the ways of the King and how to honor Him, that he may pray for them and transmit the sound of the Shofar to all worlds with concentration of thought, with wisdom and with devotion, that through him chastisement may be removed from the world.

Alas, for those whose minister is not fitting, for through him their sins will be called to mind. But, if he is truly virtuous, then the people are justified through him, and punishment is removed from them through him.

Said R' Eleazar: For this reason, the Priest and the Levite were examined as to their character and, if they were not found satisfactory, they were not allowed to minister. And so, too, with the members of the Sanhedrin before they were allowed to judge. (18b)

**867.** The hot fiery spirit named Lilith is still in the cities of the seacoast trying to snare mankind. She is the ruin of the world. (19a)

**868.** The remedy is this. When a man unites with his wife, he should sanctify his heart to his Master and say, "She that is wrapped in a robe is here. You shall not enter nor take out. It is neither of you nor of your lot. Return, return. The sea is heaving. Its waves await you. I cleave to the Holy Portion. I am wrapped in the holiness of the King." He should then cover his head and the head of his wife for a short time.

In the book which Ashmedai gave to King Solomon it says that he should then sprinkle clean water around the bed. If a woman is suckling a child, she should not join her husband while the child is awake, nor give suck afterwards until time enough has elapsed for walking two miles, or one mile if the child cries for milk.

If all this is done, Lilith will never be able to harm them<sup>112</sup>. (19a)

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<sup>112</sup> See SA OC 241:16, Hilchos Tznius and the Be'er Heitev there.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

**869.** Because the Woman sinned first, it was decreed that the husband should rule over her. (19b)

**870.** Woe to the man at whose table the wife says grace. So when we read that, "*Deborah judged Israel at that time*", we might exclaim, "Woe to the generation which could only find a female to be its Judge!"

See now. There were two women in the world who composed praises to God such as the men never equaled, namely, Hannah and Deborah. Hannah opened the gate of faith to the world in the words, "*He raises up the poor from the dust, etc.*" (I Samuel 2:8). "To make them sit with princes", to wit, in the place where the princes, that is the Patriarchs, sit Above. According to another explanation, however, this refers to Samuel who was placed on par with Moses and Aaron.

"*And make them inherit a throne of glory*". This refers to Samuel who placed two kings on the throne. Or it may refer to God, Who causes His servants to inherit His throne. (19b)

**871.** Deborah likewise praised the Holy King as it is written, "*Lord, when You went forth out of Seir, when You marched out of the field of Edom*" (Judges 5:4) – speaking in the mystery of wisdom until she began to praise herself, saying, "*Until that I, Deborah, arose that I arose, a mother in Israel.*" Then the spirit of prophecy left her so that she had to say to herself, "*Awake, awake Deborah. Awake, awake, utter a song*" (Ibid. 12). All this happened when the men were sinful and not worthy that the spirit of prophecy should rest upon them. (19b)

**872.** R' Hiya explained the verse, "*I confess my sin unto God, etc.*" (Ps. 32:5). From this we learn that one who conceals his sins and does not confess them before the Holy King and beg for mercy is not allowed to enter the door of Repentance. But if he states them openly before God, then God has pity on him and Mercy prevails over Judgment. All the more so if he weeps, for tears open all doors. Thus, the confession of sin brings honor to the King by making Mercy prevail over Judgment. (20a)

## VAYIKROH

**873.** Said R' Jose: Israel was not exiled from their Land nor was the Temple destroyed until they were all sinful before the King, the heads of the people being foremost in sin, as it says, "*O, my people, your leaders mislead you, and corrupt the directions of your ways*" (Isa. 3:12). For when the heads of the people sin, all the rest follow them.

R' Hiya learned the same lesson from the verse, "*And if the whole congregation of Israel shall err*". Why do they err? Because the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly. The eyes being the leaders whom all the rest follow. (20b)

**874.** When God performs a miracle, He does it completely. (21a)

**875.** Said R' Hiya: When God does a miracle, He does not do it by halves. (21a)

**876.** When a man is far from the Torah, he is far from God. But, if he draws near to the Torah, God draws him near to Himself. (21a)

**877.** R' Hiya and R' Jose said: Torah is not an inheritance for one place only<sup>113</sup>. (21a)

**878.** The secret of the matter is that the Community of Israel does not come into the King's presence save with the Torah. So, as long as Israel in their own Land studied the Torah, the Community of Israel abode with them. But, when they neglected the Torah, she could not stay with them an instant. (22a)

**879.** Said R' Judah: God will one day reveal the hidden mysteries of the Torah, namely, at the time of the Messiah, because, "*The Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord like as the waters cover the sea*". (Isa. 11:9) and it is written, "*They shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying, 'Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them'*" (Jer. 31:34)

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<sup>113</sup> I believe the implication here is that one should not keep Torah wisdom and knowledge to himself but must share it with others.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 880.** R' Isaac pointed out: It is exceptional for the High Priest to sin, since he feels his responsibility to his Master and to Israel and to each individual. Similarly, it is very exceptional for the whole congregation to commit one and the same sin. For if some commit it, others will not. (23a)
- 881.** It is through pride that one sins and forgets his sin. (23b)



## TZAV

# TZAV

## יז

- 882.** When one inclines to sin before his Master, he burns himself in the flame of the evil imagination, which comes from the Side of the unclean spirit, so that the unclean spirit rests upon him. (27a/b)
- 883.** Said R' Hezekiah: How solicitous should men be for the honor of their Master, and how careful not to turn aside from the right way. For every day punishment impends over the world and man never knows when it may fall. If he sits in his house, judgment looms over him. If he goes abroad, judgment looms over him, and he does not know if he will return or not. Therefore, he should in time beseech for mercy from the King, for every day judgment impends over the world as it is written, "*God has indignation every day*" (Ps. 7:12). (30b)
- 884.** R' Hiya replied: This is the meaning of what we have learned, that any activity Below stimulates a corresponding activity Above. If the activity Below is one of holiness, it stimulates holiness Above to rest upon the doer and sanctify him. And if the man defiles himself Below, a spirit of defilement is aroused Above and comes and rests upon him, defiling him further. For there is no good or evil, holiness or defilement which has not its root and source Above. And just as action Below stimulates action Above, so words Below stimulate words Above. (31b)
- 885.** The death of the sons of Aaron was deserved for many reasons. One was that they offered Incense at the wrong time, at a time when oil and

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Incense were not together (i.e. not when the lamp was lit)<sup>114</sup>. Another was that they thrust themselves forward in the place of their father. A third was that they were not married, for such are not suitable to bring blessings in the world. And a fourth was that they were intoxicated with wine. (33b)

- 886.** When R' Hezekiah was once studying with R' Eleazar, he asked him: How many lights were created before the world was created? He answered: Seven, namely, the light of Torah, the light of Gehenna, the light of the Garden of Eden, the light of the Throne of Glory, the light of the Temple, the light of repentance, and the light of the Messiah. (34b)
- 887.** He who studies Torah needs neither peace-offerings nor burnt-offerings, since the Torah is superior to all and the Bond of Faith. (35a)
- 888.** When the Sabbath departs and the additional soul takes leave, the soul and the spirit are separated and sad until the smell comes and unites them and makes them glad. (35b)



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<sup>114</sup> Ex. 30:70



## SHEMINI

# *SHEMINI*

## שמיני

- 889.** The Torah commences with the letter כּ (=2), as already explained. R' Isaac said: Why is the כּ open on one side and closed on the other? To show that when a man comes to attach himself to the Torah, it is open to receive him and to join with him. When the man closes his eyes to it and walks in the other way, it turns its closed side to him. (35b-36a)
- 890.** To study the Torah is like studying the Holy Name. The Torah is all one supernal Name. (36a)
- 891.** There is peace upon Israel when righteous men are in the world. (36a)
- 892.** Said R' Eleazar: Is God so particular with the righteous? R' Phineas replied: Verily He is, and He takes note of all their errors and desires to raise their holiness to a still higher level. (36b)
- 893.** The Priest must ever be smiling and joyful, since he is the instrument of joy and blessing. (39a)
- 894.** R' Hiya adduced the verse, "*Wine rejoices the heart of man*" (Ps. 104:15). If, he said, the Priest requires to be glad and smiling more than other men, why is he forbidden wine which creates joy and smiles? The truth is that wine rejoices at first, and saddens afterwards, and the Priest must be glad throughout. (39a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 895.** Said R' Judah: A man who studies the Torah diligently allows his expositions to be heard and does not merely whisper them is like good wine which also is not silent and causes the voice to be raised (39a-b)
- 896.** Raisins intoxicate, but apples sober. (40a)
- 897.** When an idolater who is unclean and defiles anyone who associates with him touches the wine of Israel, it becomes unclean and is forbidden. All the more the wine which he himself makes. (40a)
- 898.** R' Jose said: King Solomon wrote in his wisdom, "*All the labor of man is for his mouth*" (Eccles. 6:7). This signifies that all the punishments which a man undergoes in the Other World is on account of his mouth, because he did not guard it and through it defiled his soul. R' Isaac said: For one to defile himself with unclean foods is like serving idols. Just as he who serves idols quits the side of life and of the domain of holiness for another domain, so likewise he who eats unclean foods is defiled both in this world and the next. For these were assigned to the idolatrous peoples who are already unclean and come from the side of uncleanness. (41b-42a)



## KI SAZRIAH

# KI SAZRIAH

## כי תזריע

**899.** Said R' Jose: A woman, from the time she becomes pregnant until she delivers, can talk of nothing but the child she is to bear, whether it is to be a boy or a girl. (42b)

**900.** All spirits are compounded of Male and Female. When they go forth into the world, they go forth as both Male and Female and, afterwards, the two elements separate. If one is worthy, they will reunite. It is then that he meets his true mate, and there is perfect union both in spirit and flesh. But, if he is not worthy, she is given to another and they bear children whom they should not.

R' Eleazar said: This is not so. All at first comprise both Male and Female and they are separated afterwards. But if the woman bears a male, they are then united from the Side of the Right. If she bears a female, they are united from the Side of the Left, this Side being predominant. Hence, if the male child issues from the Side of the Left, he is effeminate, but if from the Side of the Right, he has mastery over the female. (43b)

**901.** R' Judah cited the verse, "*There is none so holy as the Lord, for there is none beside You, neither is there any rock (צור) like our God*" (I Samuel 2:2). Are there then any other holy ones or other rocks besides the Lord? Yes, there are holy ones Above, as it is written, "*The demand is by the word of the holy ones*" (Dan. 4:14). Israel is holy Below, but none are

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

holy like the Lord, because, *"There is none beside you"*. That is, God's holiness is not like their holiness for He does not require their holiness, but they could not be holy without Him. Also, *"There is no rock (צור) like our God"* or, as we may translate it, *"no fashioner (יוצר) like our God"*, as explained elsewhere. For the Holy One, blessed be He, shapes a form within a form, and finishes it and breathes into it the breath of life and brings it out into the open. (44a)

- 902.** Anyone who enjoys anything of this world without a blessing is like one who robs the Holy One and the Community of Israel. So he who has enjoyment of his wife without blessing is like one who robs the Holy One and the Community of Israel because their union is consummated by seven blessings. (44b)
- 903.** Said R' Hiya: He who reproveth his neighbor in love should not let other men hear in order that he may not be ashamed. If he reproveth him publicly, he does not show true friendship. So God in reproveth a man acts with him lovingly. At first, He smites him inwardly. If he repents, well and good. But if not, he smites him under his garments, and this is called *"chastisement of love"*. If he still does not repent, God smites him on his face where all can see, so that they may know that he is a sinner and not beloved by his Master. (46a)
- 904.** Just as one is punished for uttering an evil word, so he is punished for not uttering a good word when he had the opportunity. (46b)
- 905.** It is incumbent upon a man when he learns wisdom to also learn a little folly since there is a certain benefit to wisdom from it, as there is to light from darkness. It is written, *"More precious than wisdom and than honor is a little folly"* (Eccl. 10:1). R' Jose said: This means that a little folly reveals and displays the honor of wisdom and the glory of Heaven more than anything else. So the benefit of light is only felt from its contrast with darkness. Similarly, white is only known and valued from its contrast with black. R' Isaac said: It is the same with

## KI SAZRIAH

sweet and bitter. One does not know what sweet is until he tastes bitter. (47b)

906. Man in Scripture has four names: **אדם**, **גבר**, **אנוש**, **איש**. The highest of them is **אדם** which indicates wholeness and completeness<sup>115</sup>. (48a)
907. Everything in the world was only made for the sake of man and all things were kept back until he that was called **אדם** should appear, since his form was after the Divine prototype and when he was created all was complete.
908. Marital intercourse between human beings should be at fixed times that they may concentrate their thoughts on cleaving to the Holy One, blessed be He. As has been pointed out, God enters the Garden of Eden at midnight to have communion with the righteous, and it is then when the Community of Israel praises the Holy One, blessed be He. That is a propitious time to cleave to Him. But as for the Companions who study Torah, the time for their intercourse is at the time of another intercourse, from Sabbath to Sabbath for that is the time when all Above and Below are blessed<sup>116</sup>. (49b)
909. When one begins to set up a building, he should declare that he is building it for the service of God. Then the support of Heaven is with him, and God assigns holiness to him and bids peace be with him. Otherwise, he invites into his house the Other Side - all the more so if his inclination is to the Other Side. For then, indeed, an unclean spirit will rest on the house and that man will not leave this world until he has been punished in that house, and whoever dwells in it may come to hurt. If, it is asked, how is one to know such a house? It is one in which the man who built it has come to harm, he or his family, whether through sickness or loss of money, he and two others after him. Better

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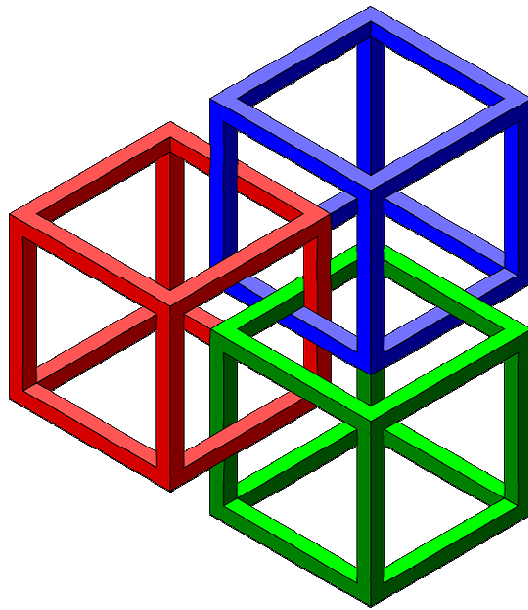
<sup>115</sup> No explanation is forthcoming regarding the other terms.

<sup>116</sup> Kesuvos 62b.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

one should fly to the mountains or live a mud hut than dwell there.<sup>117</sup>  
(50a)

- 910.** Said R' Judah: We have learned that for healing sickness, anything may be used save the wood of an Asheirah<sup>118</sup>. (51b)
- 911.** R' Eleazar said: A man obtains money through the merit of his wife, as it is written, "*A house and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife comes from the Lord.*" (Prov. 19:14). (52a)



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<sup>117</sup> I am unaware of any Halacha which reflects this passage

<sup>118</sup> Or anything else associated with idolatry or sorcery. See Deut. 16:21.

# METZORAH

## METZORAH

### מצורע

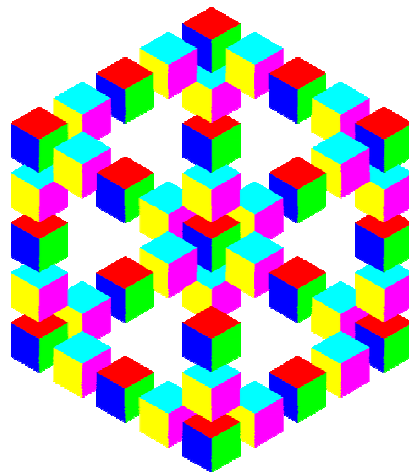
912. מצורע (leper) is derived from מוצאי שם רע (slanderer)<sup>119</sup>. (52a)
913. R' Hiya said: Whoever spreads false reports, all his limbs become defiled. (53a)
914. The prayer of an evil speaker does not ascend to the Almighty. But, if he repents then, *"On the day of his cleansing he shall be brought to the Priest."* (53a).
915. Once, when R' Hezekiah was studying with R' Eleazar, they arose at midnight and R' Eleazar discoursed on the verse, *"On the day of good, be of good cheer, and on the day of evil observe, for God has made one to match the other"* (Eccl. 8:14). He said: When God lavishes kindness on the world, a man should go abroad and show himself, for God's kindness then extends to all. Therefore, a man should do kindness, that kindness may be shown to him. But, at the time when judgment impends over the world, a man should not show himself abroad nor walk alone, for when judgment impends over the world, it impends over all, and will strike anyone it lights upon. Therefore, on that day, look carefully on all sides and go not abroad for God has made one to match the other. Just when kindness is abroad, it extends to all, so when judgment is over the world it is over all. (54a-b)

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<sup>119</sup> cf. Erchin 16a, Shabbos 97a.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 916.** There is nothing so hard in the world as the separation of the soul from the body when they have to part. Similar is the love of the Community of Israel for the Holy One, blessed be He. (54b)
- 917.** Every word of prayer that issues from a man's mouth ascends aloft through all the firmaments to a place where it is tested. If it is genuine, it is taken up before the Holy King to be fulfilled, but if not, it is rejected. (55a)
- 918.** If one wants to defile himself, Heaven helps to defile him<sup>120</sup>. Woe to a man when an unclean spirit is found in him all his life, for this indeed shows that God desires to clear him out of the world (to come)<sup>121</sup>. (55b)



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<sup>120</sup> Yoma 38b.

<sup>121</sup> This parenthetical remark is in the Soncino translation.



## ACHAREI MOS

# ACHAREI MOS

## אָחֵרֵי מוֹת

- 919.** R' Isaac remarked: One verse says, *"Serve the Lord with awe, and rejoice with trembling"* (Ps. 2:11) and another verse says, *"Serve the Lord with gladness, come before Him with rejoicing"* (Ps. 100:2). The apparent contradiction is explained as follows. When one comes to serve his Master, he should do so first in awe, and through that awe he will, afterwards, perform the precepts of the Torah in joy. It says, *"Rejoice in trembling"*, because it is forbidden for one to overly rejoice in this world. But in the words and the precepts of the Torah, it is quite right that he should rejoice. (56a).
- 920.** *"A song, a psalm of the sons of Korach"*. This Psalm is recited in the morning prayers on the second day of the week. (56b)
- 921.** Whenever the righteous are removed from the world, punishment is removed from the world and the death of the righteous atones for the sins of the generation. Therefore, we read the section dealing with the death of the sons of Aaron on the Day of Atonement that it may atone for the sins of Israel. God says, *"Recount the death of these righteous ones and it will be accounted for you as if you brought an offering on that day to atone for yourselves."* For we have learned that as long as Israel is in captivity and cannot bring offerings on that day, the mention of the two sons of Aaron shall be their atonement. For so we have learned that Abihu was equal to his two brothers, Eleazar and

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Ithamar; and Nadab to all together. Nadab and Abihu were reckoned as equal to the seventy elders who were associated with Moses and, therefore, their deaths were an atonement for Israel. (56b)

922. R' Isaac said: He who has no children is counted as dead<sup>122</sup>. (57a)
923. Whoever sorrows for the sufferings of the righteous obtains pardon for his sins. Also, he may be assured that his sons will not die in his lifetime. (57b)
924. R' Abba said: There are times when God is favorably inclined and ready to dispense blessing to those who pray to Him, and times when He is not propitious and judgment is let loose on the world, and times when judgment is held in suspense. There are seasons in the year when Grace is in the ascendant, and seasons when Judgment is in the ascendant, but held in suspense. Similarly with the months and similarly with the days of the week, and even with the parts of each day and each hour. Therefore, it is written, *"There is a time for every purpose"* (Eccl. 3:1) and again, *"My prayer is unto You, O Lord, in an acceptable time"* (Ps. 69:14). Hence, it says here, *"Let him not come at every time to the Sanctuary."* (58a/b)
925. *"And shall send him away by the hand of a man who is in readiness"*. The words *"in readiness"* contain a hint that for every kind of action there are men especially suited. There are some men especially suited for the transmission of blessings as, for instance, a man of *"good eye"*. There are others, again, who are especially suited for the transmission of curses, and curses light wherever they cast their eyes. Such was Balaam, who was the fitting instrument of evil and not of good. Even when he blessed, his blessing was not confirmed, but all his curses were confirmed, because he had an Evil Eye. Hence we have learned that a man should turn aside a hundred times in order to avoid a man with an Evil Eye. So here, *"a man who is in readiness"* means a man who is marked out by nature for this service.

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<sup>122</sup> Nedorim 64b.

## ACHAREI MOS

The Priest was able to tell such a man because he had one eye slightly larger than the other, shaggy eyebrows, bluish eyes and a crooked glance. This was the kind of man suited for such a task.

In Gush Halba (in the Galilee) there was a man whose hands brought death to whatever they touched, and none would come near him. In Syria there was a man whose look always brought ill hap, even though he meant it for good. One day a man was walking in the street with a beaming countenance when this man looked at him and his eye was knocked out.

Thus, different men are suited either for one thing or the other. Hence it is written, *"He who has a good eye shall be blessed"* (Prov. 22:9) or, as we should rather read by a change in the vowelings, (*Yebarech* for *Yeborach*) *"shall bless"*. (63a/b)

926. R' Shimon said: King Solomon composed three books corresponding to three Supernal Attributes – שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים to Wisdom, קהלת to Understanding, and בְּשַׁלְי to Knowledge. Why does בְּשַׁלְי correspond to Knowledge? Because all its verses are in parallel form, one half balancing the other, and when we examine them we find that they can be placed in either order. (64a)
927. R' Isaac said: When Israel is in captivity, God, if we may say so, is with them in captivity, for the Divine Presence never leaves them<sup>123</sup>. She was with them in Babylon and returned with them from the captivity. For the sake of those righteous who were left in the land<sup>124</sup> She abode in the land, as She never left them. (66a/b)
928. *"From all your sins shall you be clean before the Lord"*. It has been taught that from the beginning of the seventh month, the books are opened and the judges sit in judgment until the day which is called, *"The ninth of the month"* (Levit. 23:32) when all judgments are submitted to the Supreme Judge and a Throne of Mercy is set for the Holy King. Then it is suitable for Israel Below to rejoice before their

<sup>123</sup> This point is frequently repeated in the Zohar.

<sup>124</sup> It is unclear if the reference here is to the foreign country or the Land of Israel.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Master because, on the next day, He intends to try them from the Holy Throne of Mercy, of Forgiveness, and to purify them from all the sins recorded in the books which are open before Him. Hence it is written, *"From all your sins before the Lord."* (67a)

- 929.** One should eat and drink and feast on the ninth day so as to make the affliction double on the tenth. (68b)
- 930.** To listen to the words of the Torah is like receiving it from Sinai, no matter from whom it comes. He who inclines his ear to listen gives honor to the Holy King and to the Torah. (69a)
- 931.** R' Judah cited the verse, *"A song of ascents. From the depths I have called unto You, O Lord"* (Ps. 130). We have learned that when God was about to create man, He consulted the Torah and she warned Him that he would sin before Him and provoke Him. Therefore, before creating the world, God created Repentance, saying to her, *"I am about to create man, on condition that when they return to you from their sins, you shall be prepared to forgive their sins and make atonement for them."* Hence, at all times, Repentance is close at hand to men and when they all repent of their sins, she returns to God and makes atonement for all. Judgment is suppressed, and all is put right.

When is man purified of his sins? R' Isaac said: When he returns to the Most High King and prays from the depths of his heart, as it is written, *"From the depths I cried to You"*.

R' Abba said: There is a hidden place Above which is "the depth of the well" from where issue streams and sources in all directions. This profound depth is called Repentance, and he who desires to repent and to be purified of his sin should call upon God from this depth. We have learned that when a man repented before his Master and brought his offering on the altar and the Priest made atonement for him and prayed for him, Mercy was aroused and Judgment mitigated and Repentance poured blessing on the issuing streams. All the lamps were blessed together and the man was purified from his sin. (69b-70a)

## ACHAREI MOS

- 932.** The Egyptians were more skilled in sorcery than all other men. (70a)
- 933.** R' Isaac said in the name of R' Judah: Souls of the wicked are the demons of the world. (70a)
- 934.** R' Jose said: Men should not go to the graveyard without repentance and fasting<sup>125</sup>. (71a)
- 935.** When other peoples visit their dead, they do so with divinations to summon demons to them. But Israel goes with repentance before the Lord, with a contrite heart and with fasting in order that the holy souls may beseech mercy for them<sup>126</sup>. (71b)
- 936.** R' Abba said: All who are not stamped with the holy sign on their flesh are not His. They are marked as coming from the Side of Impurity and it is forbidden to associate with them or converse with them on matters of the Holy One, blessed be He. It is also forbidden to impart to them knowledge of Torah<sup>127</sup>, because the Torah consists wholly of the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and every letter of it is bound up with that Name<sup>128</sup>. (72b-73a)
- 937.** R' Eleazar's father<sup>129</sup> said: God has given this holy celestial portion to Israel and not to the nations. And Israel themselves are in two Grades, corresponding to the two Grades of Torah, the disclosed and the undisclosed. To all who have been circumcised and stamped with the holy impress, we impart those things in the Torah which are on the

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<sup>125</sup> Interestingly, Gesher Hachaim, Part 1, Chapter 29 notes that some people do not eat before visiting the cemetery but was, surprisingly, unaware of a source for this custom. Here it is.

<sup>126</sup> This is a troublesome passage (and is repeated elsewhere in the Zohar) for it implies that one may pray to the dead requesting them to plead before God on our behalf. This concept is debated among the Rishonim. Some argue that one may only pray to God alone although, if one wishes, he may ask that his prayers be answered in the merit of the deceased and righteous. Although the Gemara accepts the fact that the dead do in fact listen to us and are aware of our doings, nowhere is permission given to us to pray directly to any intermediary whatsoever, be it the deceased, an angel, God's thirteen attributes, etc. For this reason, several of the Piyyutim recited in the Elul and Tishrei Selichos were considered to be theologically problematic and were objected to. Others have no problem with the idea of beseeching the spirits (souls) of the dead to advocate our cause.

<sup>127</sup> There is a prohibition against teaching Torah to a non-Jew.

<sup>128</sup> This is a frequently repeated and key concept of the Zohar.

<sup>129</sup> Presumably this is R' Shimon.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

surface, the letters and the plain contents and the precepts, and no more. This is indicated in the words, *“He tells his words to Jacob”*. But if the Israelite rises to a higher Grade, then, *“His statutes and his judgments to Israel”*. These are the allegories of the Torah and hidden paths of the Torah and the secrets of the Torah which should only be revealed to those of a higher degree. But to impart even a little letter to one who is not circumcised is like destroying the world and repudiating the Holy Name of the Holy One, blessed be He. (73a)

- 938.** Even though one is circumcised, if he does not carry out the precepts of the Torah he is like a heathen in all respects and it is forbidden to teach him the precepts of the Torah<sup>130</sup>. He is called *“an altar of stones”* because of the hardness of his heart and, therefore, his circumcision does not help him at all. (73b)
- 939.** For three things Israel is kept in captivity: Because they pay scant respect to the Divine Presence in their exile; because they turn their faces away from the Divine Presence; and because they defile themselves in the company of the Divine Presence. (75b)
- 940.** King Solomon found a thousand and four hundred and five manners of defilement in the Book of Asmodai which can affect mankind<sup>131</sup>. (77a)
- 941.** Bath-sheba was destined for David from the Creation. (78b)
- 942.** When a woman comes to purify herself, she must cut off the hair<sup>132</sup> which grew in the days of her impurity, and cut her nails with all the filth that clings to them. (79a)



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<sup>130</sup> See SA YD Hilchos Talmud Torah 246:7.

<sup>131</sup> No listing is forthcoming.

<sup>132</sup> I do not believe that this is the Halacha whether this statement refers to the hair on her head or her pubic hair. Maybe it means that if she has entangled hair, it must be combed or cut off.

## KEDOSHIM

# *KEDOSHIM*

## קְדוּשִׁים

- 943.** He who does not study Torah has no Faith and is wholly blemished. If a man does not study Torah, it is forbidden to go near him, to associate with him, to do business with him, all the more so to walk in the road with him<sup>133</sup>. If a man walks abroad and no words of Torah accompany him, his life is forfeit. Still more one who goes with a man who has no faith and heeds neither the honor of his Master nor his own, and disregards his soul. (80a)
- 944.** Woe to the wicked who are shameless and do shameless deeds for which their children inherit an unclean soul. Why does all this come upon them? Because they do not duly sanctify themselves in wedlock. (80a-b)
- 945.** If a man studies the Torah it benefits him more than all the sacrifices and burnt-offerings, and even though punishment has been decreed against him from Above, it is annulled. Therefore, it is that words of the Torah are not susceptible to uncleanness<sup>134</sup>, because it can itself purify those who are unclean. (80b)

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<sup>133</sup> I am unaware of any such Halacha for any of these items.

<sup>134</sup> Berochos 22a

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

946. It is forbidden for a man to gaze at the beauty of a woman lest evil thoughts should be provoked in him and he should be incited to something worse<sup>135</sup>. (83b/84a)
947. Whoever gazes at the beauty of a woman by day will have lustful thoughts at night, and if these gain the better of him, he will transgress the precept, "*You shall not make to yourselves molten gods*". And if he has intercourse with his wife while under the influence of those imaginings, the children born from such union are called, "*Molten gods*". (84a)
948. R' Abba said: It is forbidden for a man to fix his gaze upon heathen idols and upon Gentile women or to receive benefit or healing from them. (84a)
949. It is forbidden to gaze upon a place which God loathes, and even on one which God loves. For instance, it is forbidden to gaze upon the rainbow<sup>136</sup> because it is the mirror of the supernal form. It is forbidden for a man to gaze upon the sign of the Covenant upon him because this is emblematic of the Righteous One of the world. It is forbidden to gaze upon the fingers of the Priests when they spread out their hands to bless the congregation because the glory of the most high King rests there. If one must not gaze at a holy place, how much less may he at an unclean and loathsome one! Therefore, "turn not to the idols". R' Isaac said: If it is forbidden to look at them, how much more to worship them! (84a/b)
950. If one restores the soul of a poor man, even if his time has arrived to depart from this world, God restores his soul and gives him a further lease on life. To withhold the wage of a poor man is like taking his life and the life of his household. As he diminishes their souls, so God diminishes his days and cuts off his soul from the other World. (84b/85a)

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<sup>135</sup> Berochos 24a *et passim*.

<sup>136</sup> Chagiga 16a.



## KEDOSHIM

951. If one curses his neighbor in his presence, it is as if he spills his blood. (85a)
952. The words, *"You shall not put a stumbling block before the blind"* we interpret as referring to one who leads another into sin<sup>137</sup> and also of one who strikes his grown-up son. Or again, of one who not being competent gives decisions on points of Jewish Law, because he causes his fellow-man to come to grief in the Future World. (85a)
953. It behooves a man to learn Torah even from one who is not qualified in order that thus his interest may be aroused and he may eventually learn from one who is qualified and walk in the straight path of the Torah. (85b)
954. *"You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle gender with a diverse kind, etc."* When God created the world, He assigned all things to their respective Sides and appointed over them celestial powers so that there is not even a tiny herb without such a supervisor<sup>138</sup>. Whatever they do is done through the power of that Heavenly control. All are rigidly assigned and none leaves its appointed sphere. All are guided by another superior regulation which gives to each its portion which comes from the Heavens. All together are called "the statutes of the Heavens".

Hence it is written, *"Your shall keep my statutes"* because each power is appointed over a certain sphere in the world in virtue of a certain statute. Therefore, it is forbidden to confound species and mate them one with another, because this dislodges the Heavenly power from its place and is a defiance of the celestial household.

The word כִּלְאִים (diverse kinds) may be connected to כִּלְאִין (prison) and it also bears the meaning of preventing, indicating that one who does this prevents the celestial powers from carrying out their function and throws them into confusion. (86a/b)

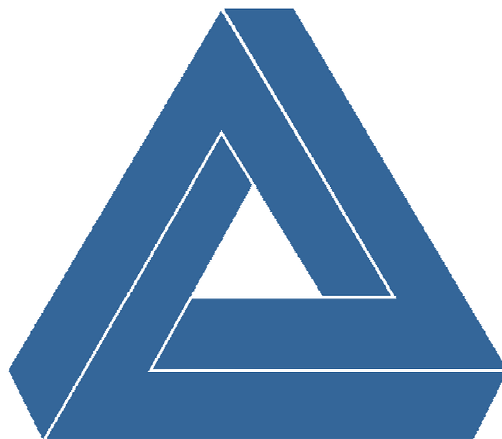
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<sup>137</sup> Moed Koton 17a.

<sup>138</sup> Bereishis Rabba 10

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 955.** When one does things Below in the right way, he draws upon himself a celestial holy spirit. But if he does things in a crooked way, he draws upon himself another spirit which leads him astray to an Evil Side. (86b)
- 956.** The female only produces issue from the energy of the male. (87a)
- 957.** The progeny of a woman does not reach completeness until her third delivery. Therefore, Levi was chosen from all the sons of Jacob being the third to his mother. (87a)
- 958.** *"You shall rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of an old man."* One should rise before a man of learning because he exhibits the holy supernal image and is emblematic of the supernal Priest. Further, we may derive from this verse the lesson that we should rise up to do good deeds before old age comes upon us. For there is not much credit to a man in doing this when he is old and cannot do evil any more, but it is an honor for him if he is good while still in his prime. (87b)



## EMOR

# EMOR

## אֶמֹר

- 959.** Aaron is the starting point of the Priesthood because God chose him to make peace in the world, his conduct having entitled him to this distinction, since all his days he strove to promote peace in the world. (88a)
- 960.** Observe that when a man is on his deathbed and on the point of departing for the Other World, three messengers are sent to him, and he sees what other men cannot see in this world. That day is a day of Heavenly judgment on which the King demands back his deposit. Happy is the man who can restore the deposit just as it was lodged within him. For if it has been defiled with impurity of the body, what will he say to the owner of the deposit? He sees the Angel of Death standing before him with his sword drawn, and all his limbs are relaxed nor is anything so hard for the soul as its separation from the body.
- Before a man dies, he beholds the Divine Presence towards which the soul goes out in great yearning. After it has left the body, what other soul will cleave to it? (88a-b)
- 961.** After the soul has left the body and the body remains without breath, it is forbidden to keep it unburied<sup>139</sup>. For a dead body which is left unburied for twenty-four hours causes a weakness in the limbs of the

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<sup>139</sup> Moed Koton 28a

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Chariot and prevents God's design from being fulfilled. For perhaps God decreed that he should undergo a transmigration at once on the day that he died, which would be better for him, but as long as the body is not buried, the soul cannot go into the presence of the Holy One nor be transferred into another body. For a soul cannot enter a second body until the first is buried, just as it is not fitting for a man to take a second wife before the first has been buried<sup>140</sup>. (88b)

- 962.** So long as the body remains unburied, the soul suffers pain and an unclean spirit rests upon the body. Therefore, the body should not be kept overnight because by night the unclean spirit spreads over the Earth, seeking a body without a soul to defile it further. (88b)
- 963.** Whoever discharges his semen without purpose will never be allowed to behold the Divine Presence<sup>141</sup> and such a one is called wicked. This is not the case, however, if a man's wife does not conceive. Still, a man should pray that God should provide him a fitting vessel so that his seed should not be spoiled. For he who discharges his seed into a vessel that is not fitting spoils his seed. (90a)
- 964.** Because God is served by the hand of the Priest, who is holy, the Priest is served by one who is sanctified by his purity, to wit, the Levite. The ordinary man, too, is served (have water poured over his hands) by one who has already sanctified himself. As thus, Israel is set apart in holiness to serve the Holy One, blessed be He. (90b)
- 965.** If one humbles himself, God raises him. (91a)
- 966.** When the dead will rise from the dust, they will leave it as they entered. If they went into it lame or blind, they shall rise from it lame or blind in order that it should not be said that it is another who is

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<sup>140</sup> Although a man can technically marry immediately upon his wife's death, a woman must wait a minimum of 90 days after her husband's death in order to clearly establish the identity of the father in case she is pregnant.

<sup>141</sup> Nidda 13a

## EMOR

risen. Afterwards, however, God will heal them and they will be before Him, and the world will be whole<sup>142</sup>. (91a)

**967.** There is no day without night, and no night without day. (93b)

**968.** One who invites a guest must show him a smiling face to crown his visit therewith.

Imagine a king who invites an honored guest and says to his court: All other days you are each in his house doing his work there or in business or in the field, save only on my special day which you devote to rejoicing with me. Now I have invited a very honored guest, and I desire that you should engage in no work in the house or in business or in the field, but that you should all come together as on my special day and prepare to meet that guest with smiles, with joy and with praises.

So God said to Israel: All other days you are engaged in work and in business, save on my special day (the Sabbath). Hence it says, "*You shall call (i.e. invite) them in their appointed time.*" See now, when Israel Below rejoices in those festivals and sings praises to the Holy One, blessed be He, and prepares a table and puts on their best garments, the angels in Heaven ask: What do Israel mean by this? and God answers them: They have a distinguished guest on this day. But, they say: Is he not Your guest, from the place called Holiness? He replies: And is not Israel holy and called holy, so that it is meet for them invite My guest alike from My side, because they cling to Me, and from the side of holiness, since it is written, "*Israel is holy to the Lord*". Assuredly, the guest is theirs. Then they all break forth with the words, "*Happy is the people who are in such a circumstance.*" (94a)

**969.** The Shofar rouses itself and men to repent of their sins. It behooves them to blow the Shofar Below and the sound thereof ascends on High and awakens another supernal Shofar and so Mercy is awakened and Judgment removed. We must produce from this Shofar Below various sounds to arouse all the voices that are contained in the supernal

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<sup>142</sup> cf. Sanhedrin 91a

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

Shofar and, therefore, we not only use the Shofar on this day, but arrange the blasts in a number of series.

With the first blast, the voice goes forth and makes its way upward to the firmaments, breaking through lofty mountains until it reaches Abraham. A second mighty blast breaks down Wrath, being itself of broken notes, and all chastisement that stands in its way as it ascend to Isaac are broken. On this he who blows the Shofar should concentrate his mind, so as to break the strength of stern judgment. With the third blast, the voice issues and ascends and cleaves to the firmaments until it reaches Jacob. These three blasts form one series. (99b)

**970.** When a man commits a sin once and twice and three times, and does not repent, his sins are exposed. (101a)

**971.** Imagine a shepherd seeking to take his flock across a river when he sees a wolf about to fall on them. "What shall I do?" he says. "While I am carrying the lambs across, he will fall on the sheep." Then he catches sight among the flock of a ram from the fields, strong and powerful. "I will throw this one to him," he says, "and while they are struggling, I will take all the flock across and save them." So God said: Here is a strong and powerful ram, I will it throw to him (Satan), and while he is busy with it, my sons shall cross and not be attacked. So on the Day of Atonement also we must send him (Satan) something with which he may occupy himself.

There is a saying, Give some wine to the menial of the king's palace and he will praise you to the king, and if he will malign you to him, and it may be that the officers of the king will take up his words and the king will execute judgment. R' Isaac said: Give the fool who stands before the king some wine and tell him all the faults and errors you have committed and he will come and praise you and say that there is not another in the world like you.

So here, the informer (Satan) is ever before the king and Israel presents him a gift along with a list of all the faults and wrongs which

## EMOR

they have done, and he comes and praises Israel and becomes their defender. (101b-102a)

972. R' Judah discoursed here on the verse, "*And the Canaanite the king of Arad heard*" (Num. 21:1). We have learned<sup>143</sup>, he said, that three notable gifts were conferred upon Israel through the three brethren, Moses, Aaron and Miriam. The Manna was given to them in the merit of Moses, the Clouds of Glory in the merit of Aaron and the well in the merit of Miriam. When Miriam died, the well was taken from them, as it is written, "*And Miriam died, and there was no water for the congregation*" (Num. 20:1,2). When Aaron died, the Clouds departed. (102b-103a)
973. "*You shall dwell in booths (Succos)*". R' Eleazar said: When a man sits in this abode of the shadow of Faith, the Shechina (God's Divine Presence) spreads her wings over him for Above and Abraham and five other righteous ones make their abode with him. (103b)
974. R' Abba said: Abraham always used to stand at the crossroads to invite guests to his table<sup>144</sup>. (104a)
975. R' Eleazar said: The Torah does not demand of a man more than he can perform, as it says, "*Each man shall give as he is able*" (Deut. 16:17). One should not say, I shall first satisfy myself with food and drink, and what is left I shall give to the poor. But, the first of everything must be for the guests. And if he gladdens the guests and satisfies them, God rejoices with him and Abraham proclaims over him, "*Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord, etc.*" (Isa. 58:14). Isaac proclaims, "*No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper*" (Ibid. 54:17). (104a)
976. R' Hiya quoted the verse, "*It is the honor of God to conceal a matter*" (Prov. 25:2). This means that it is not permitted for a man to disclose mysteries which are not meant to be disclosed. (105b)

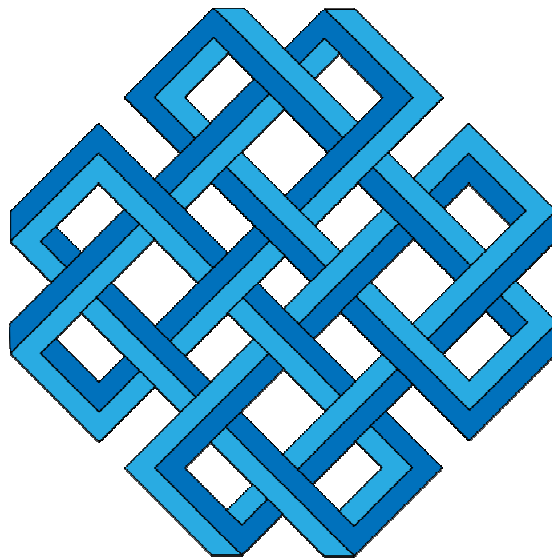
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<sup>143</sup> Taanis 9a

<sup>144</sup> Sotah 10b

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

977. R' Shimon said: It is written, "*God saw all that he made, and behold it was very good*" (Gen. 1:31). Even serpents and scorpions and fleas and all things that appear to be pests, all these are for the service of the world, though men know it not. (107a)



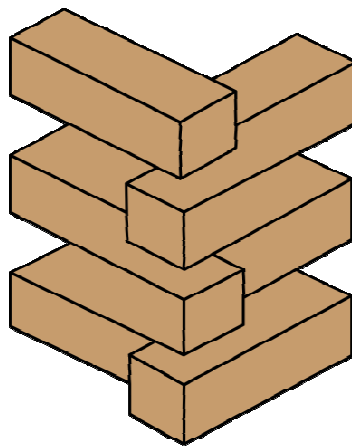


## BEHAR

# BEHAR

בהר

- 978.** As the Sabbath is rest for all, so the Sabbatical year is rest for all, for the spirit and the body. (108a)
- 979.** Just as an ox is put under a yoke in order that it may be of use, and otherwise it never does any work, so one must first accept the yoke and then perform religious service, and without it he will not be able to serve God. This yoke will not rest upon one who is subject to another and, therefore, slaves are exempt from the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven. And if they are exempt from this yoke, they are exempt from all the rest of the religion. (108a)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

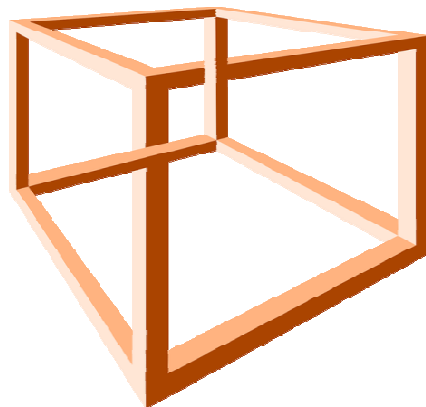
### *BECHUKOSAI*

### בחוקותי

980. Balak was a greater master of the magic arts than Balaam. For just as the celestial holiness can be aroused both by act and by word on our part, so can they that come from the Side of Impurity. Balaam was the greatest of sorcerers, but Balak was still greater. Balaam was greater in divination, but Balak in sorcery. For sorcery depends on actions, but divination on utterances and observations. Not so holy Israel whose whole endeavor is to draw upon themselves the spirit of holiness, wherefore it is written, *"For there is no divination against (or: in) Jacob nor enchantment against (or: in) Israel"* (Num. 23:23). (112b)
981. He who transgresses against the Commandments of the Law in effect impairs the Holy Name. (113a)
982. The poor man has nothing of his own save what is given him, and the Moon has no light save what is given her by the Sun. (113b)
983. צדק (righteousness) is not established without צדקה (charity). (113b)
984. If the head of the people is good, they are all delivered for his sake. If the head is not good, the whole people are made to suffer for his sake. (114a)
985. Reproof is like a thorn in a man's flesh, and yet he should not flee from it. (114b)

## BECHUKOSAI

986. One who is hated of another is abhorred and rejected of him, but God will not reject Israel because the beloved of His soul is among them, and for her sake all of them are beloved of Him. If a man loves a woman who lives in a street of tanners, if she were not there he would never go into it, but because she is there it seems to him like a street of spice-makers where all the sweet scents of the world are to be found. So “even when they are in the land of their enemies”, which is the street of the tanners, “I will not abhor or reject them”, because of the bride in their midst, the beloved of my soul who abides there. (115b)
987. Said R’ Jose: It is written, “*A son honors his father*” (Malachi 1:6). We have learned that when the father is alive it is the son’s duty to honor him with food and drink. Is he free from the obligation of honoring him after death? No so, since it is written, “*Honor your father*” (Ex. 20:12). If the son walks in the crooked path, of a surety he brings dishonor and shame on his father. But if he walks in the straight path and his deeds are upright, then he confers honor on him both in this world among men and in the Next World with God, who gives him a special throne of honor. An example is R’ Eleazar, who honored his father in the Next World after his death as the progenitor of holy sons and a holy stock. (115b)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### *BAMIDBAR*

### במדבר

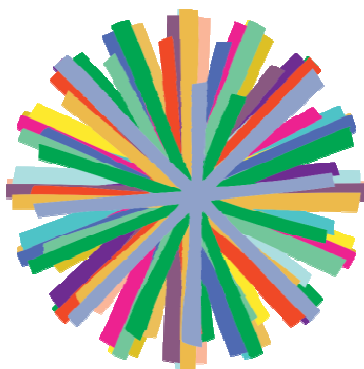
- 988.** The world was not completed until Israel received the Torah on Mount Sinai and the Tabernacle was set up. (117a)
- 989.** A thing cannot be finally settled in its place until its name has been called and it has been assigned there. (117b)
- 990.** God, above all, desires man's good heart<sup>145</sup> (117b)
- 991.** The shining light of the world of which Scripture says, "*Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth*" (Ps. 50:2) is the light which, when once it shines, will shine for all the worlds. When that light will awaken, the whole (world) will become one common fellowship under the reign of universal love and universal peace. There will be peace in Heaven and peace on Earth. So Scriptures says, "*Peace be within your walls, and prosperity within your palace.*" (Ps. 122:7). (118a)
- 992.** When Israel is not in the Holy Land, one is forbidden to display joy or gladness, as Scripture says, "*Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad in her*" to wit, only when within her. R' Abba said: This teaches us that only when Jerusalem is in joy is it permissible for us to rejoice. (118a)
- 993.** Whoever places his bed between North and South will have male children born to him<sup>146</sup>. (118b)

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<sup>145</sup> Sanhedrin 107a

## BAMIDBAR

- 994.** “El-Shaddai” signifies the God who put a limit to the universe<sup>147</sup>
- 995.** Whoever recites the Psalm, *Praise of David* (Ps. 145) thrice daily may be assured that he is destined for the World to Come<sup>148</sup>. In the morning, a man takes upon himself the yoke of Heaven by reciting this Psalm followed by the ten Hallelujahs and ending with Hallelujah with the very last of them containing ten times the expression “praise you” (Ibid. 15). Then follows the Song of Moses which contains all praises and whereby a man takes upon himself the yoke of the Holy Kingdom. This same Psalm (145) is repeated at Mincha. (119b-120a)
- 996.** Verses from Psalm 25 (1-22) have been prescribed as the Tachanun prayer<sup>149</sup>. (120b)
- 997.** There are sins which are beyond forgiveness until one departs this world, of which Scripture says, “*Surely this iniquity shall not be atoned for you until you die*” (Isa. 22:14). (121a)



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<sup>146</sup> Berochos 5b.

<sup>147</sup> Shaddai (יְהוָה) from Sha-dai, “It is enough”. Soncino writes in its footnote: He who, at the proper moment, put a limit to the expanding universe at the Creation by the word of command, “Enough!” (Chaggigah 12a).

<sup>148</sup> Berochos 4b

<sup>149</sup> This is in accordance with the Sephardic ritual. Ashkenazim recite Psalm 6.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### NOSSO

### נשנ

- 998.** Nothing can withstand the power of repentance. Proper repentance is only affected by a surrender of the soul. (122b)
- 999.** One sinner in the world brings about the destruction of many. (122b)
- 1000.** R' Hezekiah said: Cursed be the man who allows his wife to let the hair of her head be seen. This is one of the rules of modesty in the house. A woman who exposes her hair for self-adornment brings poverty on her household, renders her children of no account in their generation, and causes an evil spirit to abide on her house. If this is so when the woman does this in the house, how much more is it when in the open road, and even so much more so does all this result from another kind of shamelessness.

Said R' Judah: The hair of the head of a woman being exposed leads to hair of another kind being exposed and impaired. Hence a woman should not let her hair be seen, even by the beams of her house, much less in the open. Observe, that as the rule is most strict in the case of a man's hair<sup>150</sup> so it is with a woman's.

Consider the harm a woman's hair brings about. It brings a curse on her husband, it causes poverty, and it causes inferiority of her children. May the Merciful One deliver us from their impudence!

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<sup>150</sup> The Soncino edition says that this is a reference to the Nazir.

## NOSSO

A woman thus should cover her hair in the four corners of her house. When she does this, then, *"Your children will be like olive shoots"* (Ps. 128:3). As the olive does not shed its leaves either in winter or summer, but ever retains its superiority over other trees, so her children will excel over all other children. Her husband, moreover, will receive blessings from Above and from Below, will be blessed with riches, with children and children's children. So the Psalm continues, *"Behold, surely, for so shall the man be blessed...that you may see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel"* (Ps. 128:4-6). (125b-126a)

**1001.** The Divine Presence hastens to the Synagogue (before the worshippers). Happy is the man who is of the first ten to enter the Synagogue since they form something complete and are the first to be sanctified by the Divine Presence. But it is necessary that the ten should come together at the same time and not in sections<sup>151</sup>, so as not to delay the completion of the body in its members. So did the Holy One, blessed be He, make man all at one time, and established all his members in one act. So we read, *"Has he not made you, and established you?"* (Deut. 32:6).

So when the Divine Presence goes early to the Synagogue, She desires ten to be there at the same time so that a completed body should be formed with every member in its place. Those who come later are mere *"adornments of the body"*. But when the people do not arrive together, the Holy One, blessed be He, exclaims, *"Wherefore, when I came, was there no man!<sup>152</sup>"*. For inasmuch as the single members are not together, there is no complete body and so there is *"no man"*. (126a)

**1002.** Whoever sets to purify himself is assisted from Above<sup>153</sup>. (126a)

**1003.** The female must remove her hair before having relations with the male<sup>154</sup>. (127a)

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<sup>151</sup> I am unfamiliar with any such Halacha.

<sup>152</sup> See Berochos 6b.

<sup>153</sup> See Yoma 38b.

<sup>154</sup> Is this referring to the pubic hairs? Is there any such Halacha or custom?

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 1004.** Whoever is possessed of the fear of Heaven is rewarded with humility, and he who is possessed of humility is rewarded with the state of grace. The fear of Heaven leads to both. (145a)
- 1005.** Said R' Eleazar: Whoever fears sin is called "Adam". (145b)
- 1006.** R' Isaac said: The Priest (in pronouncing the benediction) must raise his right hand higher than his left hand. (146a)
- 1007.** The Priest who is about to spread his hands (for the benediction) must have his hands washed by one who is himself holy, to wit, a Levite. The Priest may not receive sanctification of the washing of hands from any commoner who is not himself sanctified. Why only a Levite? What not another Priest? Because the other Priest would not be complete, but the Levite is complete, being qualified for his own service. (146a/b)
- 1008.** The Priest, in the spreading forth of his hands, should not have his fingers joined close together, for it is requisite that the sacred Crowns should receive the blessing each one apart in a manner proper to each, because the letters of the Divine Name require also to be kept distinct and not to run into each other.
- R' Isaac said: The Holy One, blessed be He, desired that the Upper Beings should be blessed in order that the Lower Beings should draw down the blessing from Above and, on the other hand, that the most holy Above should reciprocally draw to themselves the blessings through the Lower Beings who are the most holy here Below, as we read, "*And Your devout ones shall bless You*" (Ps. 145:10). (146b)
- 1009.** R' Judah said: If a Priest is ignorant of this inward significance of the blessing and does not know whom he blesses or what his blessing connotes, he blessing is naught. (146b)
- 1010.** The Priest needs to contemplate with devotion on the inward and elevated significance of the words uttered whereby the unification of the Divine Name is achieved. (146b)



## NOSSO

**1011.** R' Shimon cited the following from the Book of Mystery<sup>155</sup>: The Divine Name has both a revealed and an undisclosed form. In its revealed form, it is written יְקוֹקַב, but in its undisclosed form it is written in other letters. This undisclosed form represents the most Recondite of all.

R' Judah said: Even the revealed form of the Name is hidden under other letters (יְקוֹקַב) in order to screen more effectively the most Recondite of all. For it behooves the Priest to concentrate on the various permutations of the Divine Name and to call down the mercies of all the Attributes through the two Crowns of Mercy. In these letters of this Name are concealed the twenty-two Attributes of Mercy.

They all combine in one composite Name on which the Priest should concentrate his mind when he spreads forth his hands, a Name containing twenty-two engraved letters.

We have learned that when reverence was prevalent among mankind, the ineffable Name was openly enunciated in the hearing of all. But after irreverence became widespread, it was concealed under other letters. Therefore, at the time when the Name was disclosed, the Priest would concentrate his mind on its deep and inner meaning, and he would utter the Name in such a way as to accord with that meaning. But when irreverence became common in the world, he would conceal all within the written letters. (146b)

**1012.** R' Jose said: When the Priest spreads forth his hands, it is forbidden to look at them<sup>156</sup> for the reason that the Divine Presence hovers over his hands.

R' Isaac remarked: Inasmuch as one is unable to see the Divine Presence, as it says, *"For a man shall not see Me and live"* (Ex. 33:20), to wit, not while alive but only in death, what matters is it then if one looks at the Priest's hands? Said R' Jose: It matters because the Divine Name is reflected in the fingers of the Priest's hands, so that although people cannot see the Divine Presence they ought not look towards the

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<sup>155</sup> I do not know this book.

<sup>156</sup> See Chagiga 16a.

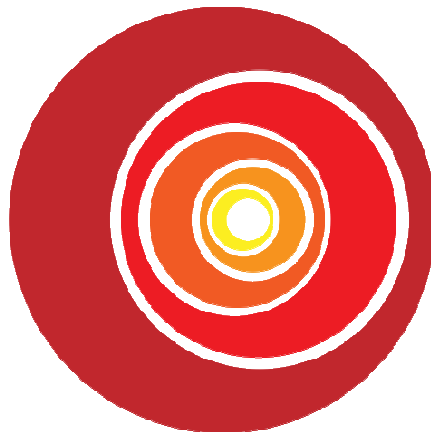
## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

hands of the Priests, as that would indicate irreverence towards the Divine Presence.

We have learned that when the Priests hold their hands outspread (in blessing) the congregation should be in fear and awe, and realize that it is a time of favor in all worlds when the Upper and Lower worlds are being blessed. Peace prevails everywhere.

A teacher taught in the presence of R' Shimon: Whoever is in distress on account of a dream should recite during the time the Priests spread forth their hands the following<sup>157</sup>, "O Master of the world. I am Yours, and my dreams are Yours...". For that is a propitious moment, and if one then offers up prayer in his distress, Rigor is turned to Mercy. (147a/b)

- 1013.** A Priest who does not love the people or whom they do not love, may not pronounce the blessing<sup>158</sup>. (147b)



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<sup>157</sup> Berochos 55a.

<sup>158</sup> The Priest, in fact, ends his introductory blessing with the word באהבה "in love". However, there does not seem to be a ruling which would suggest that a misanthropic or disliked Priest cannot go up to Duchen.

## BEHA'ALOSECHOH

# BEHA'ALOSECHOH

## בהעלותך

- 1014.** After Israel had circumcised themselves, they marked their houses with blood and with the blood of the Paschal Lamb in the three spots, to wit, *"The lintel and the two side-posts"* (Ex. 12:22). For when the Destroying Angel went forth and saw the mark of the holy sign on that door, he had compassion on Israel, as it is written, *"The Lord will (compassionately) pass over the door"* (Ibid. 23).

There is a certain difficulty here. For since the Holy One Himself was to come and slay in the land of Egypt, what need was there for a sign on the door, seeing that all is revealed before Him? Further, what signifies, *"And He will not permit the Destroyer to enter your homes"* (Ibid.)? We should have expected *"and (He) will not destroy"*.

But the truth is as follows. It is written, *"And the Lord smote all firstborn in the land of Egypt"* (Ibid. 29). Now, *"And the Lord"* (ו-יקוק) everywhere denotes *"He, together with His tribunal"*, and on any such occasion it behooves a man to exhibit some visible act in order to be saved. It is thus of importance to have sacrifices offered on the altar so as to keep at a distance the Destroyer during a service.

The same applies to the New-Year Day, the Day of Judgment, when the lords of the evil tongue rise up against Israel. It is then that we need prayer and supplication and, in addition, some outward and visible act. This act consists in blowing the Shofar, the sound of which wakes into action another Shofar. (149a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 1015.** We read that, *"The ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat"*. We assuredly find here a particular statement, apparently a superfluous detail. For what matter is it to us whether the ark rested in this or in another place, so long as it rested somewhere?

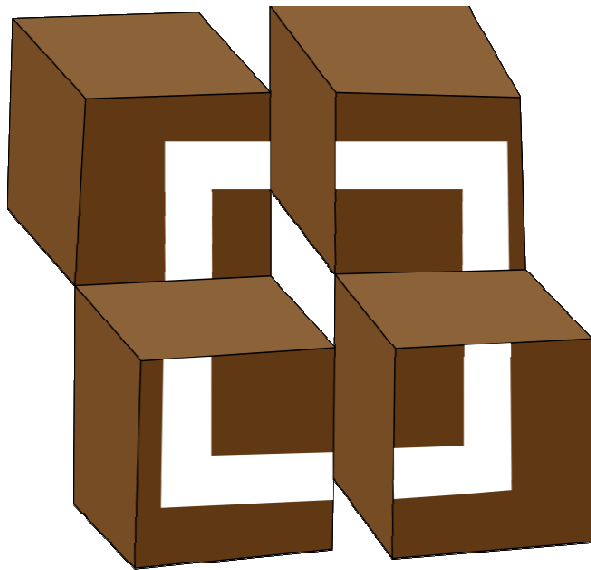
Yet does it contain a teaching applicable to the whole principle of the Torah. And happy is Israel to whom was given the sublime Torah, the Torah of Truth. Perdition take anyone who maintains that any narrative in the Torah comes merely to tell us a piece of history and nothing more! If that were so, the Torah would not be what it assuredly is, to wit, the supernal Torah, the Law of Truth. Now, if it is not dignified for a king of flesh and blood to engage in common talk, much less write it down, is it conceivable that the Most High King, the Holy One, blessed be He, was short of sacred subjects with which to fill the Torah, so that He had to collect such common-place topics as the anecdotes of Esau, and Hagar, Laban's talks to Jacob, the words of Balaam and his donkey, and of Zimri, and such, and make of them a Torah? If so, why is it called the "Torah of Truth"? Why do we read, *"The Lord's Torah is perfect...The testimony of the Lord is trustworthy...The ordinances of the Lord are upright...They are more desirable than gold, even than much fine gold"* (Ps. 19:8-11)?

But assuredly each word of the Torah signifies sublime things, so that this or that narrative, besides its meaning in and for itself, throws light on the all-comprehensive Rule of the Torah. (149b)

- 1016.** The Levite enters his service when twenty-five years old, and remains in his service for twenty-five years until he reaches the age of fifty. When he reaches the fifty-year Grade the strong fire within him is cooled down, and in such a state he cannot but impair the Spot to which he is attached. Besides, his singing voice no longer serves him so well, whereas that voice ought not to be impaired, but should constantly gain in vigor. (151b)

## BEHA'ALOSECHOH

- 1017.** Woe to the sinners who consider the Torah as mere worldly tales, who only see its outer garment. Happy are the righteous who fix their gaze on the Torah proper. Wine cannot be kept save in a jar. So the Torah needs an outer garment. These are the stories and narratives. It behooves us to penetrate beneath them. (152a)
- 1018.** In the time of wrath, one ought not utter anything in the nature of a curse against himself. (155b)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

### *SHELACH LECHOH*

שלח לך

**1019.** Sometimes in the beggar's wallet one finds a pearl. (157b)

**1020.** R' Judah was once walking along with R' Abba. He said to him: I should like to ask you one question. Seeing that God knows that man was destined to sin and to be condemned to death, why did He create him? That he knew this is proved by the fact that in the Torah, which existed two thousand years before the universe, we find it already written, "*When a man shall die in a tent*", and so forth. Why does God want man in this world, seeing that if he studies Torah he dies, and if he does not study he also dies, all going one way.

He replied: What business have you with the ways and the decrees of your Master? What you are permitted to know and to inquire into, that you may ask, and as for what you are not permitted to know, it is written, "*Let not your mouth cause your flesh to sin*" (Eccl. 5:5).

He said to him: If that is the case, all the Torah is secret and recondite, since it is the Holy Name, and if so we have no permission to ask and inquire.

He replied: The Torah is both hidden and revealed, and the Holy Name is also hidden and revealed, and the Holy Name is also hidden and revealed, as it is written, "*The hidden things belong to the Lord our God, but the revealed things are for us and for our children*" (Deut. 29:28). The revealed things we may inquire into, but the hidden things are for

## SHELACH LECHOH

the Lord alone. Hence men are not permitted to utter secret things and divulge them, save only the Holy Lamp<sup>159</sup>, R' Shimon, since the Holy One, blessed be He, has concurred with him, and because his generation is distinguished both on High and Below and, therefore, things are divulged through him, and there shall be no such another generation until the Messiah comes. (159a)

- 1021.** He who studies must be strong-minded so as to disregard this world. He should be well-provided with money, and a strong body, since the study of Torah weakens a man's strength. (160a)
- 1022.** If a broken body will study Torah, it will find healing therein. (160b)
- 1023.** R' Isaac said that if a man wants to deceive, he should first say something true so that he may be believed. (161a)
- 1024.** All future generations should learn to use this address in the time of trouble, namely, "*The Lord is slow to anger, etc.*" (161b)
- 1025.** "He who interrupts shall be interrupted"<sup>160</sup>. That is, if one interrupts his study of Torah to speak of idle matters, his life shall be interrupted in this world and his judgment awaits him in the other World. "He who shortens shall be shortened". If one shortens his "Amen", and does not draw it out, his life shall be shortened. "He who shortens shall be lengthened." The first syllable of **שמע** (in the Shema) should be uttered very rapidly and not dwelt on at all. If one does so, his life will be prolonged. (162a)
- 1026.** (Referring to the coils of the **ציצית**): The seven windings of blue round each one may be increased up thirteen, but not more. R' Isaac said that if there are seven, they are symbolical of the Divine Presence and, if thirteen, of the thirteen attributes. (175b)

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<sup>159</sup> So R' Shimon bar Yochai is often referred to throughout the Zohar.

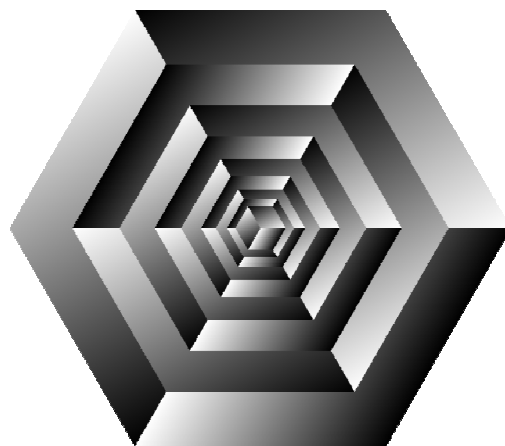
<sup>160</sup> The three statements in this paragraph were said by one of the many mysterious "masters of the hidden wisdom" found throughout the Zohar who was chanced upon by someone when on a journey.

# SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

## *KORACH*

קרח

- 1027.** If one runs after that which is not his, it flies from him. What is more, he loses his own, as well. (176a)
- 1028.** He who quarrels with peace, quarrels with the Holy Name. (176a)





# KORACH - CHUKKAS

## CHUKKAS

### חוקת

**1029.** To abolish a thing laid down in the Torah is like laying waste to the whole world. (180a)

**1030.** If that redeemer is not willing to establish seed for his brother in this world, he must tie a shoe on his foot and the wife must loosen it and take it to herself. Why was a shoe chosen for this purpose? Because the shoe was the support of the dead man in this world, and the woman, by taking it signifies that the dead man who was wandering about among the living will now, through that shoe, no longer wander about among them.

She must dash the shoe on the ground to show that she has laid rest the body of the dead, and God then, or after a time, has pity on him and receives him into the Future World. Therefore it was that whoever desired to confirm an undertaking took off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor. This was before-time in Israel when they were pious and holy. But when sinners multiplied, they concealed the matter under another form using the corner of a garment. (180a)

**1031.** All people go to synagogue to influence the powers Above, but few know how to do it. God is near to all who know how to call upon Him and set powers in motion in the proper manner. But if they do not know how to call upon Him, He is not near. (183b)



## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

# BALAK

בלק

- 1032.** If one does not recite the Shema at the proper time, he is under a ban the whole day. (Balak 186a)
- 1033.** One ought not say a blessing with dirty hands as this renders him liable to death. (Balak 186a)
- 1034.** The five fingers of the hand correspond (mystically) to the blessings the Priest makes with separated fingers and, therefore, should be clean when a blessing of God is said over them seeing that through them and what they stand for, the holy Name is blessed. (186b)
- 1035.** It is a religious duty to wash the hands after a meal. (Balak 186b)
- 1036.** A man should not go four cubits with his head uncovered. The reason being that the Divine Presence rests on the head. (Balak 187a)
- 1037.** Said R' Judah: We have learned that the host breaks bread and the guest says grace<sup>161</sup>. (Balak 187b)
- 1038.** One who blesses over wine should pour some water into it, since the blessing, "Have mercy, O Lord, upon Your people Israel" should not be said save with water in the wine<sup>162</sup>. (189b)

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<sup>161</sup> Rather, he leads in the Zimmun. This whole statement is consistent with the Halacha.

## BALAK

- 1039.** Bread and wine are the essence of the meal, all the rest being subsidiary. (189b)
- 1040.** God cherishes enmity against all who harm Israel and takes vengeance on them. But if anything good for the world is destined to issue from them, He bears with them until that good has come forth, and then He punishes them. (190a/b)
- 1041.** It is the duty of everyone to say grace. If he cannot himself, his wife or his sons can say it for him, but a curse lights on a man who does not know how to say grace himself and must ask his wife or children. (191a)
- 1042.** (A young boy who was chanced upon by some Sages thrilled them by brilliantly expounding on verses in the Torah.) They kissed him and blessed him as before and went their way. When they came to R' Shimon they told him what had happened. He was greatly astonished and said: This is indeed excellent, but he will not make a name. When a thin stick burns, it only burns for a little time. It is written, "*His offspring shall be mighty upon Earth; a generation of the upright shall be blessed*" (Ps. 112:2). When a man is mighty on the Earth, mighty in Torah and in control of his passions, then his light goes forth and is continued through many generations.
- "But", said R' Abba, "we see children who say wonderful things and afterwards become very eminent."
- He replied: When a child says one or two wonderful things by accident, then we may be confident that he will one day teach Torah in Israel. But the same cannot be said of this one whose light is already complete. (191b)
- 1043.** R' Shimon said: From a remark of the Book of the Wisdom of King Solomon – There are three signs in a man. Paleness is a sign of anger,

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<sup>162</sup> It is not stated as to why this should be the case. In any event, the Halacha today is that one need not dilute the wine as it does not have the same potency as did the wines of those days, being diluted in its manufacture anyway.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

talking is a sign of folly, and self-praise is a sign of ignorance. It is true that it says, *"Let a stranger praise you and not your own mouth"* (Prov. 27:2). We alter this to, *"Let a stranger praise you, and if not, your own mouth"*. This only means that if you are not known, discourse on Torah so that through the opening of your mouth in Torah men should know who you are and praise you. (193b)

- 1044.** The prayer of the poor man is the most excellent of all and takes precedence over the prayer of Moses or of David or of any other man. The reason is that the poor man is broken of heart, and it is written, *"God is near to the broken of heart"* (Ps. 34:19). The poor man always expostulates with God, yet God listens and hears his words. When he prays, He opens all the windows of the firmament, and all other prayers which ascend aloft have to make way for that of the broken-hearted poor man. God says, as it were, *"Let all prayers wait, and let this one enter before Me. I require here no court to judge between us. Let his complaint come before Me and I and he will be alone. And so God alone attends to those complaints, as it is written, "And pours out his complaint before the Lord"*. (195a)
- 1045.** Said R' Eleazar: When praying, one should make himself poor and needy in order that his prayer may enter along with that of the rest of the poor, for the doorkeepers allow none to enter so readily as the poor, since they can even enter without asking permission. So if a man puts himself in the position of the poor, his prayer ascends and meets the other prayers of the poor and ascends with them and enters as one of them and is favorably received by the King. (195a)
- 1046.** King David placed himself in four categories. He placed himself among the poor, he placed himself among the pious, he placed himself among the servants, and he placed himself among those who are ready to sacrifice themselves and their lives for the sanctification God's Name. He placed himself among the poor, as it is written, *"For I am poor and needy"*. He placed himself among the pious, as it is written, *"Preserve my soul, for I am pious"*. For one should not consider himself

## BALAK

wicked, nor can it be objected that if so he will never tell of his sins, for when he makes confession of his sins, then he is pious, since he comes to repent. He removes himself from the Evil Side in the impurity of which he abode until now, and cleaves to the Right Hand which is outstretched to receive him. Nor should you think that God does not receive him until he makes full confession of all the sins that he committed since he was born, for if so, what of those that are concealed from him?

The truth is that he need only recount those that he remembers, and if he concentrates his attention on these, all others follow them, just as in searching for leaven we do not look into every nook and cranny, but if we have searched as far as the eye can see, the rest is reckoned as cleared away along with this. So also the Priest declared the leper clean if he could observe no mark on him without peering too closely.

So a man need not recount all his sins since the day he was born, or those which are concealed from him. Hence David placed himself among the saints.

He placed himself among the servants, as it is written, "*Save Your servant, O You My God*". He placed himself among those who are ready to sacrifice themselves for the sanctification of God's Name, as it is written, "*Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for unto You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul*" (Ps. 86:4). All these characters did King David assume before his Master. (195a/b)

1047. R' Eleazar said: If any man shall arrange his service thus before the Master and sincerely carry out this purpose, his prayer shall not return unanswered. At first, he must make himself a servant to arrange a service of praise and song before Him. Again he becomes a servant to recite the Amida, and once more after saying his prayer. <sup>163</sup>A man should place himself among those who are ready to sacrifice themselves for the sanctification of God's Name, by reciting with

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<sup>163</sup> This appears to be a repetition of the same information of that above in a slightly different form and slightly added to and amended.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

proper devotion the formula of unity "Hear, O Israel". Then he must make himself poor when he knocks at the doors of the highest heights in saying the prayer "true and certain". He proceeds thus to the Amida prayer so that he, in saying it, should feel himself broken-hearted, poor and needy. Then he should place himself among the saints by recounting his sins in the prayer, "hearkening to prayer", for so the individual should do in order to cling to the Right Hand which is stretched forth to receive sinners who repent.

We have learned that when a man has sincerely prayed in these four styles, God is pleased and stretches forth His Right Hand over him. Assuredly, the prayer of such a man shall never return unanswered. (195b-196a)

- 1048.** Said Rav Hamnuna the Ancient: The oppression of Israel brings benefit to them and that the ease of the other nations brings evil to them. On every occasion God punishes Israel little by little in each generation, so that when they come to the great Day of Judgment, when the dead shall arise, Judgment shall have no power over them. (199a/b)
- 1049.** How much kindness does God do for men, and how many miracles does He cause to befall for them and no one knows save He! One will rise in the morning and a snake comes to kill him and he treads on the snake and kills it without knowing, but God alone knows. A man goes on the road and robbers are in wait for him, and another comes and takes his place and he is delivered, and does not know the kindness that God has wrought with him or the miracles He has done on his behalf. God alone does it and knows it. (200b)
- 1050.** He who constantly occupies himself with Torah is compared by the Psalmist to, "*A tree planted by streams of water*" (Ps. 1:3). Just as a tree has roots, bark, sap, branches, leaves, flowers and fruit, seven kinds in all, so the Torah has the literal meaning, the homiletic meaning, the mystery of wisdom, numerical values, hidden mysteries, still deeper mysteries and the laws of fit and unfit, forbidden and permitted, and clean and unclean. From this point branches spread out in all directions

## BALAK

and to one who knows it in this way it is indeed like a tree, and, if not, he is not truly wise. (202a)

- 1051.** One who is afraid of a judge should bring a large audience before him in order that they may hear him judge and he may be afraid of them and conduct the case properly. (205b)
- 1052.** One should not abandon his own poor to give to another. (206a)
- 1053.** R' Abba said: We have learned that for eleven things the plague of leprosy comes upon a man, and these are they: 1) for idolatry, 2) for cursing the Name, 3) for fornication, 4) for stealing, 5) for slander, 6) for bearing false witness, 7) for perversion of justice, 8) for false swearing, 9) for encroaching on the property of a neighbor, 10) for harboring evil designs, and 11) for fomenting quarrels between brothers. Some add also, for the Evil Eye. All these were found in the wicked Balaam. (206a/b)
- 1054.** We have learned, "In the way in which a man desires to go, he is led". (207a)
- 1055.** R' Shimon said: Sinners turn mercy into judgment. (207b)
- 1056.** The mysteries of Torah are deep and not to be penetrated. Therefore, one should not make any statement about the Torah until he has heard and understood it properly. (207b)
- 1057.** Animals are not capable of receiving a rational mind. (210a)
- 1058.** If one is taking his child through a street and is afraid of the evil eye, he should cover the child's head with a scarf<sup>164</sup> and then he will be safe from the Evil Eye. (211b)
- 1059.** "I see him but not now". Some of these things were fulfilled at that time and some later, while some are left for the Messiah.

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<sup>164</sup> I am neither aware of the efficacy of this remedy nor its mention in the Halacha.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

We have learned that God will one day build Jerusalem and display a certain fixed star flashing with seventy streamers and seventy flames in the midst of the firmament. It will shine and flash for seventy days. It will appear on the sixth day of the week on the twenty-fifth of the sixth month, and will disappear on the seventh day after seventy days.

On the first day it will be seen in the city of Rome and on that day three lofty walls of that city shall fall and a mighty palace shall be overthrown and the ruler of that city shall die. Then that star will become visible throughout the whole world and no faith shall be found among men.

When that star shines in the midst of the firmament, a certain powerful king shall arise who will seek domination over all kings and make war on two Sides and prevail against them. On the day when the star disappears, the Holy Land will be shaken over an area of forty-five miles all round the place where the Temple used to be, and a cave will be laid open beneath the ground from which shall issue a mighty fire to consume the world. From that cave shall spread a great and noble branch which will rule over all the world and to which shall be given the kingship. The Heavenly saints shall gather to it.

Then will the King Messiah appear and the kingship shall be given to him. Mankind will then suffer one calamity after another and the enemies of Israel will prevail, but the spirit of the Messiah will rise against them and destroy the sinful Edom and burn in fire the land of Seir. Hence it is written, *"And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession of his which were his enemies, while Israel does valiantly"*.

At that time, the Holy One, blessed be He, shall raise the dead of His people and death shall be forgotten of them.

R' Abba said: Why is it written, *"For in joy you shall go out"* (Isa. 55:12)? Because when Israel goes out from captivity, the Divine Presence will go forth with them and they with Her. (212b)



# PINCHOS

## *PINCHOS*

### פִּנְחוֹס

- 1060.** It is a rule that a Priest who kills a human being becomes disqualified for the Priesthood and, therefore, by rights, Pinchos should have been disqualified. But because he was jealous for the Holy One, blessed be He, the Priesthood was assigned to him and to his descendants in perpetuity<sup>165</sup>. (214a)
- 1061.** As for the tradition that Pinchos did not die, the truth is that he did not die like other men, and he outlived his generation because he kept hold of this supernal Covenant. When he departed from the world, it was with celestial yearning and beautiful attachment. (214a)
- 1062.** When God desires to give healing to the world, He smites one righteous man among them with disease and suffering, and through him gives healing to all, as it is written, *"But He was wounded because of our transgressions, oppressed due to our iniquities... and with his (His?) wounds we are healed"* (Isa. 53:5). A righteous man is never afflicted save to bring healing to his generation and to make atonement for it, for the Other Side prefers that punishment should light upon the virtuous man rather than on any other. (218a)
- 1063.** How is it that of all peoples of the world, only the Jews sway to and from when they study Torah, a habit which seems to come natural to

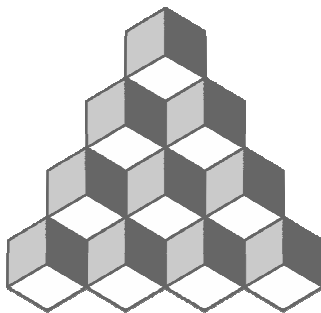
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<sup>165</sup> See Torah Temima on Levit. 25:13.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

them, and they are unable to keep still? It is written, "*The spirit (or: soul) of man is the lamp of the Lord*" (Prov. 20:27). Now once this lamp has been kindled from the supernal Torah, the light upon it never ceases for an instant, like the flame of a wick which never still for an instant. So when an Israelite has said one word of Torah, light is kindled and he cannot keep still but sways to and fro like the flame of a wick. But the souls of heathens are like the burning of stubble, which gives no flame and, therefore, they keep still like wood burning without a flame. (218b)

- 1064.** R' Abba cited the verse, "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, etc.*" (Ps. 51:18). "This verse", he said, "has been explained as showing that God does not desire a sacrifice from man for his sin, but a contrite spirit." (240a)
- 1065.** Not all the birds of the clean side are brought for offerings, but only pigeons and turtle-doves which are faithful to their mates more than all the other birds, and are preyed upon, but do not prey. (240b-241a)<sup>166</sup>



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<sup>166</sup> Soncino prints the following Note, "From the beginning of the section Pinchas to the end of the Zohar, a large portion of the text in the original is taken up by the Ray'a Mehemna; hence the frequency of the omissions in the translation. On the section Mattos, there is only a short piece of Zohar too allusive a nature to be made intelligible in a translation. There is no Zohar at all on the sections, Masei, Devorim, Ekev, Shoftim, Ki Seitzei, Ki Sovo, Nitzavim and Vezzos Habrochoh."

## VO'ESCHANON

# VO'ESCHANON

וַתְּחַנֵּן

**1066.** R' Jose adduced here the verse, "*And Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord*" (Isa. 38:2). "How great", he said, "is the power of the Torah, and how it's exalted above all, since he who occupies himself with the Torah fears no adversaries either Above or Below nor any evil haps of the world because he is attached to the Tree of Life and eats there from every day. For the Torah teaches man how to walk in the right way. It gives him counsel how to return to his Master, so that even if sentence of death has been passed on him, it is annulled and removed from him and impends not over him. Therefore, he should occupy himself with the Torah day and night and never depart from it. For if he banishes the Torah from himself or departs from it, it is as though he parted from life.

Now, it is a good counsel for a man that when he goes to his bed at night, he should take upon himself the yoke of the Heavenly kingdom with a perfect heart and hasten to entrust to God his soul. The reason is that all the world is a foretaste of death, as the tree of death is then present in the world, and all the spirits of men then leave them and ascend and are delivered to Him. But because they are given in trust, they afterwards return to their places." (260a)

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

- 1067.** When one stands in prayer he should keep his feet together<sup>167</sup> and cover his head. He should shade his eyes so as not to look at the Divine Presence. In the Book of Rav Hamnuna the Elder, it says that if one opens his eyes at the time of prayer or does not cast them on the ground he brings the Angel of Death on to himself before his time. When his soul leaves him, he will not behold the face of the Divine Presence nor will he die by a (Divine) kiss. In fact, of course, one cannot look at the Divine Presence, but what he should do is to know that the Divine Presence is before him and, therefore, there should be nothing interposing between him and the wall. (260b)
- 1068.** R' Jose said: Why do we find here both, "*You shall not covet*" and "*Your shall not desire*"? Because they are two different Grades. A man covets things which it is in his power to obtain (wrongfully), and through coveting he does try to obtain them. A man can desire things even if he sees no way of obtaining them. (261a)
- 1069.** R' Judah said: One should place God before him in all his acts. When one walks abroad, he should have three objects in view, the highest of which is prayer. Higher even than prayer is the converse of two or three companions on matters of Torah, for they shall come to no harm, since the Divine Presence accompanies them. (261b)
- 1070.** The first compartment of the תפלין contains the passage, "*Sanctify unto Me every firstborn*". The second compartment contains the passage commencing, "*And it shall come to pass when the Lord your God brings you*". The third compartment contains the passage commencing, "*Hear, O Israel*". The fourth compartment contains the passage commencing, "*And it shall come to pass if you diligently hearken*". (262b)
- 1071.** He who leaves his house to go to the synagogue without תפלין on his head and ציצית on his garment, and yet says, "I will bow to Your holy

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<sup>167</sup> Berochos 10b.

## VO'ESCHANON

Temple in fear", of him God says, "Where is my fear? He is bearing false witness." (265a)

- 1072.** R' Hiya said: If one wishes to guard his steps, he should not step over water that has been poured out in front of a door, because a certain demon abides between the two posts of the door with his face to the door seeing all that goes on inside. Therefore one should not pour water between the two doorposts. (R' Isaac, however, said that if it is clean water it does not matter, provided it has not been poured out in haughtiness.) The reason is that he is authorized to do harm, and if he turns his head to the house everything on which he looks will be cursed<sup>168</sup>. (265b)
- 1073.** When one affixes a **מזוזה** to his door with his Holy Name inscribed in it, one is crowned with the crowns of his Master, and no "evil species" will come near to the door of his house. (265b)
- 1074.** R' Abba said: We have learned that one should go to pay his respects to the Divine Presence every Sabbath and New Moon. And who is meant? His teacher. (265b)
- 1075.** R' Hiya said: The evil prompting is, at first, like a wayfarer who comes to the door of a house and, finding that there is no one to stop him, goes into the house and becomes a guest. Finding there is still no one to stop him, he takes liberties and acts as the master until the whole house is subject to him. (267b-268a)
- 1076.** One should ever carry about with him words of Torah in order that the Evil Prompter (the **יצר הרע**) may be subdued by them, since there is no opponent of the Evil Prompter like words of Torah. (268a)
- 1077.** The Divine Presence finds a home in the Land only through the Torah. (268a)

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<sup>168</sup> I know of no place that anything of this passage is mentioned in the Halacha.

## SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE ZOHAR

# VAYEILECH

וילך

- 1078.** One should pray to God that he not be thrust out to make room for another. (284a)
- 1079.** Greater is he who answers Amen (אמן) than he who says the blessing. (285a)
- 1080.** When one who was careful to answer Amen departs from this world, his soul ascends and they proclaim before him: Open the gates before him as he opened the gates every day by being careful to answer Amen<sup>169</sup>. But if one hears a blessing from the Reader and is not careful to answer Amen, what is his punishment? As he did not open blessings Below, so they do not open for him Above. When he leaves this world they proclaim before him: Close the gates in the face of so-and-so that he enter not, and do not receive him. Woe to him and to his soul. (285b)
- 1081.** For in every place to which they have been exiled, the Holy One, blessed be He, is with them in their banishment, as it is written, *“And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, etc.”* (Lev. 26:44). (297b)



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<sup>169</sup> Shabbos 119b.

# VAYEILECH - HA'AZENU

## *HA'AZENU*

האזינו

**1082.** R' Jose said: There is no creature so devoted to her young as the eagle, being as kind to them as it is cruel to others. (298b)



**The End.**





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